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REPORT OF THE 39TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN (FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN PREPCOM) 15 MARCH -7 APRIL

The 39th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) met at UN Headquarters in New York from 15 March to 7 April 1995, where it served as the preparatory committee for negotiations on the draft Platform for Action, the document to be adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) in Beijing, in September 1995. Many delegates came into the negotiations directly from the World Summit for Social Development, which had ended three days earlier in Copenhagen, Denmark. After a full three weeks of negotiations, including weekends and many late night sessions, participants left New York exhausted.

The draft Platform for Action, which served as the basis for negotiations, was prepared by the FWCW Secretariat with input from five regional group meetings, four expert group meetings, consultations with UN agencies, and informal, open-ended consultations in December 1994. Negotiations were originally scheduled to take place during two weeks, on a twenty page text. The sixty-eight page draft, numerous amendments and the difficult issues under discussion resulted in delegates adding three days to the meeting so that all sections of the text could be discussed before sending the draft to Beijing. In addition, a draft Declaration was drawn up by the G-77/China for adoption at the FWCW, and an extra section dedicated to the girl child was added to the Platform.

Ten years after the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies, the Beijing process is intended to launch action on and implementation of a comprehensive agenda that seeks to re-define and re-make equality, development and peace. In order to take action, the question of resources is key, but the reallocations and increases recommended in the Beijing Platform are modest. These include a recommendation for an increased share of ODA targeted towards implementation of the Platform in developing countries, and an "invitation" to the international financial institutions to allocate grants and loans. Within the UN system, important decisions on funding for INSTRAW and UNIFEM were deferred because of the continuing debate in other fora on their merger. It has been suggested that the 39th Session itself was under-funded. In view of these factors, attention focused on two initiatives: the Australian call for a "Conference of Commitments," and behind-the-scenes

lobbying to install an ombudswoman and support unit in the office of the Secretary-General of the UN. The Australian initiative will possibly add momentum to implementation of the Platform by Governments, where primary responsibility lies, but it remains in brackets going to Beijing.

Two key debates marked the Session. A small but persistent group of delegations repeated their reservations to language that had been agreed to at previous UN conferences, notably ICPD. This led to disagreements over the modalities for references. Secondly, a number of delegations objected to the use of the term "gender" in the Platform and proposed that it be bracketed throughout. An intervention by the Australian Ambassador, Mr. Richard Butler, smoothed the way to a compromise decision to lift the brackets and establish a Contact Group, chaired by Namibia, to discuss the term in light of the Platform.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE DRAFT PLATFORM FOR ACTION

In resolution 45/129, the UN General Assembly endorsed resolution 1990/12 of ECOSOC, which called for a world conference on women in 1995 and requested that the CSW serve as the preparatory committee for the Conference. In section III of resolution 37/7, the CSW requested that the Secretary-General prepare a draft Platform for their 38th Session. Following that meeting, the CSW requested, in resolution 38/10, that the Secretary-General further develop the draft Platform, taking into account the results of regional group meetings.

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REGIONAL GROUP MEETINGS

The regional group meetings were organized by the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Economic Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ECAP), the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), and the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA). Each meeting adopted a regional Platform.

EUROPE: The High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting of the ECE was held in Vienna from 17-21 October 1994. The critical areas of concern identified by this region are: insufficient promotion and protection of women's human rights; feminization of poverty; insufficient awareness of women's contribution to the economy and promotion of their potential; insufficient *de facto* gender equality; insufficient participation of women in public life; insufficient statistical systems, databases and methodologies; and insufficient intra- and interregional networking and cooperation.

LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN: The Sixth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean met in Argentina from 20-25 September 1994, where the region's Platform for Action was discussed. The Platform was finalized at a 16-18 November 1994 meeting in Chile. Participants discussed the strategic areas of: gender equity; economic and social development; elimination of poverty among women; women's equitable participation in decision-making and in the exercise of power in public and private life; human rights, peace and violence; shared family responsibilities; recognition of cultural plurality; and international support and cooperation.

ASIA AND THE PACIFIC: The Second Asian and Pacific Ministerial Conference on Women in Development was held in Jakarta, Indonesia, from 7-14 June 1994. The delegates suggested actions to address the following critical areas: feminization of poverty; unequal participation in economic activities; inadequate recognition of women's role in environmental management; inequitable access to power and decision-making; violation of women's human rights; health; access to education and literacy; negative portrayal of women in the media; mechanisms for promoting the advancement of women; and women's role in peace-keeping.

AFRICA: The Fifth African Regional Conference on Women was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 16-23 November 1994. The conference suggested actions to be taken in the following critical areas: women's poverty, food security and economic empowerment; access to education, training, science and technology; women's role in culture, family and socialization; women's health; women in environmental management; women in the peace process; political empowerment; women's legal and human rights; gender-disaggregated data; women, communication, information and the arts; and the girl child.

ARAB REGION: The Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting was held in Amman, Jordan, from 9-10 November 1994. Delegates suggested actions to be taken on the following issues affecting Arab women: the right to participate in power and decision-making structures; alleviation of poverty; equal opportunity in education; equal access to health services; strengthening capabilities of Arab women to enter the labor market and achieve self-reliance; the impact of war, occupation and armed conflict on women; violence against women; environmental management; and the use of communications to change roles in society and achieve equality.

EXPERT GROUP MEETINGS

The Expert Group meetings focused on: gender, education and training; women and economic decision-making; institutional and financial arrangements for the implementation of the FWCW's Platform for Action; and gender and the Agenda for Peace. The experts recommended specific actions to address the issues under discussion.

GENDER, EDUCATION AND TRAINING: The Expert Group meeting on the promotion of literacy, education and training, including technological skills, took place at the ILO International Training Center in Turin, Italy from 10-14 October 1994. The report stressed: access to education as a human right; the need for interventionist approaches; science and technology; the special needs of refugees and others in vulnerable circumstances; and education resource implications flowing from structural adjustment.

EQUALITY IN ECONOMIC DECISION-MAKING: The Expert Group on women and economic decision-making met in New York, from 7-11 November 1994. The Group examined the challenge of increasing and improving the presence of women in economic decision-making and the market. Five areas of action were proposed: affirmative placement and retention of women, and transparency and monitoring; greater access to finance, markets and technology; linkages between formal financial institutions and NGOs; highlighting the market potential of women in certain sectors; and training initiatives. Finally, the Group made a number of recommendations to increase the visibility of economic opportunities for women.

INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FWCW'S PLATFORM FOR ACTION: The Expert Group considering institutional and financial arrangements met in New York from 21-23 November 1994. The Group considered principles and guidelines for implementation and monitoring of the Platform, and examined the roles of relevant actors at all levels. The principles identified by the Group for effective arrangements for implementation are: clear mandates; transparency; consistent flow of information; and transparent monitoring and reporting on progress. National Governments are expected to be catalysts for implementation. The Group drew upon the language and ideas of the ICPD Action Programme and stressed the need for specific funding arrangements. The group proposed that governments establish and fund effective core programmes for women's empowerment, and anticipated that as much as two-thirds of implementation costs will come from member States.

GENDER AND THE AGENDA FOR PEACE: The Expert Group meeting on peace and women in international decision-making took place in New York, from 5-9 December 1994. This Group's report is predicated on the argument that equal participation by women will "make a qualitative difference, in terms of content and style, to the benefit of society and the achievement of peace." Recommendations for increasing female participation in peace and security fora include: inclusion of women in all candidate lists; a 40% target for women's involvement in UN peace operations; UN registration of arms production; education on links between violent play and the culture of violence; designating rape during the conduct of war as a war crime; and gender sensitive training for personnel in peace and security operations.

CSW REPORT

The 39th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) was called to order on 15 March by Ms. Patricia Licuanan (Philippines), Chair of the Commission. She stated that the goals of Nairobi remain valid but, for the most part, unattained. She noted that the conference title, "Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace," indicates the need for concerted action.

Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Development, Nitin Desai, noted that this session is where the basic outcome of the Beijing Conference will be shaped. He urged delegates to place the Conference in the context of the other recent UN conferences. All of the UN conferences, beginning with the 1990 World Conference for Children, are part of the process of searching for a role for public policy in a rapidly changing world and of defining the responsibility of government for the social good.

Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women, highlighted the Secretariat's innovative process of involving youth in the regional meetings. She noted that the draft Platform for Action sets forth more than 200 actions, and stated that NGOs are an essential, democratizing element in this process.

Delegates then turned to the matter of NGO accreditation. The EU, supported by several other delegations, called for a transparent, open NGO accreditation process, and proposed that the list of NGOs to be accredited be left open until the end of the CSW Session. Armenia questioned the accreditation of the Armenian Relief Society. The Holy See challenged the accreditation of "Catholics for Free Choice," objecting to the use of the word "Catholic" in their title, while espousing positions opposed to the Catholic Church, including its position on abortion. Delegates adopted the list of NGOs *ad referendum*, pending examination of the questioned NGOs and leaving the list open until the end of the CSW.

Mongella introduced Agenda Item 3, Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women, by noting that the Commission's decisions will shape the conduct of the conference in Beijing. The remainder of 15 March, all of 16 March and the morning of 17 March were then devoted to statements on preparations for the FWCW.

DRAFTING, SUB-DRAFTING AND INFORMAL GROUPS

Negotiations on the draft Platform for Action began with a Drafting Group and a Sub-Drafting Group, but by the end of the first week, mid-way into the discussion of the section on health, most of the remaining text was sent to informal-informal negotiations. First readings on Chapters III (Critical Areas of Concern), IV (Strategic Objectives and Actions, Sections A, B and part of C), and V (Institutional Arrangements) were chaired by Ms. Irene Freudenschuss (Austria). First readings on Chapters I (Mission Statement) and II (Global Framework) were chaired by Amb. Julia Alvarez (Dominican Republic). Amendments were submitted in written form on the remaining texts, and expert groups were used to integrate the compilation texts into more manageable drafts from which negotiations proceeded, in closed informal-informal sessions. Ms. Patricia Licuanan (Philippines) and Ms. Freudenschuss chaired the two informal groups, which worked in parallel from 28 March to 3 April. In an afternoon Plenary on Monday, 3 April, the Bureau recommended that delegates extend the CSW, as many texts had not yet been addressed and the meeting was scheduled to end the next day. Delegates agreed to extend the CSW for three days, and created a third informal group, chaired by Ms. Patty O'Neill (New Zealand), to ensure that all texts would be considered by the negotiation deadline of midnight Wednesday, 5 April. All sections, except the Declaration, were completed during all day and late night sessions, although the number of brackets reveals that consensus has not yet been reached on many substantive issues. The following summarizes each section in the Platform for Action and highlights the issues that remain bracketed.

DECLARATION

Delegates met to discuss the proposed Declaration, tabled by the G-77/China, late in the negotiation process. All agreed that there should be a Declaration, but participants were not ready to negotiate the final text. Consensus focused on the need for a short statement that focused on the main cross-cutting themes. Four parts were envisaged for the text: a preamble noting the need for action and referencing past international instruments and World Conferences for Women; a description of the global environment; a prescriptive statement focused on creating an enabling environment; and a statement of commitment. The Beijing Declaration will be drafted entirely at the FWCW.

CHAPTER I. MISSION STATEMENT

This chapter, which contains five paragraphs, begins by noting that the Platform is an agenda for women's empowerment and goes on to: reaffirm the human rights of women; emphasize the necessity of partnership between women and with men; call for immediate and concerted action; and identify the need for a strong commitment from Governments, international organizations and institutions at all levels.

Bracketed text in this chapter includes: the [the full enjoyment of all universal] human rights; an [equitable] world and [equity] for all; and [adequate][new and additional] resources.

CHAPTER II. GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter identifies the global situation and reasons for the FWCW. Previous UN Conferences and agreements are recognized, international changes due to the end of the Cold War are noted, and challenges faced by women, such as the feminization of poverty and exclusion from institutions of power, are identified.

Bracketed paragraphs in this chapter regard the World Conference on Human Rights, arms production and trade, the social dimension of development, the role of women in families, and the role of religion in the lives of women. Other bracketed references include: [universal] human rights; [alien domination and foreign occupation]; the dismantling of South Africa's policy of apartheid and the change to parliamentary democracy in Central and Eastern Europe; [a just and equitable social and economic international order]; feminist ideals; restrictions on NGOs to operate freely in some countries; lack of commitment by the media to promote human values and dignity; and discrimination against women begins even before birth.

CHAPTER III. CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

This four-paragraph chapter notes that the advancement of women should not be seen in isolation as a women's issue. It states that most of the Nairobi Strategies have not been achieved and identifies areas of particular urgency that stand out as priorities for action. Strategic action is called for on the twelve areas of concern that correspond to the twelve sections in Chapter IV (Strategic Objectives and Actions).

Brackets in this chapter remain around references to: respect for women's innate dignity and the fundamental equality between men and women; [equity] between women and men; colonial and other forms of alien domination; the failure to protect rights and freedoms, including the right to development; and action with full respect for religious and ethical values.

CHAPTER IV. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

This chapter is introduced by two paragraphs. The first notes that this chapter contains diagnoses of each area of critical concern and proposes strategic objectives with concrete actions to be taken by various actors in order to achieve them. The second paragraph, which is bracketed, recognizes that many women face particular barriers because of factors such as race, age, culture or religion. In the first paragraph, a reference recognizing differences among women is bracketed.

SECTION A. THE PERSISTENT AND INCREASING BURDEN OF POVERTY ON WOMEN: This section describes poverty and some causes of the feminization of poverty, noting that the majority of people living in poverty are women and that women do not have equal power in policy and decision-making. It also notes that women often do not qualify for social security and fall into deeper poverty. Brackets remain around references to unemployment and underemployment, cultural and social factors for family instability, and sustained economic growth and sustainable development. Bracketed references in the strategic objectives include:

A.1. Macroeconomic policies and development strategies that address the needs and efforts of women to overcome poverty: people-centered sustainable development; the easing of migration policies; increased resources; absolute poverty; families in poverty; debt cancellation; the creation of an enabling environment; and a new paragraph on NGO action.

A.2. Revise laws and administrative practices to recognize women's rights to economic resources and to ensure women's access to economic resources: laws to prevent rural and indigenous community resources from passing to the private sector; ratification of ILO Convention 169; and adoption by ECOSOC and the GA of the draft International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People.

A.3. Provide women with access to savings mechanisms and institutions and to credit: [increase] [provide adequate] funding for entrepreneurial activities.

A.4. Conduct research in order to enable women to overcome poverty: [seek to] apply methodologies for incorporating gender perspectives on all policies.

SECTION B. UNEQUAL ACCESS TO AND INADEQUATE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES: This section calls for: equality of access to education, literacy, scientific and technological training; gender-sensitive curricula; the use of mass media as an educational tool; resources for education; and mainstreaming gender perspectives in policies and programmes. Brackets remain on references to: sustained economic growth, sustainable development and development centered on the human person; early marriages; sexual harassment; the impact of "the lack of sexual and reproductive education" on women and men; parental rights, duties and responsibilities; girls in higher branches of education and in the professions; and fostering moral and spiritual values. Brackets in the strategic objectives include:

B.1. Ensure equal access to education: parents' ability to choose quality education; freedom of conscience and religion; and the repeal of discriminatory laws and priorities in women's education.

B.2. Eradicate illiteracy among women worldwide: the target year 2000.

B.3. Improve women's access to vocational training, science and technology and continuing education: [quality] education.

B.4. Develop non-discriminatory education and training: a sub-paragraph calling for awareness about the status, role and respective contributions of women and men in the family and society; the removal of barriers to sexual and reproductive health education; integrated education and services related to youth sexuality; respect for cultural and religious diversity in educational institutions; and the removal of barriers to schooling of pregnant girls and young mothers.

B.5. Allocate sufficient resources for educational reforms and monitor implementation: mobilization of funding from the [private sector]; emphasis on meeting educational costs of [under-served populations]; monitoring the closure of the gap between women and men in education; and allocation of a minimum percentage of assistance to women and girls' education.

B.5 (bis) [To promote life-long learning [educational processes] for girls and women]: the title contains the only brackets in this section.

SECTION C. INEQUALITIES IN ACCESS TO HEALTH AND RELATED SERVICES: This section notes that women's health involves their emotional, social and physical well-being and that it is determined by the social, political and economic context of their lives as well as by biology. [The major] barrier to women's health is inequality and inadequate responsiveness and lack of services to meet health needs related to sexuality and reproduction. Additional brackets in the introduction refer to: counseling and access to sexual and reproductive health information and services; [unprotected] [premature] sexual relations; unsafe abortions; safe sex practices; responsible sexual behavior on the part of women's partners; increasing privatization of health care systems; and sexual

rights. Bracketed references in the strategic objectives include the following:

C.1. Increase women's access throughout the life-cycle to affordable and quality health care, information and services: support and implementation of ICPD and WSSD [commitments]; removal of all barriers to women's health; equal access for women to social security; provision for ethical/religious objection for providers of health information and services; provision of full information on medical procedures; and unsafe and illegal abortion.

C.2. Strengthen preventive programmes that address threats to women's health: informal and formal education focusing on elimination of harmful attitudes and practices; public health campaigns on sexuality and reproduction taking into account parental responsibilities; and women's health care training in medical schools.

C.3. Undertake [gender-sensitive] multisectoral initiatives that address STDs, AIDS/HIV pandemic and other [sexual and reproductive health] issues: review, adoption and implementation of laws and practices that may contribute to women's susceptibility to HIV infection and other STDs; information for all women on HIV/AIDS and pregnancy and research; and programmes for adolescents on responsible sexual behavior.

C.4. Promote research and information dissemination on women's health: race and ethnicity and genome and genetic engineering research.

C.5. Increase resources and monitor follow-up for women's health: qualifications [where necessary] and [where appropriate] regarding increases and development of resources; assistance to youth NGOs; and the development of mechanisms to coordinate and implement health measures in the Platform.

SECTION D. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: The introduction to this section defines violence against women and notes groups particularly vulnerable to violence, some of the causes and effects of violence against women, suggestions for the elimination of violence against women and the problem of international trafficking in women. Brackets remain around references to: [universal] human rights; terrorism, forced abortion, forced sterilization, forced use of contraceptives, prenatal sex selection and female infanticide; internally displaced women; foreign occupation or alien domination; destitute women; equity; and unwanted pregnancy. Brackets in the strategic objectives include references to:

D.1. Take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women: the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women; the rehabilitation of victims and perpetrators; compensation for victims; the consideration and ratification of all [relevant][universally] accepted human rights [norms][instruments]; the norms contained in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; national and local plans of action; the [creation, funding and improvement] of training for personnel; updating the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women; family planning centers and school health services; educational campaigns about the effects of violence; and the responsibility of the media.

D.2. Study the causes of violence against women and effective methods of prevention strategies: the social, economic, cultural and political context of women.

D.3. Eliminate trafficking in women and assist female victims of violence: commercial sex work other than prostitution; national and international trafficking networks; and resources for programmes to heal victims of trafficking, including job training, legal assistance and confidential health care.

SECTION E. ADVANCE PEACE, PROMOTE CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND REDUCE THE IMPACTS OF ARMED OR OTHER CONFLICT ON WOMEN: This section notes that an environment that maintains world peace is a precondition for the advancement of women, equality and development, but identifies that armed and other types of conflicts including [foreign

occupation], ethnic and religious conflicts are an ongoing reality affecting women in every region.

Bracketed text in the introduction includes references to: systematic ignorance of humanitarian and human rights law in armed conflicts; emphasis on preventive strategies; excessive military spending; international stability and security; and contribution of women as peace educators. Bracketed text in the strategic objectives includes references to:

E.1. Increase and strengthen participation of women in conflict resolution and decision-making and protect women in armed and other conflicts: the establishment of gender balance in all UN forums and peace activities; actions to strengthen women's role in national and international [peace building, fact-finding, and preventive diplomacy]; and training for prosecutors handling cases involving rape [and its consequences] and [integrate a gender perspective into their work].

E.2. [Reduce military expenditures and control availability of armaments]: military conversion for [development/peaceful] purposes; expansion of the UN Register of Conventional Arms; the illicit arms trade; and action to [immediately adopt/consider] a moratorium on the export and planting of anti-personnel land mines.

E.3. Promote non-violent forms of conflict resolution and reduce human rights abuse: creation of a UN unit for third-party conflict prevention; the declaration of rape as a war crime; terrorism; ending unilateral measures against populations; alleviation of economic sanctions; [preventive diplomacy]; and violations of [international humanitarian law] by security forces.

E.4. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace: A call to take into account the FWCW [during future] reviews of the plan of action for the UN Decade for Human Rights Education is bracketed.

E.5. Provide protection, assistance and training to refugee and displaced women: international emergency provision for Governments in [countries of asylum] training and rehabilitation resources for refugees; basic support for women displaced as a result of violence; the right of refugee women to safe and protected return to homes; protection of migrating families; and [internally displaced] women.

E.6. Provide assistance to women of colonies: self-determination and public awareness of women of the colonies.

SECTION F. INEQUALITY IN WOMEN'S ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION IN DEFINING ECONOMIC STRUCTURES AND POLICIES [AND THE PRODUCTIVE PROCESS ITSELF] [ECONOMIC POTENTIAL AND INDEPENDENCE OF WOMEN] [GENDER EQUALITY IN THE ECONOMIC STRUCTURES, POLICIES AND IN ALL FORMS OF PRODUCTIVE ACTIVITY]: This section notes that considerable differences in women's and men's access and opportunities to exert power over economic structures exist and states that continuing obstacles hinder their ability to achieve economic autonomy.

Bracketed text in the introduction includes references to: women's participation in remunerated economic life; women's increasing share in the labor force but lack of corresponding change in responsibility for unremunerated work in the household; the contribution of women migrant workers; and obstacles for women in paid work. Bracketed references in the strategic objectives include the following:

F.1. [Promote women's self-reliance and guarantee economic opportunities]: equitable rights; measures for transparent budget processes; integration strategies for migrant women; compliance of transnational corporations with national laws and codes; and the use of [contract compliance regulations] in pursuit of equal opportunity provision.

F.2. Take positive action to facilitate women's equal access to resources, employment and markets: [equitable] state employment opportunities and strategies for international [development] institutions to assist micro to medium scale enterprise.

F.3 Provide business services and access to markets, information and technology to low-income women: actions [by Governments in cooperation with NGOs at the community and national levels and the private sector].

F.4. Strengthen women's economic capacity and commercial networks: actions to be taken by [transnational and national corporations] and [by the private sector].

F.5. Eliminate occupational segregation and all forms of employment discrimination: the extension of international labor standards to females in expert processing zones; measures to prohibit and redress direct and indirect sexual/parental status discrimination; and employment of migrant women and those re-entering the labor market.

F.6. [Create a flexible work environment]: [actions to be taken]; an introductory reference to [better harmonization of work and family responsibilities]; and extension of protection to part-time and temporary employment, protection for atypical workers and parental leave benefits.

SECTION G. INEQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN THE SHARING OF POWER [FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES] AND DECISION-MAKING AT ALL LEVELS: The introduction to this section notes that: improvement of women's social, economic and political status depends on the sharing of power between women and men and women's equal participation in decision-making at all levels, from the household to the highest levels of Government; women are under-represented at all levels of government and economic and political decision-making; and structural and attitudinal barriers to their advancement to top levels exist. In the introduction, brackets remain around references to: the functioning of democracy; the culture of many political parties and government structures; unbalanced power relations between women and men within the family; and diplomats and negotiators. Bracketed text in the strategic actions include references to:

G.1. Ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making: electoral systems; increasing the number and raising the position of women in Government-funded organizations; ensuring women's participation in the leadership of political parties; equity; the impact of data on women and men in decision-making and the progress towards the S-G's goals for women in decision-making positions; the integration of women into elective and non-elective public positions; shared work and parental responsibilities; monitoring women's access to senior levels of decision-making; policies to achieve gender parity in employment by the year 2000; and the use of databases in appointing women to senior decision-making positions.

G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership: no brackets remain in this section.

SECTION H: INSUFFICIENT MECHANISMS AT ALL LEVELS TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN: This section notes that gender factors often are not taken into account in policy and programme planning. It notes that national machinery for the advancement of women is the central policy-coordinating unit inside government, should be located at the highest possible level in the government and should have sufficient resources in terms of budget and professional capacity.

Brackets in the introduction remain around references to: limited resources of the CSW and CEDAW and international mechanisms that facilitate decentralized planning with a view to involving NGOs. Bracketed references in the strategic objectives sections include the following:

H.1. Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies: action by INSTRAW and UNIFEM.

H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in all legislation, public policies, programmes and projects: paragraphs regarding mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies, ensuring that analysis of the impact on women and men is carried out before

policy decisions are taken, systematic review of policies and regular review of national policies to ensure that women are beneficiaries of development; legal reform with regard to the family, conditions of employment and other matters; and promoting increased participation of women in the development process.

H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation: collection of data that reflects problems and questions related to men and women in society; [measure] [make visible] the full contribution of women and men to the economy; satellite accounts of women's and men's unremunerated economic contribution; data collection on access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services; statistical methods of data collection for use by the CSW and other UN bodies; and development of national capacity to measure remunerated and unremunerated work done by women.

SECTION I: LACK OF AWARENESS OF AND COMMITMENT TO [INTERNATIONALLY AND NATIONALLY] RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN. [THE ENJOYMENT OF [ALL] [UNIVERSAL] HUMAN RIGHTS BY WOMEN.]: This section defines the human rights of women, urges governments to close the gap between women's *de jure* and *de facto* human rights, notes different forms of violence that constitute human rights violations and groups particularly vulnerable to human rights violations, and calls for legal literacy so that women may become aware of their rights.

In the introduction, brackets remain around references to: the requirements of international law; [all the major international human rights instruments include sex as one of the grounds upon which States may not discriminate]; reservations contrary to international treaty law; *de jure* equality; factors undermining women's enjoyment of equal rights; negative effects of SAPs; integration of women's human rights into all UN human rights activities; reproductive rights; and feminist groups. Paragraphs referring to the definition of human rights, systematic discrimination against women, violence and women in vulnerable circumstances remain bracketed. Bracketed references in the strategic objectives sections include:

I.1. Promote and protect [all] the human rights of women through the implementation of all [international] human rights instruments: the option to [consider] ratification and implementation of international human rights treaties; withdrawing reservations to CEDAW; [independent] national institutions; the sale of children's organs; the drafting of an Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child; links between human rights, military aggression, ethnic cleansing, genocide, refugees and displaced women; reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Violence Against Women; the mandate of CEDAW; drafting an Optional Protocol to the Convention; an international convention against sexual exploitation; and cooperation between the UNHCHR and the UNHCR.

I.2. Ensure equality and non-discrimination under the law: customary laws and legal practices and the right of women to be judges; reproductive rights; violence resulting from traditional or customary practices; sexual orientation or lifestyle; the right of women to be members of professional organizations; and the human rights of women activists in the field of human rights.

I.3. To Achieve legal literacy: human rights education programmes for military, law enforcement personnel, and judiciary, legal and health professionals, as well as for women themselves.

SECTION J: INEQUALITY IN WOMEN'S ACCESS TO AND PARTICIPATION IN ALL COMMUNICATIONS SYSTEMS, ESPECIALLY THE MEDIA, AND THEIR INSUFFICIENT PROMOTION OF WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY [MOBILIZE THE MEDIA TO PORTRAY WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO SOCIETY] [RESPONSIBILITY OF THE MEDIA FOR THE IMPACT OF THEIR CONTENT ON WOMEN] [WOMEN AND THE

MEDIA]: The introduction to this section notes that: the media exerts a great influence, especially over children and adolescents; there are few women at decision-making levels; negative images of women do not accurately reflect their contributions to the world; and women should be more involved with the development of information systems. In the introduction, brackets remain around references to the negative effect of pornography and the control or influence of transnational corporations. Bracketed references in the strategic objectives include the following:

J.1. Participation and access of women to expression and decision-making in and through the media and new communication technologies: [ensure][promote] women's access; professional guidelines and rules of conduct; regulatory mechanisms; non-stereotyped portrayals of women; reflection of cultures, cultural values, and moral, ethical and religious systems; and reflecting indigenous [cultural values] in the media.

J.2. Promote a [positive][balanced and non-stereotyped] portrayal of women in the media: [positive][non-stereotyped] images of women; regulatory mechanisms; professional guidelines and codes of conduct; gender equality and non-stereotyped roles within the family; the role of women as mothers and nurturers of families; the rights of women as provided for in international human right instruments; encouraging the media to present women as contributors to and beneficiaries of the development process rather than as a sexual objects and commodities; professional guidelines and codes of conduct for violent, degrading and pornographic materials in the media; and the development of a new alternative media to address women's concerns.

SECTION K. [LACK OF ADEQUATE RECOGNITION AND SUPPORT FOR] [PROMOTE] [WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO MANAGING NATURAL RESOURCES AND SAFEGUARDING THE ENVIRONMENT] [WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT]: This section notes that women have an essential role to play in the development of sustainable and ecologically sound consumption and production patterns and natural resource management. It also notes that they have often played leadership roles in promoting an environmental ethic.

Bracketed references in the introduction include: the unsustainable pattern of consumption and production, particularly in industrialized countries; the relation between poverty and environmental degradation; and women's role in promoting sustainable development. Bracketed references in the strategic objectives include the following:

K.1. Involve women actively in environmental decision-making: empowerment of women as consumers and GEF projects for women.

K.2. Ensure integration of gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development: women's [control over resources].

K.3. Establish or strengthen mechanisms at all levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women: prohibition of [transboundary movement of hazardous toxic and radioactive material waste].

SECTION L. [PERSISTENT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AND VIOLATION OF THE RIGHTS OF][SURVIVAL, PROTECTION AND DEVELOPMENT OF] THE GIRL CHILD: This section notes that girls are often treated as inferior and that education, society and media reinforce gender stereotypes. Discrimination against the girl child in access to nutrition and physical and mental health services, and the devastating effect on children's health of sexual violence and sexually transmitted diseases, are also identified.

Bracketed text in the introduction includes references to: the rights and duties of parents; reasons that boys have fared better than girls in education, including customary attitudes, child labor and teenage pregnancies; responsible sexual behavior and sexual education; and trafficking in human organs and tissues. Bracketed references in the strategic objectives are as follows:

L.1. Eliminate all forms of discrimination: ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; equal succession and inheritance rights; laws ensuring that marriage is not entered into without the consent of the intending spouses; and universal human rights.

L.2. Eliminate negative cultural attitudes and practices: ensure that religious attire and practices are not the basis for discrimination at educational institutions; eliminate the root causes of son preference; and provide programmes to educate parents about sexual abuse, rape and incest.

L.3. Increase public awareness of the girl-child's value, needs and rights: international human rights instruments.

L.4. Eliminate discrimination in education, skills development and training: this section is bracket free.

L.5. Eliminate discrimination in health and nutrition: recognize the rights, duties and responsibilities of parents; sexual and reproductive health care programmes; education and outreach programmes regarding HIV/AIDS and STDs, [as contained in the ICPD report]; and family planning.

L.6. [Eliminate the economic exploitation of child labor and protect young girls at work]: minimum age for child [employment].

L.7. Eradicate violence against girls: effective actions and measures to enact and enforce legislation; gender sensitization training; female feticide/pre-natal sex selection; safe and confidential programmes; and medical and psychological support.

L.8. Educate about social, economic and political issues and problems: this section is bracket free.

L.9. [Strengthen [the role of] family [responsibility] to advance the status of the girl-child]: education and campaign for parents to enhance equal treatment and to ensure shared responsibilities between girls and boys in the family.

CHAPTER V. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

This section notes that, while implementation is primarily the responsibility of Governments, it is also dependent on institutions in the public, private and non-governmental sectors at all levels. It notes that implementation would be facilitated by transparency, and calls on organizations to promote an active policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective. Actions are specified for the national, sub-regional/regional and international levels. On the international level, most actions focus on the UN, including the GA, ECOSOC, the CSW, CEDAW, the UN Secretariat, the Division for the Advancement of Women, INSTRAW and UNIFEM.

Bracketed text include references to: elimination of sexual harassment, including treatment of women as sex objects; equity between women and men; the "Conference of Commitments" proposal; feminist movements; the Agenda for Peace and the Agenda for Development; a high-level post in the office of the S-G to advise the S-G on the integration of gender concerns throughout the UN system; a mid-term World Conference on Women; the CSW; provision of resources within the regular budget of the UN; INSTRAW; UNIFEM; WTO's contribution to implementation; and a mechanism for collaborating with NGOs to monitor implementation.

CHAPTER VI. FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS

This section notes that financial and human resources have been generally insufficient for the advancement of women and calls for political commitment to make available human and financial resources for the empowerment of women. National, regional and international level actions are identified and include: review of how women benefit from public-sector expenditures; mobilization of resources from regional development banks; 0.7 percent of GNP for ODA; and an invitation to developed and developing country partners to mutually consent to allocate 20% of ODA and 20% of

the national budget, respectively, to social programmes, taking into account a gender perspective.

Bracketed references include: mobilization of additional public and private resources, including from innovative sources of funding; feminist associations; funding mobilization by regional commissions; outcomes of previous summits and conferences regarding debt management; doubling the resources targeted towards eliminating disparities between women and men; paragraphs regarding INSTRAW and UNIFEM; and mobilization of resources from within the UN regular budget.

CLOSING PLENARY

Chair Licuanan opened the last Plenary of the 39th Session of the CSW and announced the formation of a Contact Group, to be chaired by Ms. Selma Ashipala (Namibia), to find a common understanding of the word "gender" in the context of the Platform for Action. Benin requested clarification about how and to whom the group would report. After a lengthy debate, Morocco proposed that the Chair of the Contact Group report directly to the FWCW. Chair Licuanan formally proposed establishing the group, which would meet from 15 May to 15 June in NY with the mandate of finding a common understanding of the word "gender" in the context of the Platform, and which would report directly to the FWCW. She noted that there would be a pre-conference on 2-3 September, at which the Chairperson could present the report. The proposal was accepted.

In draft resolution E/CN.6/1995/L.21, Provisional agenda and proposed organization of work of the FWCW, Australia proposed adding an additional sub-Item 8, entitled "National Priorities and Commitments," and the explanatory note: "Participating States are invited to make statements of national priorities and/or commitments, including specifying actions that they will take in their own countries to bring about change by the year 2000, taking into account the draft Platform of Action." The provisional agenda was adopted, as orally revised.

Delegates then turned their attention to the draft rules of procedure (E/CN.6/1995/L.3), the amendments to which had been circulated in English. Most of the amendments related to participation of the European Community at the FWCW. The EU noted that they did not consider their request to be a matter of precedent, but was considered on a case-by-case basis, depending on whether the EU could use transfers of competence. Following adoption, the US stressed the need to know whether the EC or the EU speaks for the member states, and on which issues.

The Plenary adopted the draft Platform, as contained in a variety of documents, including E/CN.6/1995/L.17, addenda 1, 2, 3 and 4 and corrigendum 1, 5, 7, 8-11, 13, 14 and 16. The US bracketed a sentence regarding the uncertain economic global climate. Peru made a statement on Section C (inequalities in health status), pointing out that Peru does not support abortion. The G-77/China said more work is required on peace and development. The Chair noted that there would be a two-week period during which corrections could be made to the text, to ensure that the documents accurately reflected the work of the informal negotiations.

The Chair then presented the outline of and draft texts for the Declaration, and proposed that they be sent to Beijing to serve as the basis for the Declaration, but noted that the document was informal. The CSW adopted the proposal. Document E/CN.6/1995/L.8 and addenda 1-3 (adoption of the report of the Commission on its 39th Session) were also adopted.

Secretary-General of the FWCW, Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, closed the Plenary by stating that it is clear that equality between women and men is an accepted, non-negotiable principle which permeates the entire Platform. She encouraged Governments to include NGO representatives and young people at the FWCW and to declare commitments and pledge resources.

A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE CSW

Procedural questions dominated the FWCW preparatory process, and are the focus of this analysis. However, it should be noted that an understanding of procedural issues is often incomplete without acknowledging the political or issue subtext that can shape "procedural" outcomes. Nevertheless, a number of internal and external forces presented significant challenges for the work of delegates. For example, delegates had not adequately met as a whole to conceptualize the issues under discussion and the document as a whole, preparation time before the conference began was limited, and the relationship between member States and civil society continued to evolve. A key factor that informed both the procedural (timing) and political (maintaining a fragile global consensus) content of the Session was its proximity to other relevant UN conferences, including Vienna, Cairo and Copenhagen. Attempts by some delegations to use the opportunity to "upgrade" reservations to earlier international agreements raises a serious question for the UN conference process — a question that also emerged after the reversals in the debates on the New International Economic Order in the 1980s.

The preparatory process was originally scheduled to take two weeks and the draft Platform was originally scheduled to be approximately twenty pages. The draft Platform, however, was a sixty-eight page text, which was released in February when delegates were preparing for the Social Summit. Late publication was compounded by the quality of the draft text. The draft Platform's language of victimization and under-developed integration of key demands into the context of the ICPD, the Vienna Declaration and WSSD were among the criticisms. A suggestion that key UN agencies should have been involved in expert drafting of the Platform was belatedly acknowledged during the Session when the Secretariat referred the section on health to personnel in WHO and UNFPA.

A major problem faced by the FWCW preparatory process was the lack of adequate issue definition. The 38th Session of the CSW

saw one stage of the Secretariat's draft text, and sent it back, expecting it to be influenced by the regional meetings. The regional meetings that took place during 1994 provided a chance for each region to identify their concerns and define the issues under discussion in their regional context, but delegates returned to the 39th Session of the CSW without a common approach. During opening statements at the 39th Session, it became clear that some delegations defined all of the issues as a violation of women's human rights, while others preferred to treat the issues within the sectoral categories into which the draft text separated them. This debate continued into the negotiating rooms.

The special nature of the agenda for Beijing produced inevitable tensions within and across regional blocs. The central demand for the empowerment of women to co-determine the discourses on political and economic processes continues to attract resistance in some regions. Within the G-77/China, some delegations were accused of attempting to use the power of the bloc to entrench conservative elements in the Platform, inserting qualifiers and "escape clauses" by calling for respect for cultural and philosophical conditions. The tensions were sufficient to create serious problems for the Philippines, 1995 coordinator for the G-77/China — problems serious enough to be taken up back in the capital.

The debate over the word "gender" revealed some of the fundamental differences and positions of delegations regarding the Beijing objectives. Indeed the debate could become a textbook case study on the state of global feminism and feminist epistemology. The issue raised central debates on the relation between language, knowledge and power; the political contest over "natural" and socially negotiated identity; and ideas informing the current "backlash" against some of the feminist advances made in the US. Several countries expressed discomfort with the term "gender," and asked to bracket the word throughout the text. Others felt that this would impede the process, and pointed to years of use of the term in the UN (and in contemporary academic literature) and the lack of any questioning until this point. Those who wanted to bracket the term suspected that there was a hidden/unacceptable agenda behind its use, for example, tolerance of non-heterosexual identities and orientation. The Bureau circulated and retracted a definition of gender as the socially constructed roles adopted by men and women. Some of those who objected to the brackets suggested that the obstruction had serious implications. During one of the floor debates on the term, the delegate from the EU suggested that those who had asked for brackets might have a greater motive than the one stated, and that perhaps they wanted to bracket "women" throughout the text. The clash between those who thought the draft Platform was taking the role of women too far and those who believed that others were trying to derail the process slowed down negotiations and frustrated the participants. This definitive question should have been aired and addressed earlier in the preparatory process. Some of the most interested parties in the debate are now represented in the Contact Group set up to arrive at an agreed understanding of the word "gender." As one senior US delegate put it, the likely outcome will be the introduction of some "positive fuzziness" to the text. It is to be hoped that the exercise will provide an important forum for those with differing conceptions to learn more about each other's approach to the Conference and issues at hand.

A number of possibly precedent-setting procedures are significant outcomes of this negotiation process. The non-governmental accreditation process was questioned from the first day, when accreditation of certain groups was challenged for their beliefs and exclusion of whole categories of NGOs, such as those from Taiwan or Tibet, were revealed. The CSW set up a small working group to address the issue, but the group reached an impasse. Interested parties therefore introduced a draft resolution in the CSW regarding NGO accreditation. China called for a vote on the resolution, and in doing so noted concern with the extraordinary, precedent-setting procedure. Many other delegates shared China's concern, but there were no dissenting votes. Delegates preferred to settle the matter and focus on other issues.

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There was talk of a draft resolution to establish a high-level post in the office of the Secretary-General to focus on gender matters. This would have had implications similar to the precedent-setting method of resolving the accreditation issue, given that the text under consideration was in a bracketed paragraph of the Platform. Problems with the nature of the proposed voluntary fund for the post prevented action on this in New York. However, high-level support, including that of Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali, exists. Together with the Australian initiative for a "Conference of Commitments," the proposal for a high-level post offered NGOs and delegations the promise of tangible breakthroughs in a programme that even Secretary-General Mongella found difficult to describe in terms of concrete initiatives.

Another outcome of this process was a critical focus on the evolving relationship between member States and civil society. The relationship between NGOs and delegates at the World Summit on Social Development was said to have signaled a new partnership between the two. Many at the CSW felt that NGOs' input was indispensable and represented a necessary creative approach, but NGOs felt shut out from the process at the 39th Session. Secretary-General Mongella characterized the situation as one where the delegates, as hosts, invited the NGOs into their sitting room, but then disappeared to the kitchen to cook, keeping their guests waiting and hungry. NGOs found it hard to keep up with the texts, since most of the document was negotiated in closed sessions. NGOs are looking forward to Beijing and have begun working to ensure a greater partnership there, but no new decision regarding NGO access had been made by the end of the CSW. Behind the accreditation and access debates is the UN's evolving role as the facilitator of an unprecedented dialogue involving the representatives of sovereign States and global civil society. Since Nairobi, women have been in the vanguard of this promising but

difficult marriage of an essentially American model of democratic lobbying and a forum with a built-in democratic deficit, which reflects the current global dispensation. This helps to explain the gap between expectations and realizations in the NGO camp, and the continued nervous response by some Government delegations. Some delegates expressed unease about the intensity of lobbying activities at the Session, and it was at times apparent that lobbying objectives might have been better served by more coordination. Any delays in addressing these issues may pose a threat to some of the advances made by civil society into the corridors of power. It has been suggested that this may well be one of the most significant issues to be taken up with serious intent as a result of the Beijing preparatory process.

The preparatory committee of the draft Platform for Action was faced with negotiating issues that have time and again evaded consensus in international fora. The Platform is an attempt to generate a women's perspective and agenda for action drawing on the fragile consensus reached in related areas, including human rights, reproductive rights and health care, and women's articulation of and participation in economics, politics and society. The politics of gender will help define and re-define numerous debates well into the next century. If Nairobi represented the moment for setting down a series of statements of intent, Beijing is intended to become the threshold of action and implementation. Despite all the internal and external challenges, delegates picked up a momentum in the last days of negotiations, and achieved some agreement. Chair Licuanan noted that delegates had negotiated the longest text in the shortest period of time in recent memory. The bracketed text, and remaining areas of contention, are well defined, and interim bilateral and multilateral informal discussions may be essential. The fate and momentum of the draft Platform for Action, whatever its weaknesses on questions of re-defining and remaking macroeconomic and political structures, whatever its achievements in advancing a comprehensive vision of the world through women's eyes, will largely be determined by the continued vigilance of one of the most innovative critical social movements in civil society.

FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN ON THE INTERNET

<http://www.iisd.ca/linkages/>

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) has developed an electronic clearinghouse on the Internet for information related to the Women's Conference. *Linkages: A Multimedia Resource for Environment and Development Policy Makers* is a freely accessible World Wide Web site that contains links to official documents in the UN computers, summaries from the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* and links that lead across the network to other on-line Beijing Conference collections (including the WEDO gopher and APC Women's Networking Outreach Program.) *Linkages* also includes comprehensive electronic holdings on other issue areas, including the Cairo Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development, Habitat II and the emerging international debate on sustainable production and consumption. For further information on how to access this free service and how to get the *Earth Negotiations Bulletin* delivered electronically, send e-mail to <enb@igc.apc.org>.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR BEFORE BEIJING

NGO ACCREDITATION: According to CSW resolution E/CN.6/1995/L.20, "Accreditation of NGOs to the FWCW," 28 April 1995 is the new deadline for receipt of applications and supporting materials for NGO accreditation.

CONTACT GROUP ON GENDER: The contact group established to discuss a common understanding of the use of "gender" in the Platform for Action will meet between 15 May and 15 June in NY, chaired by Ms. Selma Ashipala (Namibia). The results will be sent on to Beijing, and may be presented during pre-conference meetings (2-3 September).

DISCUSSIONS ON UNIFEM AND INSTRAW: These two UN agencies will be the subject of discussion in both ECOSOC and the fall GA session. Decisions taken in these fora are expected to inform negotiations in Beijing regarding the future of UNIFEM and INSTRAW, and their role in implementing the Platform.

CEDAW: Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on 22 May in New York.

COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD: The ninth session of the committee will meet 22 May to 9 June in Geneva.

NGO FORUM: 30 August to 8 September 1995, in Beijing, at a yet to be decided location (the original location was found to be structurally unsound at the end of March). Information on alternative venues is expected soon.