



CSW-44 HIGHLIGHTS: TUESDAY, 7 MARCH 2000

On Tuesday, 7 March 2000, Working Group I met in the morning to continue negotiation of bracketed text contained in the introduction of the proposed outcome document (E/CN.6/2000/L.1/Rev.1).

Working Group III reconvened in the afternoon to conclude discussion of Beijing +5 organizational matters and the list of speakers (E/CN.6/2000/PC/8, PC/9).

WORKING GROUP I

Working Group I met to discuss proposed revisions to the introduction of the outcome document regarding further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the PFA (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.1/Rev.1). The Group had before it the EU redraft text as a basis for negotiation.

On a paragraph referring to reviewing progress of the 12 critical areas of concern, the G-77/CHINA, supported by the HOLY SEE, proposed additional language elaborating on priority action to eliminate discrimination and empower women through equal access to productive resources and economic independence. The EU responded that the PFA already calls for empowering women and involving men in abolishing discrimination, and noted that specific actions are detailed in the document section on actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the PFA. JUSCANZ suggested a G-77/China-proposed reference to the elimination of practices discriminating against women would be better placed at the end of the paragraph rather than after the first sentence. The G-77/CHINA asked for time to consider this proposal. The EU reiterated that including text on equal access to productive resources and economic independence would effectively exclude other areas of the PFA. Chair Mlacak agreed the text should remain broad in the introduction and suggested coming back to these proposals at a later time.

The G-77/China proposed, and MEXICO supported, new text referring to, *inter alia*, the significance of national and regional particularities, states' sovereign responsibility toward PFA implementation and respect for various religious and ethical values. The EU opposed, stating that it repeats language contained in the PFA. The G-77/CHINA asked for time to consider these comments.

Chair Mlacak invited comments on the EU redraft paragraph referring to implementation of the PFA. MEXICO expressed its support for the text, reserving the possibility of later amendments. The G-77/CHINA presented alternative text, which refers to, *inter alia*: taking forward the PFA, national accountability and follow-up mechanisms, action for increased cooperation at the international level, and the need for an international environment favorable to full PFA implementation. She also emphasized adopting an integrated and balanced approach that encompasses policy, legislative and programme measures, without including reference to language proposed by the EU on mainstreaming a gender perspective into legislation, policies and programmes.

JUSCANZ proposed adding "measurable goals" to a list of measures supporting the dual strategy approach brought forward by the EU. She also suggested text stating that policies, legislation and programmes must respect and value the full diversity of women and recognize that many women face additional barriers because of, *inter alia*, their race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic class or status as indigenous people migrants, displaced people, or refugees.

MEXICO submitted new text and asked for a compilation document of all proposals. She said the proposal highlights the close link between CEDAW and the PFA, noting that CEDAW constitutes a legal commitment while the PFA is a political commitment.

Delegates requested time to consult and Chair Mlacak adjourned the meeting at 12:00 pm.



WORKING GROUP III

Working Group III convened to conclude discussion of organizational matters and the list of speakers for the Beijing +5 Special Session (E/CN.6/2000/PC/8, PC/9).

On the status of first ladies in drawing up the list of Plenary speakers, Chair Ostrauskaite noted that first ladies are not placed at the same rank as heads of state, vice presidents, crown princes and princesses or heads of government, and added that delegations should decide on the rank of their speaker. A delegate asked about the status of queens, stating it would be a breach of protocol if queens fell in the same category as crown princes and explained that her national constitution places the queen above princes, although she is not quite a head of state. Chair Ostrauskaite requested the delegate provide clarification of the queen's status to the Secretariat. She noted that the drawing of lots for Plenary speakers would take place on a date to be determined in early May.

Regarding a Bureau proposal to add members of the UN system and the Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women onto the list of speakers, one delegate requested that language regarding speakers in the Plenary debate be amended to refer only to the heads of programmes, specialized agencies and other entities within the UN system. Several delegates supported the changes, noting this form of participation would contribute to the success of the Special Session. One delegate asked if this would affect the list of Plenary speakers, and Chair Ostrauskaite clarified that Member States would speak first and so it would have no impact. She then read the text, which also states that representatives of the UN system may make statements in the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Whole. A delegate called for an explicit reference that these arrangements will not set a precedent for other GA Special Sessions.

On a proposal inviting the Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to participate in the Plenary debate, delegates were informed that there is no precedent for the head of a treaty body to speak during a Special Session. Several delegations supported the proposal and another delegate offered additional wording to acknowledge the role of CEDAW in contributing to PFA implementation and to clarify that this does not constitute a precedent for other GA Special Sessions.

Pending GA approval of two resolutions on NGO participation at the Special Session, Chair Ostrauskaite presented text for insertion in the draft provisional agenda. The text would allow a limited number of NGOs with ECOSOC consultative status to make statements in the Plenary debate, and NGO representatives to make statements in the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Whole. The text further states that this will in no way create a precedent for other GA Special Sessions.

A delegate then urged the Secretariat to set a date for the drawing of lots for the Plenary speakers and called for a date at least one month prior to the Special Session. Chair Ostrauskaite said the date would be set during the first week of May, taking into consideration the different issues faced by regional groups.

On the issue of whether or not to include panel sessions on best practices related to gender equality within the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Whole, Chair Ostrauskaite said delegations have agreed that the

panels should take place informally, and would be coordinated by the Chair of the PrepCom in consultation with interested delegations. Delegates requested further information on the location and level of participation in the panels. Referring to a question about documentation of the panels, Chair Ostrauskaite clarified that any information resulting from them would be circulated as non-papers and therefore would not be reflected in the documentation of the Special Session. A delegate asked whether the documents could be circulated in a more formal manner, without becoming part of the official outcome document of the Special Session. Chair Ostrauskaite said that since the panels would be informal side events, any documentation that resulted could not be officially distributed, and directed additional questions to the Secretariat. She asked that names of possible participants in the panels be submitted to the Bureau.

On the difficulty faced by NGOs in obtaining visas to attend the Special Session despite official invitations, a delegate said her government was working closely with embassies and consulates around the world to facilitate the issuing of visas both to NGOs accredited to the Special Session and to those who are not accredited but plan to participate in parallel events. Delegates then requested that the Secretariat make arrangements to facilitate the issuance of grounds passes during the Special Session. Chair Ostrauskaite said there would be a briefing for missions on this issue in May.

Suggesting that pending issues and questions be resolved at a later date, possibly in April or May, Chair Ostrauskaite said Working Group III had finished its task and adjourned the session at 5:00 pm.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The anticipated kick-off of text negotiations was put off once again, as at least one regional group struggles to forge consensus on alternative text proposals. Speculation about the efficiency of the group's leadership is echoing in the halls. Some participants questioned whether fallout from unusually hard-line negotiations during the recent Commission on Social Development meeting is now delaying any sign of progress on the Beijing +5 talks.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUPS: Working Group I will reconvene at 11:00 am and 3:00 pm in Conference Room 1 to continue discussion of outstanding paragraphs contained in the introduction of the outcome document. Working Group II, chaired by A. K. Bhattacharjee (India), is expected to meet at 3:00 pm in Conference Room 6 to discuss actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing PFA (E/CN.6/2000/L.1/Rev.1).

SPECIAL EVENT: To celebrate the First International Women's Day Observance of the New Millennium, the UN will be hosting a Town Hall Meeting on "Women Uniting for Peace" from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm in Conference Room 4. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan is expected to open the special event.