WSSD+5 PREPCOM HIGHLIGHTS
THURSDAY, 13 APRIL 2000

In the morning, afternoon and evening, Working Group I discussed Commitment 9, on resource allocation, and Commitment 7, on accelerated development in Africa and the LDCs. In the afternoon and evening, Working Group II debated Commitment 2, on poverty eradication, and Commitment 4, on social integration.

WORKING GROUP I

COMMITTMENT 9: RESOURCE ALLOCATION: In 112 (b), on strengthening international support for debt management capacity in HIPC and developing countries, delegates agreed to use language from GA Resolution A/54/202 and “to call upon” international community support. In 112 (b) bis, the G-77/CHINA proposed new text on taking measures to address the debt problem of middle-income developing countries. Brackets remain, pending US reflection on the “new concept” and EU consideration of “respectable documents.” In 112 (c), on urging donor countries to fulfill the agreed ODA target of 0.7% of GNP, JAPAN, the EU and the US proposed urging donor countries to strive to fulfill this as soon as possible. The G-77/CHINA preferred a target of 2005. The HOLY SEE proposed language on striving to fulfill yet-to-be attained internationally agreed targets. Proposals remain bracketed. In 112 (d), on encouraging interested countries to implement the 20/20 initiative, NORWAY proposed, with EU support and G-77/CHINA opposition, deleting “interested.” The G-77/CHINA opposed proposals to add: by enhancing the coordination of efforts (the US); by establishing poverty eradication indicators for monitoring (Switzerland); and by monitoring and discussing implementation in relevant fora (the EU). Delegates agreed the paragraph after deleting “monitoring” in the EU amendment and inserting reference to the Oslo and Hanoi Consensus. The US and the EU opposed 112 (e), on preferential interest rates for social development, noting the forum was inappropriate and that preferential rates already exist. The text is bracketed pending discussion by the G-77/China. After debate about a reference to land-locked and transit countries in 112 (f), on providing these countries with support to implement the WSSD, Chair Maquieira agreed to research precedent language. Delegates agreed to 112 (f), bis, on providing these countries with support to implement the 20/20 initiative, NORWAY proposed, with EU support and G-77/CHINA opposition, deleting “interested.” The G-77/CHINA opposed proposals to amend: by enhancing the coordination of efforts (the US); by establishing poverty eradication indicators for monitoring (Switzerland); and by monitoring and discussing implementation in relevant fora (the EU). Delegates agreed the paragraph after deleting “monitoring” in the EU amendment and inserting reference to the Oslo and Hanoi Consensus. The US and the EU opposed 112 (e), on preferential interest rates for social development, noting the forum was inappropriate and that preferential rates already exist. The text is bracketed pending discussion by the G-77/China. After debate about a reference to land-locked and transit countries in 112 (f), on providing these countries with support to implement the WSSD, Chair Maquieira agreed to research precedent language. Delegates agreed to 112 (g), on implementing commitments regarding the special needs and vulnerabilities of the small island developing states. Delegates deleted 112 (h), on assisting EIT countries to develop progressive and efficient tax systems, and paragraph 113, on the UN Ad Hoc Group of Experts on International Taxation Cooperation promoting international cooperation on tax matters.

In paragraph 114, on improving methods of controlling the use of available funds to benefit groups with special needs, the HOLY SEE suggested reference to vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. The EU proposed 114 bis, on cooperation between governments and civil society to increase efficiency and effectiveness of resources for health and education. The G-77/CHINA proposed, and the US and EU opposed, merged language on transparency and accountability for greater efficiency and effectiveness. The US proposed substituting the G-77/China proposal for 114 and including a reference to improved methods of monitoring expenditures. The G-77/CHINA objected to “monitoring.” Brackets remain on the text.

COMMITTMENT 7: AFRICA AND THE LDCS: Delegates agreed on chapeau language based on the Copenhagen Declaration. CANADA proposed 86 bis, on encouraging efforts to promote sustainable human development that integrate pro-poor economic growth, universal access to basic social services, transparent and accountable governance, and sustainable development. The G-77/CHINA preferred omitting reference to sustainable human development. The text remains bracketed.

In paragraph 87, on encouraging international efforts to establish favorable conditions for integration and participation, the G-77/CHINA supported, and the EU and US opposed, references to favorable conditions, equitable integration into the global economy and participation in the multilateral trade system. The EU and the US supported language on promoting full integration and participation and deleting reference to the multilateral trade system. The EU suggested EU-Africa partnership language on fostering smooth and gradual integration to promote sustainable development. TURKEY suggested an UNCTAD 10 reference to successful integration. Referring to GA Resolution A/54/198 and Copenhagen language, the G-77/CHINA proposed, and the EU opposed, language on creating an enabling environment to facilitate integration for equitable participation in the multilateral trade system. Proposals remain bracketed.

In 87 (a), on implementing debt relief consistent with the HIPC initiative, the G-77/CHINA supported a Norwegian proposal amended by the EU on “innovative” debt relief initiatives for LDCs and proposed reference to debt cancellation. JAPAN and the US objected. The text remains bracketed. In 87 (b), on improving market access for export products, the G77/CHINA proposed reference to eliminating all trade barriers and, inter alia, duty-free treatment, quota elimination and preferential schemes for their products. The HOLY SEE supported Norway’s proposal to reduce tariffs. JAPAN, NEW ZEALAND and the HOLY SEE, preferred “tariff-free” to “duty-free.” The US, NORWAY and the EU (ad referendum) supported an amended G-77/China text referring to including by eliminating, inter
Delegates accepted paragraph 26, on including, inter alia, access to productive resources and micro-finance in pro-poor growth strategies. Delegates deleted paragraph 25, on medium-term measures to eradicate poverty. In 27 ter, on social protection systems, delegates supported references to, inter alia, best practices and community-based innovative schemes. Chapeau language was agreed. Discussion was deferred on 27 ter (a), on social protection for the uninsured, and 27 ter (b), on social security.

COMMITMENT 4: SOCIAL INTEGRATION: Delegates agreed on paragraph 51, on improving participation, cooperation and dialogue; deleted 53 bis, on social development advisory and monitoring mechanisms; and agreed on paragraph 54, on voluntarism. Delegates bracketed 55 bis, on the role and partnership accountabilities of non-profit organizations. In paragraph 57, on countering certain information dissemination, the HOLY SEE added pornography and specified religious intolerance. CANADA added sexism. Alternatives for “ageism” were not decided and the additions remain bracketed.

In paragraph 59, on measures to eliminate racism, the US proposed deleting text on resources to support future conferences. The paragraph was agreed. In paragraph 59 bis, on violence against women, the US and the G-77/CHINA supported reference to gender-based violence. The paragraph was agreed. INDIA stated, and all agreed, that discussion of text on indigenous people, including 59 ter, 21 bis and 21 ter, be deferred pending negotiations in Geneva. In paragraph 60, on aging, the US opposed an EU reference on supporting preparation of a POA for the Second World Assembly on Aging. Discussion was deferred.

In paragraph 61, on empowering people with disabilities, delegates deleted reference to environmental measures. The paragraph was agreed. Paragraph 61 bis, on employment for people with disabilities, was agreed. The EU bracketed paragraph 62, on refugees and displaced persons. The US deferred discussion on paragraphs 63 and 64, on migrants. Delegates agreed on paragraph 65, on supporting efforts to counter drugs, subject to nomenclature checks. Delegates deferred paragraph 65 bis, on substance abuse, and noted Canada’s new paragraph 66 bis, on addressing the causes of armed conflict. Brackets remain within paragraph 67, on strengthening UN promotion of social integration in its post-conflict strategies. In paragraph 69, on social protection measures, delegates deleted the chapeau but retained sub-paragraphs pending relocation.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The PrepCom entered its final hours yesterday with a scramble for missing documents in Working Group I. Frustration broke in one bloc over proposals that couldn’t be backed with previous agreed text — or at least text that could be quickly located. Without paper in hand, delegates resorted to animated face time on the floor that sometimes broke into diplomatically emotional outbursts. Nevertheless, two weeks of difficult talks close with delegates and NGOs voicing optimism on some key issues, including: debt relief, governance, corporate conduct, resources, taxation and strengthening the UN system. Delegates sailed smoothly through text on economic sanctions, and the currency transaction tax clung to the document. The best in-the-spirit-of-flexibility phrase: growth-enhancing, poverty-reducing economic reforms. Most predictable odds: Whether the World Solidarity Fund will survive the final cut. The most arcane diplomatic quibble: Is UNCTAD an international institution or just a conference? In the words of Chair Maquieira, if it walks like a duck…

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUPS: Working Group I will meet in morning and afternoon sessions in Conference Room 2. Working Group II will meet in morning and afternoon sessions in Conference Room 5.

PLENARY: The Plenary will convene at 4:30 pm.