



Earth Summit Bulletin

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PREPCOM HIGHLIGHTS TUESDAY EVENING, 24 MARCH 1992

FINANCIAL RESOURCES (PLENARY)

After a week's interval the Plenary returned Tuesday night to discuss financial resources. This meeting was convened by Vice-Chair John Bell, at the request of the G-77. Pakistan, on behalf of the G-77, presented a proposal that negotiations on finance resume at the ambassadorial level in a small contact group. Bell stated that negotiations should concentrate on the means of implementation. The US stated that the industrialized countries must generate new and additional financial resources from various sources, both public and private, since existing financial resources are insufficient. The US went on to say that it is committed to working with the other industrialized countries to preserve the environment within a context of sustainable development in a spirit of true partnership. This statement was considered by observers as a major policy shift by the US government.

Bell, somewhat tongue-in-cheek, announced that Tommy Koh had requested a final text on financial resources by 4:00 pm the next day. The group began work on the L.41/Rev.1 compilation text that represents the original G-77 text combined with the proposed amendments by other countries. Bell moved directly to "Means of implementation". Debate focused on three areas, the first related to wording used to describe the beneficiaries of financial resources was disputed by the G-77, which opposed the use of the US wording "countries in need of assistance". In turn, the term "developing countries" was not acceptable to those countries calling themselves the "transitional countries" (the former Soviet bloc). The second related to the US wording "country-based mechanisms" to describe mechanisms for financing, which was not acceptable to the G-77, that would like to say that all mechanisms, including but not limited to "country-based mechanisms", should be provided in a coordinated and effective partnership. The third problem area pertained to the proposal to include "in additionality" in the title "Partnership in Sustainable Development".

ATMOSPHERE (WORKING GROUP I)

Working Group I met Tuesday evening to discuss atmosphere. The G-77 and China had submitted a revised draft of PC/100/Add.14 to the Chair earlier in the week. Even though this text did not yet include an activities section, it was agreed that "in the spirit of compromise" the G-77 paper would be used as the basis for negotiation.

Section A, "Addressing the uncertainties: securing the scientific basis for decision making," was agreed upon after extensive language changes were made. Discussion of Section B, "Promoting sustainable development that does not adversely impact the atmosphere," was not completed. One of the contentious issues was the use of the word "lifestyle." The US argued that it was contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights for governments to determine citizens' lifestyles. This area will be resolved pending decisions in consumption chapter of Agenda 21. Many countries supported the proposal that "lifestyle and consumption" be set out in a separate area of the document. The Chair will consult with PrepCom Chair Tommy Koh on this matter.

EARTH CHARTER (WORKING GROUP III)

The Earth Charter contact group met Tuesday night to continue its reading of the Secretariat's compilation text. The atmosphere within the contact group was generally positive and, as a result, they were able to complete their first reading of the document. As with the preceding day, the objective was to reach agreement on the underlying approaches and concepts of the principles. No attempt was made to reach agreement on actual language.

PREPCOM HIGHLIGHTS WEDNESDAY, 25 MARCH 1992

ATMOSPHERE (WORKING GROUP I)

Working Group I met yesterday morning to continue negotiations on the proposed revision to PC/100/Add.14 by the G-77. Vice-Chair Bo Kjellén announced the crowded work plan for the next two days and suggested that if the weather improved the delegates might choose to meet outdoors, due to the shortage of meeting rooms. Kjellén said that he had consulted with PrepCom Chair Tommy Koh and that paragraphs dealing with "lifestyles" would be taken to the Plenary for discussion. He then skipped the rest of the section on consumption patterns and lifestyles and moved directly to the objectives in the "transportation" section of the programme area, "Promoting sustainable development that does not adversely impact the atmosphere." This section was accepted after it was agreed that the objectives should be broadened to include various transport systems (Canada) and promote environmentally sound road systems (Japan). Consensus language was found for the objectives in sections in this programme area on "industrial development", and "terrestrial and marine resources development and land-use". Text on technology was left bracketed until the Plenary completed its discussion on this topic. The US held the position that some greenhouse gases, such as CO₂, are not pollutants and the Chair suggested that a smaller group meet to find language acceptable to all.

The last programme area covered was "Preventing stratospheric ozone depletion." Canada had been asked by the Chair on Monday to work with other countries to find new language for the "Objectives" section. Their new text included recognition of the issue and the need to deal with this on an international basis. Due to lack of time, this and several other issues, including the last objectives of the programme area on transboundary atmospheric pollution was delegated to a contact group.

FRESHWATER RESOURCES (WORKING GROUP II)

Vice-Chair Vincente Sanchez of Chile opened Working Group II's meeting on freshwater resources with an update on the work of the contact groups. One contact group worked on the entire document (PC/100/Add.22) and a sub-contact group was established to deal with issues related to transboundary waters. The group incorporated many of the recommendations from the Dublin Conference on Water and the Environment into the text.

The Vice-Chair started the morning's discussion with paragraph 17 (the first paragraph in Programme Area A.). All paragraphs in the document that deal with finance or targets and timetables will remain in brackets pending the results of the Plenary's discussion of these issues. Brackets also remain in paragraph 23(o) (implementation of activities to improve integrated water resources management) due to a disagreement on the use of the term "implementation mechanisms" or "mechanisms for cooperation".

Overall, very few amendments were made to the text that emerged from the contact group. Most of the text on transboundary waters was accepted by all delegations without amendment.

The Vice-Chair then moved to paragraphs 1-16 that make up the Introduction and the General Objectives sections. This text had not been negotiated in the contact group and the compilation text was simply a listing of all proposed written amendments. Negotiation began with paragraph 7, which deals with the access to adequate supplies of water of good quality. After much discussion, Colombia's proposed text was accepted for the paragraph with amendments by New Zealand and Ethiopia. The group then discussed an amendment proposed by Mexico to include four "Guiding Principles" from the Dublin Statement. The Chair, supported by India, Colombia, Kenya and Brazil, stated that Agenda 21 was not the place for these principles. The Nordic countries,

the EC, Canada and the US supported Mexico's amendment. The Chair finally asked that interested countries convene, with Denmark as the coordinator, to agree upon a text that can be brought back to the Plenary.

ROLE OF MAJOR GROUPS (PLENARY)

The session began as a formal Plenary to hear statements from four government ministers. Vice-Chair Leon Mazairac then began work on the major groups chapter of Agenda 21 (PC/100/Add.13) and allowed interventions from representatives of four major groups: trade unions, business and industry, scientists and farmers. He announced that the group would work "article-by-article" to "the bitter end." He also announced that the Secretariat had produced a clean text on the programme area for women, based on the discussions held Monday.

The discussion then began on Programme Area II, "Strengthening the role of youth". Sweden proposed a new section in the programme area on youth to include children. By 6:00 pm only seven and one-half paragraphs were covered. The Chair established a contact group that will meet today to discuss the many unresolved paragraphs.

There was resistance among some governments regarding the establishment of youth positions on government delegations and within government ministries (paragraph 24(a)) and to promoting dialogue with youth and youth organizations in evaluating national development plans (paragraph 24(b)). Erin Hannah, a youth delegate from Canada, proposed a number of amendments that would strengthen or clarify the text.

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 pm and was scheduled to resume at 8:00 pm to complete this programme area and move on to the programme area on indigenous peoples.

EARTH CHARTER (WORKING GROUP III)

The Earth Charter contact group intended to meet yesterday morning. The meeting was postponed to provide the G-77 with the opportunity to review and elaborate its position to the Secretariat's compilation text. This exercise led to a G-77 approach paper that distills previous days' discussions vis-a-vis each principle, as enumerated in the compilation text. The approach paper was tabled yesterday afternoon when the Contact group reconvened in an informal session to undertake a second reading of the compilation text, while taking into account the G-77's proposed reformulations.

The objective of the afternoon session was to identify those principles that were ripe for consensus and that could, in turn, be delegated to a smaller group for drafting. Those principles that were still contentious were set aside for further discussion by the larger contact group. Under the skillful and efficient leadership of Mr. Sarwal, the Indian Co-Chair, the group was able to identify 12 areas where agreement had been or was close to being reached. These are: the Stockholm Principle; integration of environmental protection into the development process; special needs of developing countries; poverty; capacity-building; public participation; sustainable agricultural development policies; prior no-

tification; differentiated responsibilities; the role of women and indigenous people; and peaceful dispute resolution.

By the close of the meeting, Co-Chair Holthe of Norway proposed that a smaller group reconvene Wednesday evening to commence drafting on the so-called "easy" principles and to produce an "honest-to-God/likely-to-fly-in-the-bigger-group" bracketed text. By the end of last night's session, the group should have decided on the next course of action. Working Group III Chair Bedrich Moldan has requested that the group submit a work product to him no later than Saturday at 1:00 pm. For the first time in four weeks it appears as if Earth Charter negotiations may actually commence in earnest.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY AT PREPCOM

PLENARY: The Plenary is scheduled to continue discussion on human settlements. The Secretariat's compilation text is not expected to present problems. One major improvement is the recognition of the urban plight in developed as well as developing countries.

WORKING GROUP I: Working Group I is completing work on many of its Agenda 21 chapters. An informal session will convene this afternoon to conclude work on land resources, integrated management of fragile ecosystems, sustainable agriculture and desertification and drought. The Chair, Bo Kjellén, will attempt to expedite proceedings, leaving some sections in brackets to be decided at next week's Plenary.

WORKING GROUP II: The Working Group II Bureau met last night to discuss the group's plan of action for the remainder of the week. The group is tentatively scheduled to discuss oceans in an informal session this afternoon. It is possible that one of the other Agenda 21 chapters under Working Group II's mandate may be discussed since the contact group on living marine resources has not completed its work.

EARTH CHARTER (WORKING GROUP III): The Earth Charter contact group will meet to continue its work on the Secretariat's compilation text. If drafting commenced last night, it will continue today around those principles close to agreement.

INSTITUTIONS (WORKING GROUP III): Working Group III will meet this morning to continue its review of the Chair's draft Agenda 21 chapter, CRP.3. While the text represents the broad consensus that has been reached to date, nevertheless countries may continue to call for the establishment of a contact group.

SURVEY OF EXISTING INSTRUMENTS (WORKING GROUP III): Working Group III will meet this evening to review text that has been prepared by the Vice-Chair from the Philippines.

SCHEDULE OF PREPCOM IV EVENTS

OFFICIAL MEETINGS

March 26	10:00 am	UN Conference Room 4	Plenary (Human Settlements)	Open
March 26	10:00 am	UN Conference Room 1	Working Group III (Legal & Institutional Issues)	Open
March 26	3:00 pm	UN Conference Room 1	Working Group I (Land Resources)	Open
March 26	3:00 pm	UN Conference Room 4	Working Group II	Open
March 26	8:00 pm	UN Conference Room 4	Plenary	Open
March 26	8:00 pm	UN Conference Room 1	Working Group III (Survey of Existing Agreements)	Open

NGO AND OTHER MEETINGS

March 26	9:00 am - 10:00 am	UN Conference Room 1	NGO Strategy Session	NGOs
March 26	10:00 am	Outside UN Conference Room C	Canadian NGO Strategy Session	Canadian NGOs
March 26	10:00 am - 11:00 am	UN Conference Room C	Women's Caucus	NGOs
March 26	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm	CCUN 10th Floor Conf. Room 10H	NGO Working Group on Forests	NGOs
March 26	12:00 pm - 2:00 pm	CCUN 8th Floor Grumman Room	NGO Working Group on Education	NGOs
March 26	1:00 pm	UN Conference Room (TBA)	Canadian Delegation Briefing for Canadian NGOs	Canadian NGOs
March 26	1:00 pm - 2:00 pm	UN Conference Room C	Technical Briefing on "Forests as Global Carbon Sinks"	Delegations & NGOs
March 26	1:00 pm - 3:00 pm	CCUN 10th Floor Conf. Room 10H	NGO Working Group on Militarism Environment & Development	NGOs
March 26	1:30 pm - 2:30 pm	CCUN 2nd Floor Hospitality Center	NGO Orientation	New NGOs
March 26	2:00 pm - 4:30 pm	The Baha'i Center on 866 UN Plaza - Conf. Room on the 1st Floor	NGO Working Group on Finance	NGOs
March 26	6:00 pm - 8:30 pm	UN Conference Room 2	NGO Government Dialogue & NGO Plenary "Indigenous Peoples and UNCED"	NGOs
March 26	7:00 pm - 8:00 pm	ECOSOC Chamber Room 2nd Floor	NGO Meeting with the Heads of Nordic Delegations	NGOs