



## UNCED HIGHLIGHTS 1 JUNE 1992

### PRE-CONFERENCE CONSULTATIONS

UNCED Pre-Conference Consultations started yesterday morning in Conference Room 4 of RioCentro. This was the first of two sessions where delegates are making important decisions regarding UNCED's structure and its procedural mechanisms. The recommendations that will emerge from these consultations today will be forwarded to the Plenary for adoption on 3 June.

UNCED Secretary-General Maurice Strong opened the morning session and quickly moved to the first substantive item on the agenda, which was the election of the presiding officer of the Pre-Conference Consultations. The delegates easily elected Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Lafer to the post, who, according to many delegates, was the pleasant surprise of the morning. Lafer, a former jurist and university professor from the University of São Paulo, proved linguistically adept and good humored during the morning's meeting. With an extensive background in international relations, Lafer is also familiar with UN General Assembly's Second Committee and its politics, having served as Chair of the United Nations Commission for Science and Technical Development (an open-ended commission that is now an expert body that reports to ECOSOC).

The next item on the agenda consisted of a list of a number of recommendations to the Conference on the following procedural matters: adoption of the rules of procedure; election of officers; adoption of the agenda; organization of work, including establishment of the Main Committee of the Conference; signature of Conventions; concluding events; credentials of representatives of the Conference and appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee; and the report of the Conference. Due to a lack of substantive logistical information and a long procedural debate on the Summit portion of the Conference, the delegates were unable to complete discussion on most of the items on the agenda.

The next item, adoption of the rules of procedure, was dealt with quickly, with the rules of procedure for UNCED having been adopted pursuant to decisions taken at PrepComs III and IV. The document, "Provisional Rules of Procedure," (A/CONF.151/2), sets out the provisional rules of procedure that will be adopted as the third agenda item on Wednesday. These rules were developed at PrepCom III and forwarded to the Conference, after being endorsed by the 46th session of the United Nations General Assembly in December 1991. PrepCom IV adopted three draft decisions, entitled "Observer status in the work of the Preparatory Committee for the UNCED and of the UNCED for associate members of regional commissions", "Status of the European Economic Community at UNCED" and "Draft provisional rules of procedure of the Conference". These decisions were adopted

by the UN General Assembly in April and the provisional rules as amended are reflected in A/CONF.151/2.

The next item on Monday's agenda dealt with recommendations for the election of officers, including the President of the Conference, 39 Vice-Presidents, an ex officio Vice-President from the host country, a Rapporteur-General and a Chairman for the Main Committee. As expected, Brazilian President Fernando Collor de Mello was nominated as the President of the Conference and will preside over the Plenary. Brazilian Foreign Minister Celso Lafer was nominated as the ex officio Vice-President and will preside over the Plenary in the absence of President Collor.

Nominations were then tabled for the 39 Vice-Presidents. The Latin American group nominated Argentina, Columbia, Costa Rica, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela, Brazil and Jamaica. The Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG) nominated Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Switzerland, United Kingdom and the United States. The Eastern European Group nominated Czechoslovakia, Poland, Russian Federation, and the Ukraine. Both the Asian and African groups, however, had greater difficulty in reaching agreement on their nominees. The Asian group tabled 12 nominations for their eight seats. The nominees were China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Japan, Republic of Korea, Maldives, Malaysia, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Sri Lanka, and Vanuatu. The Asian group met later in the day to reach final agreement on its eight nominees. The African group initially tabled 11 nominations for their nine seats. After the Chair of the African group announced the list of nominees, one of the African countries expressed his displeasure that his country had not been nominated and insisted that it be added to the list. Thus, the 12 African nominees now include Tanzania, Kenya, Benin, Guinea Bissau, Senegal, Tunisia, Nigeria, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Gabon, Zaire and Mauritania. The African group met later in the day to reach final agreement on its nine nominees.

Most of the morning's session was devoted to a discussion on the organization of work for the Conference. The provisional schedule for the Conference is as follows:

- The Plenary will hold a general debate between 3 and 11 June;
- The Main Committee will meet from 3 to 10 June;
- Heads of State or Government will participate in the concluding events, including the "Summit segment" of the Conference, which will take place from 12 to 14 June.

The Summit portion of the Conference proved to be the most problematic of the morning's agenda items. The dates of 12 and 13 June have been set aside for heads of State or Government who wish to address the Conference in the Plenary Hall. Only Heads of State or Government may take the floor during this period and the time available allows for only one statement from each State. Since a growing number of Heads of State or Government are indicating their interest in addressing the conference, their statements will have to be limited. Monday

morning's discussions addressed the appropriate time allotments for each speaker. The debate over the logistics and time factors in accommodating the 96 Heads of States currently on the Speakers List (which is open until 6:00 pm on Wednesday) are proving to be quite contentious. Many delegates could not accept a five minute time limit. Several requested more time and even recommended extending the length of the meetings. One delegate recommended that if one Head of State were to speak on behalf of a regional group, he or she could be given additional speaking time. Another delegate commented after the meeting that the participants were trying to decide whether the Heads of State would use the two days allotted to the Summit to talk to television audiences at home or, rather, to each other here in Rio. Another delegate made the point that since shorter speeches could be televised in their entirety, it would be preferable to adhere to the proposed five-minute time limit. The tension broke when one delegate suggested the idea of tradeable talking permits. Discussion on the Summit schedule is expected to continue today.

Discussion on a number of agenda items, including the signature of conventions and the concluding ceremonies, was postponed since there was a lack of logistical information. Due to time constraints and the fact that regional groups had to meet to resolve outstanding issues, the remaining items on the agenda are to be discussed this morning.

## THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY AT UNCED

### PRE-CONFERENCE CONSULTATIONS:

The second session of these consultations will begin this morning. The delegates are expected to complete the remaining outstanding items on the agenda. Issues to be resolved include the following:

- **Election of Officers:**

Once the African and Asian groups submit their final list of nominees, the entire list of 39 Vice Presidents can then be forwarded to the Plenary for approval on Wednesday. The Rapporteur-General, who is expected to be Ahmad Djoghla of Algeria, and the Chairman of the Main Committee, who is expected to be Tommy Koh of Singapore, will also be nominated today.

- **Signature of Conventions:**

One of the outstanding issues pertains to the registration process for the signing of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Conventions. Delegations want to be able to register in advance for specific time slots to ensure sufficient time to make the necessary arrangements for media coverage when their Heads of State, Government or Delegation sign the Conventions. Since this information was not available on Monday, discussion had to be postponed until today.

- **Concluding Events:**

The delegates must decide the format for the closing ceremonies as well as the form of the final documents to be signed by the Heads of State or Government. The question is whether the Heads of State will sign a package containing Agenda 21, the Rio Declaration and the Statement of Forest Principles or, rather, a statement that simply refers to those documents.

- **Credentials Committee:**

One of the rules of procedure provides that a Credentials Committee of nine members be appointed at the beginning of the Conference and that its composition be based on that of the Credentials Committee of the UN General Assembly. The current composition of the Committee consists of the following States: Belgium, Belize, Chile, China, Lesotho, Singapore,

Togo, Russian Federation and the United States. At UNCED, the Credentials Committee is expected to deal with a number of issues including: the accreditation of Heads of State; whether ministers or vice presidents can speak on behalf of their Head of State during the Summit portion of the Conference, if their Head of State is not present; and potential problems regarding country representation at the Summit (i.e., where the geo-political nature of a country is in question, as in the case of Yugoslavia).

### LIKE-MINDED COUNTRIES' DECLARATIONS:

The governments of Austria, the Netherlands and Switzerland have privately circulated separate "Like-Minded Country" declarations that would commit signatory countries to reduce emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and other greenhouse gases that are not controlled by the Montreal Protocol at 1990 levels by the year 2000. These targets, combined with stronger reporting measures, are intended to show that some countries intend to go beyond the Climate Change Convention that was agreed to in New York last month. These three declarations are currently being integrated into a single declaration that will be finalized at a luncheon on Wednesday. Although the exact mechanisms have not been worked out, this declaration will probably be available for signing by Heads of State alongside the Climate Change Convention during the Conference. This initiative has support from the Small Island states.

### IN THE CORRIDORS:

During the closing days of PrepCom IV, while Conference Services was overloaded with documents awaiting translation, one document slipped into the system and only emerged one week after PrepCom IV concluded. This document may play an important role in the financial resources negotiations to begin this week. A/CONF.151/PC/L.75 is the draft text on financial resources submitted by Andrés Rosenthal, the issue coordinator from Mexico, during the final week at PrepCom IV. This document was the product of discussions that were carried out during the final week under PrepCom Chair Tommy Koh and Rosenthal. These discussions began with representatives from some of the EC countries, the Nordics and Japan, who were later joined by representatives from the G-77. As a result of disagreement between the G-77 and the EC over the GEF, talks broke down on the last Thursday evening of PrepCom IV. The G-77 insisted that because discussions at PrepCom IV failed to produce an agreement, negotiations on financial resources in Rio would have to resume with the original G-77 and China text, PC/L.41/Rev.1. This text was mired in seemingly intractable negotiations during the third week of PrepCom IV. L.75 appeared at the Japanese Eminent Persons meeting, to many people's surprise, and at the Kuala Lumpur meeting, to the disdain of many developing countries. Many observers suggest that if the negotiations on financial resources are to proceed quickly at UNCED, then discussions will have to be based on some form of the L.75 document. Many countries, including several members of the G-77, maintain that resuming negotiations on L.41/Rev.1 could undermine the advances made during the waning days of PrepCom IV.