



HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE ICPD+5 PREPCOM TUESDAY, 30 MARCH 1999

Delegates at the ICPD+5 PrepCom met in the Working Group all day and night on Tuesday to negotiate the proposals for key actions for further implementation of the POA. They were able to complete negotiations on the chapter on population and development concerns, leaving the remaining four chapters for negotiation on the final day of the PrepCom.

WORKING GROUP

The Working Group met until 1:00 am to negotiate the Chair's revised draft of proposals for key actions for further POA implementation (E/CN.9/PC/CRP.1/Rev.1), which synthesized delegates' proposed amendments from the previous week's discussions. Chair Chowdhury noted that the section entitled "Background" draws from the principles outlined in the POA.

POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT CONCERNS: Population, Poverty and Sustainable Development: The G-77/CHINA preferred entitling the section "major population trends." On enhancing understanding of the interrelationships between population and other issues, the G-77/CHINA said suggesting that reduction in fertility can accelerate economic growth is subjective and needs clarification. Delegates accepted CANADA's proposal to re-examine recent research concerning relationships among reduced fertility, economic growth and more equitable distribution of its benefits. On legislative and administrative measures to prevent environmental degradation, the G-77/CHINA stipulated "within their own countries." The EU and others deleted the specification of dumping of toxic materials. Text was added emphasizing integrated community-based approaches to sustainable development (US) and special attention to youth in promoting public education (CANADA).

On promoting an enabling environment, the EU deleted "as a means of stabilizing the global population." MEXICO added that the trading system should be "secure, non-discriminatory and predictable." The US added ensuring that structural adjustment programmes respond to social, economic "and environmental" concerns. On the need for governments of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to ensure that social safety nets are implemented, the G-77/CHINA reordered the paragraph to take special note of assistance from donors, including through bilateral and/or multilateral support, especially in those countries most affected by the recent global financial crisis. On the call for governments of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to continue to support declines in infant and child mortality rates by strengthening relevant health programmes, delegates agreed on text containing the

following amendments: adding oral "rehydration" therapies (G-77/CHINA); including "pre-natal care" under infant and health programmes (G-77/CHINA); and referring to strengthening maternal health services, quality family planning services and efforts to prevent HIV/AIDS and other STDs (US).

Delegates adopted a new subparagraph based on a RUSSIAN FEDERATION proposal addressing the stagnation or increase in adult mortality. On targeting poverty, the G-77/CHINA added subparagraphs on: ensuring that programmes target females, particularly female-headed households; developing innovative ways to strengthen assistance to families in poverty; and undertaking policies and programmes to meet the basic needs of the poor and disadvantaged. The EU added a subparagraph on strengthening health care systems focused on poor people. On indigenous populations, CANADA amended the wording to "promote and protect" rather than "acknowledge and safeguard" their rights, and altered it to apply to all governments. The G-77/CHINA included land rights.

Changing Age Structure and Ageing of the Population: CANADA added text on examining economic and social implications of demographic change and how these relate to development planning concerns and individuals' needs. On investing in plans to meet young people's needs, CANADA added "especially young women." The G-77/CHINA incorporated giving due respect to parents' rights, duties and responsibilities. The US inserted considering the evolving capacities of young people. On including education, income-generating opportunities and vocational training in such plans, the G-77/CHINA and others objected to the US proposal to add "health services, including sexual and reproductive health." The text was bracketed. On measures for the elderly, the G-77/CHINA added "where appropriate" to a call for research and strategies on addressing population ageing and added enhancing the elderly's ability to care for family members suffering from HIV/AIDS. NORWAY extended families to include communities. The EU added consideration of "affordable, accessible and appropriate health care services" and specified investing in health care of older persons, "especially the elderly poor." On creating opportunities for older women and men to contribute their skills to the family, the work force and community service, CANADA added removing barriers to creating such opportunities.

International Migration: CANADA preferred calling on governments in countries of origin and destination to undertake the proposed measures and the G-77/CHINA added "including" through international cooperation. On protecting the dignity and human rights of migrants, refugees and displaced persons, the G-77/CHINA qualified migrants "irrespective of their legal status" and deleted text on asylum procedures. The US amended text on providing protection to refugees

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“and, as appropriate, displaced persons” and facilitating family reunification “of documented migrants,” and added the valuable role of NGOs in meeting the needs of migrants, refugees and displaced persons. On providing social services, delegates agreed to “basic health, education” (HOLY SEE) and social services, including “sexual” (US and NORWAY) and reproductive health and family planning services. CANADA shifted to a separate subparagraph the call on governments to become Parties to the UN convention and protocol relating to the status of refugees. On preventing trafficking in migrants, the US proposed changing migrants to “persons” but the G-77/CHINA objected. The US specified in particular women and children subjected to “forced” labor.

Delegates amended text on supporting “and ensuring effective follow-up” (RUSSIAN FEDERATION) of bilateral and multilateral initiatives, including regional and sub-regional consultation processes, and, “where appropriate, developing national policies” (G-77/CHINA) and “cooperative strategies” (CANADA) to “maximize the benefits and manage” (EU) the challenges posed by international migration. Delegates deleted the specification “such as family disintegration.” Subparagraphs were added on: public information campaigns on migration in countries of origin and destination (EU); international assistance to developing countries who host the majority of refugees and displaced persons (G-77/CHINA) and to other countries lacking capacity to manage their flows (RUSSIAN FEDERATION).

On intensifying efforts to improve data collection and analysis, delegates agreed to add “including gender-based analysis.” On studies to assess the causes of international migration, the US specified assessing the positive contribution “of migration.” On improving understanding of the links between globalization, demographic and environmental change, poverty and migration, the G-77/CHINA proposed adding natural disasters and the US including good governance, but delegates ultimately agreed to improving understanding of the links between relevant factors of international migration. The G-77/CHINA added text on channeling international support to address the causes of movement of refugees and displaced persons. The HOLY SEE proposal to provide basic social services to refugees in the text was included in brackets.

Internal Migration, Population Distribution and Urban

Agglomerations: Delegates accepted CANADA’s proposal to reorganize the section to distinguish between internal displacement, which is involuntary, and internal migration, which is voluntary. On research to strengthen the understanding of internal migration, the US suggested “formulation of an effective voluntary national settlement policy” to avoid any notion of coercion. On population distribution policies, the US said these should be consistent with international instruments when applicable. Regarding the causes of internal migration and internal displacement, CANADA deleted reference to internal migration, noting that the emphasis in the text was on internal displacement. She urged specification of the needs of internally displaced women and children and, where appropriate, facilitation of their return and reintegration. Noting the cross-cutting nature of migration, the G-77/CHINA preferred addressing the causes of migration over CANADA’s suggestion to address only the root causes. On the management and delivery of services, the EU specified the urban poor. The G-77/CHINA with the RUSSIAN FEDERATION objected to inserting reference to marginalized people stating that the concept remains unclear.

Population, Development and Education: The G-77/CHINA specified calling for assistance by the international community, in particular to developing countries. On meeting the goal of universal access to education, CANADA specified “eliminating” the gender gap in primary education “by 2005” and in secondary education “by 2010.” She added the sensitization of parents to the value of education to enable girls to achieve their full potential. On education, MEXICO and others proposed including sex education in school curricula. The G-77/CHINA preferred “promoting, as appropriate, sex education in order to further implement the POA in terms of promoting responsible sexual behavior.” The text was bracketed. On reducing the rates of illiteracy,

delegates agreed to emphasize the need to halve the rates of illiteracy among women and stress that men’s illiteracy should also be considered. The G-77/CHINA added a new subparagraph on provision of adequate equipped facilities by rehabilitating existing schools and building new ones.

Regarding actions to surmount the barriers to education in developing countries, CANADA added enhancing access to and use of modern technologies, including satellite transmission and communication, particularly for the least developed countries. The G-77/CHINA inserted “as well as other mechanisms” and noted that achieving this would be difficult, particularly for the least developed countries, without assistance from the international community. The US added continuing to increase public knowledge, understanding and commitment at all levels, from the individual to the international, to further the achievement of the goals and objectives of the POA.

Data Systems, Including Indicators: On the role of governments in strengthening national information systems, CANADA added that this should be in collaboration with research institutes and NGOs. The EU specified age as well as gender-impact indicators and added special attention to maternal mortality and morbidity factors. Regarding specific indicators listed, NORWAY added enrolment and retention of boys and girls in schools, and the US, access to sexual and reproductive health services, disaggregated by population subgroups, including indigenous people. The US, opposed by the G-77/CHINA, advocated including measures of environmental degradation or, as a minimum, environmental change, as a specifically referenced indicator. Delegates agreed to precede the list of indicators by the term “*inter alia*.” The INDIGENOUS PEOPLES CAUCUS stressed including language addressing the needs of indigenous people and reproductive rights of women and girls. CANADA added a call for governments, in consultation with indigenous people, to establish and strengthen statistics and data collection concerning the health of indigenous people, including sexual and reproductive health and their determinants. The G-77/CHINA added “dissemination” of data needed to assess reproductive health status. On strengthening capacity of developing countries to undertake censuses and surveys and develop solutions for meeting data requirements, improved maternal mortality estimates (EU) and vital registration systems (TURKEY) were added as goals.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Protest resounded in the corridors Tuesday as the Women’s and Youth Coalitions staged a brief yet high-profile demonstration outside Conference Room 1 prior to the Working Group’s afternoon session. The voiced “outrage” focused on the slow pace of G-77/China consultations, which some NGOs suspected were being held up by a handful of “conservative” delegations they feared were “determined to stymie negotiations.” The peaceful rally turned ugly when security guards reportedly tried to remove a CNN camera covering the event, although delegates were left with no doubt about NGO concerns, particularly on adolescents’ rights and reproductive health. In spite of this effort to propel discussions forward, delegates left Conference Room 1 at 1:00 am Wednesday morning with deep concerns about the significant work remaining for the final day of the PrepCom.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUP: The Working Group will convene at 10:00 am in Conference Room 1 to resume negotiations on the Chair’s revised text, beginning with the section on gender equality, equity and empowerment of women. It is expected that they will work until at least 9:00 pm to complete negotiations.

CLOSING PLENARY: The closing Plenary will convene when the Working Group completes negotiations on the proposals for key actions for further POA implementation. The Plenary will consider and adopt this revised text, as well as the provisional agenda, the list of speakers, organization of work and accreditation of NGOs for the Special Session.