



RESUMED SESSION OF THE ICPD+5 PREPCOM 24-28 JUNE 1999

The Commission on Population and Development (CPD) acting as the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the Special Session of the UN General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development will resume today at UN headquarters in New York. The PrepCom is resuming its session following its meeting from 24 March - 1 April, at which it was unable to complete negotiations on proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the POA, and following further informal consultations held from 5 - 7 May. The resumed PrepCom aims to complete negotiations on these proposals for key actions and submit them for consideration and for adoption by the Special Session, to be held from 30 June - 2 July 1999.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ICPD+5 PROCESS

ICPD: The International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) was held in Cairo, Egypt, from 5 - 13 September 1994. An estimated 20,000 government delegates, UN representatives, NGOs and media attended the conference, which adopted a 16-chapter Programme of Action (POA) on population and development. The POA, adopted by 179 countries, underscores the integral and mutually reinforcing linkages between population and development and endorses a new rights-based strategy focused on meeting the needs of individual women and men rather than on achieving demographic targets. One of the primary goals of the POA is to make family planning universally available by 2015 as part of a broadened approach to reproductive health and rights. It includes other time-bound population and development goals for 1995 - 2015, including the reduction of infant, child and maternal mortality and provision of universal access to education, especially for girls. The POA provides estimates of the levels of national resources and international assistance required for its implementation and calls on governments to make those resources available.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION FOR A SPECIAL SESSION: In Resolution 52/188 of 18 December 1997, the UN General Assembly (GA) decided to convene a Special Session from 30 June - 2 July 1999 to review and appraise implementation of the ICPD POA. The GA emphasized that existing agreements contained in the POA would not be renegotiated. It designated the CPD as the prepara-

tory body for the Special Session, and the 32nd session of the CPD in March 1999 as the PrepCom. The Population Division of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) were asked to collaborate and coordinate the ICPD review process leading up to the Special Session.

THE HAGUE FORUM: The International Forum for the Operational Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the ICPD POA (The Hague Forum) took place from 8 - 12 February 1999 in The Hague, the Netherlands. The Hague Forum was an integral part of the five-year review of the ICPD (ICPD+5). Organized by UNFPA and hosted by the Dutch Government, The Hague Forum was attended by approximately 2000 participants, including ministers and other high-level government officials, parliamentarians, representatives of UN specialized agencies, international and non-governmental organizations, youth, and the media. The goals of The Hague Forum were to: examine lessons learned, success stories, obstacles and constraints to enable further implementation of the POA; allow for exchange among countries facing similar experiences; bring together a wide variety of partners to refocus commitment on population and development; and provide technical inputs to the Special Session. The Hague Forum assessed country-level operational and programme experiences in POA implementation, focusing on five substantive themes: creating an enabling environment for the further implementation of the POA; gender equality, equity and empowerment of women; reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health and reproductive rights; strengthening partnerships; and resource flows and financing for POA implementation.

The outcome of The Hague Forum was a draft report that summarizes the findings and proposed actions of the Main Committee's deliberations on these five themes. The report was submitted to the PrepCom and provided input to the Secretary-General's Report for the Special Session containing proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the POA.

ICPD+5 PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

The CPD acting as the PrepCom for the Special Session met from 24 March - 1 April 1999 at UN headquarters in New York. The task of the PrepCom was to negotiate proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the POA in preparation for the Special Session. The PrepCom was unable to finish its work in the time allotted and had to extend its session by an additional day. However, even with this extra meeting, the PrepCom did not complete negotiations.

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The PrepCom reached agreement on a number of proposals for key actions on population and development concerns; gender equality, equity and empowerment of women; and reproductive rights and reproductive health. However, delegates were unable to agree on several contentious paragraphs. In the section on population and development concerns, delegates debated at length but could not reach agreement on a paragraph on developing and implementing national, regional and local plans to meet the needs of young people, namely due to text on including sexual and reproductive health in such plans. A paragraph on assistance to refugee women and children was bracketed due to disagreement over references to providing them with access to health services, including family planning. Delegates also could not agree on a proposed paragraph to include sex education in school curricula.

In the section on gender equality, equity and empowerment of women, delegates were unable to reach consensus on text encouraging the removal of all existing reservations to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. In the section on reproductive rights and reproductive health, delegates negotiated at length but ultimately bracketed contentious paragraphs relating to: access to information and services on the full range of safe and effective contraceptive methods, including new options and underutilized methods; means of addressing the health impacts of unsafe abortion; UNAIDS ensuring a well-coordinated response from the UN system to the HIV/AIDS pandemic; and the provision of specific and user-friendly reproductive and sexual services to adolescents, which should safeguard their rights to privacy, confidentiality and informed consent, respecting cultural values and religious beliefs.

Delegates had insufficient time to discuss the preambular background section, the sections on partnerships and collaborations and mobilizing resources, and the latter half of the sub-section on adolescent sexual and reproductive health. The PrepCom decided to schedule informal consultations in early May in an attempt to complete negotiations in advance of the Special Session.

INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS

The PrepCom resumed from 5-7 May 1999 for informal consultations at UN headquarters in New York. Under the guidance of PrepCom Chair Anwarul Karim Chowdhury (Bangladesh), delegates adopted *ad referendum* numerous paragraphs that had been bracketed during the PrepCom in March or had not been negotiated previously. Delegates focused on the preambular background section and the sections on mobilizing resources and partnerships and collaborations.

In the section on partnerships and collaborations, delegates adopted eight paragraphs that had not been agreed at the first PrepCom session and bracketed several new proposed paragraphs that propose to, *inter alia*: note that governments should recognize the important role of civil society; call for a general strengthening of health systems as an essential element in achieving POA implementation; urge the private sector to ensure that all relevant programmes adhere to basic rights recalled in the POA; and involve youth in all aspects of decision making related to youth-related policies and programmes. Delegates debated at length but could not agree on text for two paragraphs on providing adequate financial and technical resources and information to build the human resources, institutional capacity and sustainability of civil society, and on encouraging parliamentarians or members of national legislatures to advocate for the POA and give due consideration to The Hague Declaration of Parliamentarians on the ICPD Review adopted at the International Forum of Parliamentarians from 4-6 February 1999. Debate focused, in particular, on the specific role and proposed tasks of parliamentarians.

Delegates also devoted significant time to negotiating the section on mobilizing resources. A particularly contentious paragraph addressed the need for sufficient funding for HIV/AIDS prevention, and a compromise text was agreed that notes the severe impact of the HIV/AIDS epidemic and calls for action to mobilize the necessary resources both domestically and internationally. After extensive consultations, delegates were unable to agree on text for several paragraphs, including those that, *inter alia*: urge the mobilization of financial resources needed for POA implementation, including a proposal to urge an increase in the share of funding for relevant programmes to ensure full implementation; encourage developing countries to continue to make efforts to mobilize domestic resources from all sources and to promote international cooperation, including South-South cooperation; increase advocacy efforts to ensure that the necessary resource goals are met; urge donor countries and international funding agencies to complement domestic efforts in meeting urgent reproductive health commodity needs; and call on governments and the international community to encourage and promote additional mechanisms to increase funding for relevant programmes to ensure their sustainability. Delegates did not have time to discuss a paragraph on policies that facilitate greater private sector involvement in providing reproductive health care.

In the preambular background section, delegates discussed at length the first paragraph, which provides details about the ICPD POA, its aims, focus and key recommended actions. However, after protracted debates regarding the use of the terms “universally recognized human rights” and “reproductive rights” and regarding access to reproductive health care services, delegates were unable to reach agreement and placed these portions of the text in brackets. Delegates considered deleting a paragraph summarizing the proposals for key actions and, after considerable debate, amended the text to emphasize the need for sufficient resources, political commitment and effective priority-setting within each national context. Delegates reached agreement on the remainder of the background section.

Delegates also considered NGO accreditation for the Special Session. Several participants stated that they had been unable to consult with their capitals on whether the proposed list of NGOs was acceptable. Delegates authorized the Chair to move forward with the necessary steps to continue the NGO accreditation process without precluding their rights to inform the Chair of any problems once capitals have been consulted. Chair Chowdhury said he would circulate the list to all missions requesting an expeditious response.

Delegates had not completed their work by the conclusion of the informal consultations. By the close of the consultations, 25 paragraphs had been adopted *ad referendum*. Fifteen paragraphs remain in brackets, and 13 paragraphs have yet to be discussed, including the latter half of the contentious section on adolescent sexual and reproductive health. The document containing proposals for key actions was revised based on these informal consultations and will be used as the basis for negotiations at the resumed PrepCom just prior to the Special Session. The resumed PrepCom will seek to complete the negotiations on this document and will forward its outcome to the Special Session.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

RESUMED PREPCOM: The resumed ICPD+5 PrepCom will convene at 10:00 am in Conference Room 2 to continue negotiations on the Chair’s revised working paper containing proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the ICPD POA (E/CN.9/1999/PC/CRP.1/Rev.3).