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HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN THURSDAY, 7 SEPTEMBER 1995

Delegates to the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) continued to make slow but steady progress through the draft Platform for Action and Declaration. Working Group I reviewed agreements from informal meetings on Chapter V (Institutional Arrangements) and proceeded to examine the first two chapters. Working Group II examined the section on armed conflict. Contact Group I continued its review of the section on health during the morning, and Contact Group II briefly considered the draft Declaration during the evening. The Plenary continued to hear statements under Agenda Item 8, General Exchange of Views.

WORKING GROUP I

The Working Group, chaired by Nana Ama Yeboa (Ghana), met during the afternoon to consider work done by an informal group and to begin consideration of Chapters I (Mission Statement) and II (Global Framework).

In paragraph **293** (conference of commitments), delegates agreed to note that the FWCW is a conference of national and international commitment and action, that States and the international community have been encouraged to make commitments, and that many have done so at the FWCW. In **309** (high-level post), States will invite the S-G to establish a high-level post in his office to address gender concerns.

The four paragraphs related to the CSW were agreed as follows: **318**, the GA and ECOSOC are invited to review and strengthen the CSW's mandate; **319** notes that the CSW should have sufficient human and financial resources; **320** states that the CSW should assist ECOSOC in its coordination of the reporting on the Platform for Action; and **321** calls for the CSW to review the critical areas of concern in developing its work programme.

Delegates engaged in a lengthy discussion on resources in connection with **5** (strong commitment required). The G77/China supported the reference to "new and additional" and the EU supported the reference to "adequate." In **27** (NGO role), delegates removed brackets from the reference to the inability of NGOs to operate freely in some countries. In **30** (women and family), the Holy See, Kenya, and the Philippines supported the text, the US supported including the points in the document, and the EU proposed an alternative. In **31** (women and religion), the

Holy See, Guatemala, Ecuador and others supported retaining the paragraph; the EU, Mexico and others desired to delete it; and Benin, Egypt, India, the US and others proposed a redraft.

In **35** (global communication and mass media), several delegates proposed that the reference to the mass media's lack of commitment to promoting human values and dignity be reformulated, others proposed moving the reference, and some proposed deleting it. The Group will take it up during discussion of the section on the mass media. Delegates met during an evening, informal session to negotiate outstanding paragraphs.

CONTACT GROUP OF WORKING GROUP I

The Contact Group of Working Group I (health) met on Wednesday evening and Thursday morning. In **98** (women's health risks), brackets were removed and specific ICPD paragraphs were replaced with a general reference. In **99** (HIV/AIDS), brackets were removed from safe sex, "mothers," and "gender." In **100** (gender violence), "prostitution" was replaced by "sex exploitation." In **104** (local circumstances), brackets were removed from respect, privacy, information and services. Paragraph **105** (statistics), was amended: effectiveness "of drugs" including contraceptives.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE C.1. (life cycle): The amended **108** (agents), refers to governments "with the appropriate support of" NGOs and other organizations "whenever appropriate." In (c) (gender-sensitive programmes), "barriers" was removed from brackets. Sub-paragraph (d) (equal access), was removed from brackets. Sub-paragraph (e) (increase provision), was amended: "universal access by the year 2015, "which includes" information and services. In (f) (services and training), brackets were removed from "gender" and a reference to WHO deleted. In (h) (medical interventions), "properly trained personnel" was included. In (j) (unsafe abortion), reference to paragraph 8.25 of ICPD was included. In (p) (environmental hazards), "special" was deleted. Sub-paragraph (u) (drug procurement), was removed from brackets.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE C.2 (preventive programmes): In sub-paragraph (a) (prioritize education), "prostitution" was replaced by "sexual exploitation" and "child marriage" was added. In (d) (discrimination laws), "physical" was deleted. "Where possible" was deleted from the removal of coercive laws. In (e) (information), ICPD was deleted. In (g) (information for adolescents), education was added, and brackets removed from "boys and girls" and "sexual and reproductive health." In (h) (disproportionate burden), "mothers" was removed from brackets. In (m) (preventive programmes), brackets were

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removed from reproductive cancers. In (p) (medical curricula), “gender-sensitive” was introduced, and reference to paragraph 91 of the FWCW Platform deleted. In (q) (protection from abuse), brackets were removed from “children.”

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE C.3 (HIV/AIDS and STDs): Brackets were removed from “gender-sensitive” and “sexual and reproductive health” in the chapeau. In (b) (reducing susceptibility), “combat” harmful practices was added. In (d) (stigmatization), brackets were removed from “including during travel.” In (e) (empowerment), (f) (community strategies), and (g) (national strategies), brackets were removed from the term “gender sensitive.” In (h) (special education), parental responsibility was deleted. In (i) (implications for pregnancy and child), information for health workers and STDs were added. In (j) (peer education), women “of all ages” and parental responsibility were deleted. In (k) (adolescent education), brackets were removed from “gender relations” and reference to ICPD deleted. In (m) (universal access), brackets were removed from “condom use.” In (n) (high risk behaviour), brackets were removed from “unprotected” and “irresponsible.” Brackets were removed from (p) (initiate research).

WORKING GROUP II

Chair Irene Freudenschuss (Austria) opened the Group’s consideration of bracketed text in the section on armed conflict. In 144(b) (peace keeping), the EU proposed deleting the reference to observer missions. The G77/China accepted references to peace keeping, all stages of peace monitoring and negotiations. The EU, supported by Canada, objected to a reference to equitable geographical distribution in peace keeping missions. Cuba objected to a reference to the S-G’s plan to improve the status of women in the Secretariat. In 144(c) (gender balance in international judicial bodies), delegates lifted the outer brackets, but maintained brackets around references to foreign occupation and war crime tribunals. India’s proposed reference to terrorism was bracketed. An Israeli call for gender balance in “nominating” as well as promoting candidates was accepted. In 144(d) (training of officials), India proposed a reference to terrorism. The US bracketed India’s proposal and retained brackets on “foreign occupation.” The EU removed brackets from integrating a gender perspective into the work of officials handling cases involving violence against women.

In 145(a) (conversion of military resources), a G77/China proposal to use “development and peaceful” purposes was accepted. Cuba proposed a reformulation of 145(c) (UN Register of Conventional Arms). The EU, supported by the US and others, proposed deleting the paragraph. Botswana and others objected. In 145(d) (military expenditures and trade), the bracketed text was deleted because it was repetitious. In 145(e) (land-mines), the EU proposed ratification of the referenced Convention and Protocol, promotion of assistance in mine clearance, and adoption of a moratorium on the export of land-mines. References were suggested to: promote scientific research (Japan); transfer mine clearance technology (Cuba); eventually eliminate land-mines and strengthen the Convention (Canada); and avoid stockpiling (Mexico). In 145(f) (elimination of weapons of mass destruction), Morocco proposed references to chemical, radiological and bacteriological weapons. The EU, supported by the US, proposed a new formulation. The G77/China supported the original. India proposed a reference to the greater adverse effect of such weapons on women and children. Cuba proposed references to prohibition, elimination and safe international control. South Africa objected to EU references to specific conventions. Syria proposed a reference to prohibiting the production of such weapons.

In 147(b) (peaceful settlement of disputes), the G77/China proposed deleting the reference to preventive diplomacy and

lifting the brackets. The EU agreed to delete the outer brackets, but retained the reference to preventive diplomacy.

Delegates deleted 147(c) (UN unit for conflict prevention and resolution) and accepted the G77/China reformulation of 147(e) (rape as a war crime), with references to crimes against humanity and acts of genocide.

In 147(g) (terrorism), Turkey, supported by Cuba and others, proposed replacing the paragraph with Vienna language. The EU, the US and G77/China preferred the original wording. The original version with an added reference to “all forms” of terrorism was accepted. The phrase “and legitimacy” and brackets were removed from 147(k) (effect of economic sanctions). A G77/China reformulation of 148(e) (peace education programmes) was accepted, referring to a culture of peace and focusing on conflict resolution and tolerance.

In 149(d) (right of refugees to return), the G77/China amended a reference to “safe and voluntary return.” An alternative proposed by Norway and supported by Canada, adding the principle of *non-refoulement* of refugees and their safety and dignity, was accepted. In 149(f) (resources for refugees) Norway, supported by Canada and Slovenia, proposed a shortened alternative to bracketed text. The G77/China supported the original paragraph.

In 149(i) (persecution aimed at women), the G77/China proposal to lift brackets from “support and promote efforts” and delete “consider” was accepted. The G77/China proposed unbracketing 149(l) (training and rehabilitation for refugees). Canada, supported by the EU and the US, proposed deleting a reference to increasing contributions to refugee programmes. The G77/China opposed. The US deleted a reference to providing special measures. The G77/China proposed unbracketing 149(n) (support services for displaced women). The EU, supported by Australia, bracketed references to the causes of displacement.

IN THE CORRIDORS

Some delegates are expressing concern that they are falling behind on the proposed timetable for the work of the Conference. Although brackets are being removed in most of the groups at a steady pace, it is not matching the 25 or more resolutions-per-day rate that Chair Freudenschuss noted would be necessary for Working Group II alone. Informal consultations have made progress on issues that the working groups found difficult to resolve. Even so, Saturday and Sunday sessions are expected to allow time to settle all outstanding issues by the close of the Conference.

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

PLENARY: The general exchange of views will continue during morning, afternoon and evening sessions of the Plenary in Hall No. 1.

WORKING GROUP I: The Working Group is expected to meet during an afternoon session in Hall No. 16, where it will complete Chapter II (Global Framework) and then take up the section on mass media.

CONTACT GROUP OF WORKING GROUP I: The Contact Group will meet at 10:00 am in Hall No. 16 during a morning session to continue discussion on the section on health.

WORKING GROUP II: The Working Group is expected to meet during morning, afternoon and evening sessions in Hall No. 15, where it will take up section G (participation in power structure and decision-making).

CONTACT GROUP OF WORKING GROUP II: The Contact Group will meet in Hall No. 6 at 3:00 pm and at 7:00 pm in Hall No. 16 to consider the draft Declaration.