



## CSW-44 HIGHLIGHTS: WEDNESDAY, 8 MARCH 2000

On Wednesday, 8 March 2000, Working Group I met in the morning to continue negotiation of bracketed text contained in the introduction of the proposed outcome document. Delegates reconvened briefly in Plenary in the afternoon to hear a statement by the President of the UN Security Council. Working Group II met immediately afterward to begin discussion of actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the PFA (E/CN.6/2000/L.1/Rev.1).

### PLENARY

In celebration of International Women's Day, Amb. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury (Bangladesh), President of the Security Council (UNSC), read a statement from the UNSC. He noted it was an honor to present the first UNSC statement on mainstreaming gender issues in all aspects of peace processes.

The statement recognizes that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men. It affirms that equal access and full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for peace and security. It further notes the review of the FWCW is an essential element in achieving this goal. Referring to the vulnerability of women and children in armed conflict, and that they constitute the majority of refugees and internally displaced persons, the UNSC notes that although women play important roles in conflict resolution and other parts of the peace process, they are underrepresented in decision-making. The statement declares that if women are to play an equal part in security and maintaining peace, they must be empowered politically and economically, and represented adequately at all levels of decision-making across all stages of the peace process. The statement underscores the role of women in preserving social order and fostering peace in their communities during conflicts, and calls upon stakeholders to refrain from human rights abuses in conflicts, including

those that are gender-specific. It further calls for respect of international humanitarian and human rights laws, recalls the obligation to prosecute those responsible for grave breaches of these laws, and welcomes the inclusion of all forms of sexual violence as a war crime in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. The UNSC stresses that efforts should be strengthened to assist refugees and displaced women and underscores the importance of promoting active and visible gender-mainstreaming in all policies and programmes at all levels while addressing armed or other conflicts.

CUBA expressed concern over the UNSC's participation in discussing the advancement of women, maintaining that this issue is primarily the responsibility of the GA and ECOSOC. She highlighted challenges faced in addressing women's issues, and expressed concern about mandates. President Chowdhury responded that he did not feel the UNSC was in any way taking over the work of the GA and ECOSOC, but rather the intention was to emphasize women's contributions to peace-building and the importance of mainstreaming gender in conflict resolution. He said he hoped the UNSC's statement would add to other efforts, highlighting that the various organs of the UN must support each other in their mutual objectives.

### WORKING GROUP I

Working Group I continued negotiation of proposed text revisions to the outcome document regarding further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and the PFA (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.1/Rev.1). The Group had before it the Secretariat's redraft compilation text of the introduction as a basis for discussion.

On a EU-proposed text reaffirming governments' commitment to the goals and objectives contained in the Beijing Declaration and the PFA, JUSCANZ proposed referring to the outcome document as tangible affirmation of commitment by governments to the goals and objectives contained in the Beijing Declaration and the PFA.

JUSCANZ, supported by the EU and MEXICO, suggested text recog



nizing the contribution of the regional preparatory meetings to the preparations of the Special Session by ensuring a regional perspective on implementation and follow-up.

Addressing the paragraph on reviewing progress of the 12 critical areas, the EU suggested that reference to the elimination of all practices that discriminate against women be placed immediately following the reference to the advancement and empowerment of women, and proposed deleting language on lack of equal access to productive resources and economic independence. The G-77/CHINA preferred retaining all text, but suggested the reference be placed later in the paragraph, allowing for a more logical flow from general issues to specific ones. JUSCANZ disagreed. Chair Mlacak proposed retaining brackets and determining placement of the remainder of the text at a later time.

The EU suggested referring to resolutions instead of recommendations in the text on the basis for further progress and accountability to the world's women and the full realization of the human rights of women. The G-77/CHINA, with the support of JUSCANZ, preferred retaining the original language. Regarding text on governments' primary responsibility in implementing the PFA and further actions and initiatives, the G-77/CHINA suggested references to: the primary responsibility of governments for fully implementing the PFA; adoption of an integrated and balanced approach that encompasses mainstreaming a gender perspective into all legislation, policies and programmes with actions specifically targeting empowerment of women and girls; and the allocation of sufficient resources. She also called for policy, legislative and programme measures to be supported by increased international cooperation, institutional arrangements, adequate data, targets, national accountability, follow-up mechanisms and measurable goals. JUSCANZ suggested language stating that policies, legislation and programmes must respect and value the full diversity of women and recognize that many women face additional barriers because of language, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic class, or status as indigenous people, migrants, displaced people, refugees, or "other status." The EU proposed reference to mechanisms for accountability, monitoring and follow-up, as well as full recognition of the importance of the allocation of sufficient resources. The HOLY SEE suggested text encouraging the active involvement of men and boys in fulfilling the goals of the PFA. TURKEY noted similarities between the G-77/China and EU proposals and called for prompt resolution of the text.

The G-77/CHINA asked for time to consult and the Group was adjourned.

### **WORKING GROUP II**

Chair A. K. Bhattacharjee (India) opened the first meeting of Working Group II and called on governments to set targets for making progress on the negotiation of actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the PFA. He noted this would be possible with trust and compromise, and asked that no substantive changes be brought forward after the first reading.

A group of countries noted that the section on actions and initiatives was particularly important because it outlines actions for the future. She called for streamlining the introductory paragraphs to draw clear links between the actions and earlier sections on achievements, obstacles and challenges. She called for strengthening language on actions and further refinement of the placement of paragraphs. A regional group said it would submit additions and amendments and emphasized that the group would focus on the substance of the paragraphs.

On the paragraph referring to government recognition of steps necessary to achieve the goals of the PFA, a group of countries suggested reference be made to governments recommitting themselves to the Beijing Declaration and the PFA, as well as to further actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and address challenges.

Another group proposed, and many delegates supported, language referring to progress made since the Beijing Conference. Others supported reference to the evaluation of progress. Delegates also suggested: deleting the reference to current challenges affecting the full realization of the PFA; adding a reference to the right to development; and referring to human rights as essential to rather than prerequisites for realizing gender equality.

Rather than negotiating specific words and phrases, a regional group, supported by a group of countries, expressed its preference for considering whole paragraphs, and suggested delegations distribute text proposals. Chair Bhattacharjee stated that consideration of whole paragraphs would not be efficient given time constraints and considering that delegations were not coming forward with substantive changes. The Working Group adjourned at 5:00 pm to allow participants to consider text proposals of other delegations.

### **IN THE CORRIDORS**

Amidst the general good humor, delegates are anxious to start text negotiation. Between the quibbling over details and the refusal of major groups to proceed without lengthy examinations of all key proposals, delegates are worried that if an open-minded approach toward compromise is not rapidly adopted, matters will be left pending. One delegate stated ironically that delegations could not do a better job of delaying the process and avoiding an outcome to the meeting.

### **THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY**

**WORKING GROUPS:** Working Group I is expected to reconvene at 10:00 am in Conference Room 6 to continue negotiation of the introduction to the outcome document. Working Group II will meet at 3:00 pm in Conference Room 1 to negotiate text proposals submitted by groups on actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the PFA (E/CN.6/2000/L.1/Rev.1).