



CSW-44 HIGHLIGHTS: THURSDAY, 9 MARCH 2000

On Thursday, 9 March 2000, Working Group II met in the afternoon to continue negotiation of actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the PFA. Working Group I met in an evening session to begin discussion on achievements and obstacles in the implementation of the 12 areas of concern of the outcome document (E/CN.6/2000/L.1/Rev.1).

WORKING GROUP I

On achievements in the area of women and poverty, text referring to progress in the recognition of gender equality as a prerequisite for poverty eradication and to efforts made to integrate a gender perspective into poverty eradication policies and programmes was left bracketed. Delegates agreed on text referring to a two-pronged approach of promoting employment and income-generating activities for women and providing basic social services. The EU opposed text introduced by the HOLY SEE on policies and programmes implemented to strengthen the role of the family in performing societal and developmental roles, on the grounds that the sentence was not gender-specific. The HOLY SEE proposed a redrafted version including recognition of the vital role of women in the family, and the text remains bracketed. On language referring to women's economic empowerment, the EU preferred reference to micro-credit with micro-finance. The G-77/CHINA, with support from the HOLY SEE, stated it preferred reference to micro-credit as a wider concept than micro-finance. The EU suggested reference to micro-finance including micro-credit, and JUSCANZ proposed an alternative reference to micro-credit and other forms of micro-financing, which the EU accepted. The G-77/CHINA requested time to reflect on this proposal, and JUSCANZ's proposal remains bracketed. On text referring to policy support for female-headed households, JUSCANZ suggested reference to policy development and to the particular needs of these households. The proposal

remains bracketed. On text regarding enhanced global understanding of gender and poverty issues through research and development, JUSCANZ suggested reference to differing impacts of poverty on women and men, including the relationship between remunerated and unremunerated work. This text remains bracketed.

On obstacles in the area of women and poverty, the EU and JUSCANZ rejected a proposal from the Holy See to include unfulfilled commitments to provide development assistance in text listing factors that contribute to widening economic inequality between women and men. The reference remains bracketed. Delegates cleared text referring to income inequality, unemployment and deepening poverty among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. Regarding text listing these groups, the EU suggested, and JUSCANZ and the HOLY SEE opposed, deleting it and placing it later in the text. A compilation of proposals by JUSCANZ and the Holy See, which includes references to, *inter alia*, rural women, single mothers and indigenous women, was placed in brackets. JUSCANZ, the EU, the HOLY SEE and the RUSSIAN FEDERATION made additions to a sentence listing obstacles that thwart national efforts to combat poverty, including excessive military spending, conflicts, sanctions and low levels of development assistance. JUSCANZ proposed text stating that low levels of ODA and inefficient use of resources are among the factors that hinder national efforts to combat poverty. No final agreement was reached on which of these would be retained. The G-77/CHINA agreed with the general thrust of the paragraph, but noted it would need time to reflect on some of the wording. MEXICO submitted, and later withdrew, a proposal to add a sentence on high military spending absorbing resources for health, education and employment services.

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WORKING GROUP II

On governments' recognition of steps necessary to achieve the goals set out in the PFA, a regional group supported reference to evaluation of progress made since the Beijing Conference and to continued and additional steps to achieve the goals of the PFA. She opposed a proposal to delete reference to current challenges affecting the full realization of the PFA and proposed, and many delegates supported, moving a reference recognizing development as a human right to another part of the document. A group of countries advocated retaining the original formulation and the reference to development remains bracketed. A regional group proposed, and many delegates supported, inclusion of language to differentiate chapters referring to current challenges and options in the outcome document. Many delegates supported inclusion of a reference to governments recommitting to the PFA as well as further committing to actions toward implementation. One delegate advocated reference to commitment to actions proposed in the report of the outcome document. Delegates required additional time to discuss this.

On a paragraph calling on international institutions and other actors to implement the PFA by supporting governments' efforts and developing complementary programmes, many delegations supported referring to trade unions and other stakeholders in the list of actors and referring to collaboration between governments and actors "where appropriate." A regional group suggested merging language recognizing the contribution, autonomy and complementary roles of NGOs. The merged text also calls on governments and intergovernmental organizations to continue strengthening partnerships with NGOs, particularly women's groups, in implementing the PFA. Some delegates opposed reference to autonomy, while others noted this concept has already been affirmed in the Beijing Declaration and should be maintained. The reference remains bracketed.

Many delegates supported additional text on achieving gender equality and women's full participation in all spheres of society as essential for good governance, political legitimacy and effective management of social and economic resources. A group of countries expressed concern about referring to good governance and political legitimacy, stating these terms need to be fully qualified. Many delegations proposed deleting the reference to political legitimacy, noting it is encompassed within the concept of good governance. Chair Bhattacharjee suggested bracketing the reference to good governance and discussion of this paragraph was postponed pending the outcome of consultations.

On achieving gender equality, delegates welcomed reference to the empowerment of women. A regional group supported reference to inequalities between women and men and girls and boys and to their responsibilities, opportunities and possibilities. On addressing women's and men's interests, concerns, experiences and priorities in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all actions, a

delegate opposed reference to systematically addressing these interests, concerns, experiences and priorities and suggested retaining the original formulation. She also opposed reference to national monitoring but welcomed language on follow-up and evaluation. Many countries suggested, and a group of countries opposed, reference to national and international monitoring, stating that international monitoring is carried out regularly. The group opposing reference to international monitoring responded that implementation is the primary responsibility of national governments and international monitoring applies only to follow-up mechanisms. Another group of countries suggested the scope of monitoring not be specified to allow introductory paragraphs to remain broad. Chair Bhattacharjee suggested bracketing the reference to monitoring pending further consultations.

One group of countries suggested reference to the life cycle and diversity of women in a paragraph on designing policies and implementing further actions and initiatives to achieve gender equality. Another group of countries suggested adding a reference to indigenous people, migrants, refugees, displaced people and "other status" to the list of status reflecting women's diversity. One delegate proposed deleting this list and reference to the life cycle to refer instead to all stages of the life cycle, including in all conditions of life, for all women.

On endorsement of the PFA by governments and the international community as indication of agreement on a common development agenda, with gender equality as an underlying principle, many delegations supported reference to equal access to financial and economic resources for all women. A regional group preferred giving the text a forward-looking view and suggested reference to new and further initiatives to the PFA. A group of countries supported language referring to development, while other delegations preferred keeping the paragraph's focus on gender equality.

IN THE CORRIDORS

The pace of negotiations has picked up, although the present cruising speed might not produce clean text by the end of the PrepCom as delegates leave pieces of bracketed text behind to help negotiations find their way home to introductory paragraphs. In this context, some members of the groups are growing impatient at the trends of negotiations. However, delegates all agree on Chair Bhattacharjee's reminder that "in the UN, there can be no emerging consensus, just a merging of consensus."

THINGS TO LOOK FOR TODAY

WORKING GROUPS: Working Group I is expected to reconvene at 3:00 pm, in a Conference Room to be announced, to finish negotiating text on women and poverty and carry on discussion of other achievements and obstacles. Working Group II will meet at 3:00 pm in Conference Room 1 to continue discussion of actions and initiatives (E/CN.6/2000/L.1/Rev.1).