



## SUMMARY OF THE 44TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN: 3-17 MARCH 2000

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) held its 44th session at UN Headquarters in New York from 28 February to 17 March 2000. The CSW met in two sessions: in the first session (28 February-2 March), the Commission followed up on the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW), and in the second session (3-17 March), the Commission acted as the Preparatory Committee (PrepCom) for the Beijing+5 Special Session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: Gender equality, development and peace for the 21st century." The session was attended by over 2000 participants, including high-level government officials, UN agency representatives, international organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and the media.

Delegates had before them the task of negotiating the proposed outcome document for the Special Session (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.1/Rev.1), which includes an introduction and three sections on: achievements and obstacles in the implementation of the 12 critical areas of the Platform for Action (PFA); current challenges affecting the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the PFA; and actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and to achieve the full and accelerated implementation of the PFA. Delegates also discussed the draft provisional agenda and organizational matters (E/CN.6/2000/PC.8) and the list of speakers (E/CN.6/2000/PC.9) for the Special Session.

After a slow start, delegates negotiated their way through a limited portion of the text during the last week of the PrepCom and only succeeded in lifting brackets from a few paragraphs in each section of the outcome document. In the end, despite many efforts in Working Groups and among group consultations to finish an initial reading of the entire heavily bracketed text, many issues remain unresolved.

### A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE BEIJING +5 PROCESS

**FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN:** The FWCW was held in Beijing, China, from 4-15 September 1995. An estimated 50,000 government delegates, UN representatives, NGOs and members of the media attended the Conference and its parallel NGO Forum at Huairou. The principal themes of the Conference were the advancement and empowerment of women in relation to women's

human rights, women and poverty, women and decision-making, the girl-child, violence against women and other areas of concern. At the end of the Conference, delegates adopted the Beijing Declaration and PFA. The PFA sets out an agenda for empowering women and accelerating implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies (NFLS), and aims to achieve significant change by the year 2000.

**BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION:** The Beijing Declaration deals with removing obstacles to women's participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making.

The PFA acknowledges that significant progress will depend on building strategic partnerships and involving all stakeholders in the efforts toward change. The action plan sets time-specific targets, committing nations to carry out concrete actions in areas such as health, education, decision-making and legal reforms with the ultimate goal of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women in both public and private life. PFA implementation is mainly the responsibility of governments, but it also involves institutions in the public, private and non-governmental sectors at all levels. The PFA identifies 12 areas of concern: poverty, education and training, health, violence, armed conflict, economy, decision-making, institutional mechanisms, human rights, media, environment and the girl-child.

**BEIJING +5:** In Resolution 52/100, the GA decided to convene a Special Session to review and appraise progress in implementing the NFLS and the Beijing PFA to take place five years after the FWCW,

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and to deliberate on further actions and initiatives. This review is not intended to renegotiate existing arrangements, but will assess successes, failures and obstacles to goals set at Nairobi and Beijing. The Special Session is scheduled to take place from 5-9 June 2000 in New York.

In Resolution 52/231, the GA designated the CSW to act as the PrepCom for the Special Session during its 43rd and 44th sessions in March 1999 and March 2000. The GA invited the Commission to propose the agenda and documentation for the Special Session and to focus in particular on the report requested from the Secretary-General that will contain suggestions on further actions and initiatives. The Committee was asked to pay particular attention to mainstreaming a gender perspective and identifying common trends and themes across the 12 critical areas of concern set out in the PFA. To enhance participation in the Beijing +5 process, ECOSOC invited those NGOs that were accredited to the FWCW to attend the 43rd and 44th sessions of the CSW.

**CSW-43:** The CSW held its 43rd session at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 1-19 March 1999. The CSW met in two sessions: in the first session (1-12 March), the Commission followed up on the FWCW, and in the second session (15-19 March), the Commission acted as the Preparatory Committee for the Beijing +5 process. The session, which was attended by approximately 1000 participants, including ministers and other high-level government officials, UN agency representatives, NGOs and the media, had the following objectives: to follow-up on the FWCW; to initiate a comprehensive review and appraisal of the implementation of the PFA that was adopted at the FWCW by acting as the Preparatory Committee for the UN General Assembly Special Session to take place in June 2000 (Beijing+5); and to agree on an optional protocol to CEDAW.

### REPORT OF THE PREPCOM.

On Friday, 3 March 2000, PrepCom Chair Rose Odera (Kenya) opened the third session of the CSW acting as the PrepCom and welcomed all participants. She introduced, and delegates adopted, the agenda and the proposed organization of work (E/CN.6/2000/PC/1).

Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchet called for further work toward global gender equality on the basis of new proposals formulated by regional commissions. She said the Beijing Conference was a milestone and had launched an important process requiring continuous updating to include new issues and obstacles. She welcomed the participation of NGOs and recognized the need for political will and commitment to make a difference in the lives of girls and women everywhere.

Nitin Desai, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, highlighted the importance of mainstreaming the work of the PrepCom in the broader context of all UN entities.

Angela King, Special Advisor to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, declared that the greatest peaceful revolution of the 20th century had been the transformation of the status of women. She called for clear and pragmatic strategies to ensure all women benefit from globalization and sustained efforts to combat, women's and girls' marginalization.

Aida Gonzalez-Martinez, Chair of the Commission on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, welcomed increasing linkages between the PFA's political framework and CEDAW's legal obligations. She called for systematic analysis of PFA implementation by the CSW.

Yakin Ertürk, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, introduced key documents for the PrepCom: review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing PFA (E/CN.6/2000/PC.2); emerging issues containing additional material for further actions and initiatives for the preparation of the outlook beyond the year 2000 (E/CN.6/2000/PC.4); and a summary of on-line conferences on progress made in the implementation of the PFA (E/CN.6/2000/PC/CRP.1).

PORTUGAL, on behalf of the EU, noted the need for: political commitment, involvement of men, and mainstreaming of gender into policies and programmes. He stressed linkages between gender equality and development, environment, population and human rights issues.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE noted the situation of women in developing countries has stagnated or worsened due to globalization and the HIV/AIDS epidemic. She emphasized regional cooperation in West Africa and the importance of resolving the international debt issue to liberate resources for the advancement of women.

CHINA, highlighting the growing gap between developing and developed countries as a major obstacle to PFA implementation, called for increased international financial assistance and fundamental changes leading to a just economic and political order.

ZAMBIA suggested a debt swap for HIV/AIDS and poverty programmes, and maintained that a permanent solution lies in an equitable economic order.

JUSCANZ noted the importance of gender mainstreaming, the necessity of active participation of men and the need to ensure that benefits of globalization are equally shared.

ALGERIA stated that developing countries, in spite of adequate political will, are experiencing a lack of financial resources. He said benefits derived from trade have accrued to developed countries, and called for support of the international community through increased ODA.

To accelerate PFA implementation, the PHILIPPINES proposed: promoting the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes; establishing a trust fund supported by financial institutions and interested donors; and creating a South-South cooperation scheme aimed at capacity-building, including arrangements for knowledge-sharing.

IRAN noted: sharing best practices would facilitate pragmatic approaches; the need to reaffirm commitment to the PFA; the role of diversity at all levels; and the need for increased resources for effective implementation.

ECUADOR highlighted cooperative efforts between state agencies in charge of women's affairs and women's movements. She noted the link between feminization of poverty and trade liberalization, especially in cases of heavy debt repayment schemes, and appealed for international collective action to guarantee economic and social rights for women and girls.

PAKISTAN suggested, *inter alia*: mandatory inclusion of gender concerns at all major UN conferences; establishment of horizontal linkages between external assistance and advice offered to national governments; and coordination of UNDP governance programmes with national implementation of other UN programmes.

SUDAN called for mobilization of resources and special budgets to support rural women and to help women cope with the effects of globalization, and emphasized the need for North-South cooperation.



KENYA called attention to HIV/AIDS in the implementation of PFA and CEDAW, and said gender aspects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic need to be examined along with dissemination of information. She said HIV/AIDS is a common responsibility, as are the adverse impacts of globalization on women and youth in developing countries.

The FAO, on behalf of the ACC Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, said human rights instruments and international commitments, including the FWCW, provide a global framework for gender equality. She emphasized the Inter-Agency Committee's commitment to working with member states and civil society partners to achieve PFA objectives.

The WORLD FOOD PROGRAMME noted a dramatic increase in the number of women acting as heads of households in emergency situations, and called for the incorporation of a gender perspective in humanitarian assistance, disaster mitigation and recovery strategies.

Delegates concluded the opening Plenary by adopting two resolutions on the participation and accreditation of NGOs at the UN Special Session. The resolution on participation allows those NGOs accredited to the Special Session to make statements in the *Ad Hoc* Committee of the Whole and those NGOs that are in consultative status with ECOSOC to make statements in the debate in Plenary (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.3). The resolution on accreditation provides guidance to NGOs on forwarding applications to a committee composed of the Bureau of the PrepCom and the Secretariat (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.4\*).

#### ORGANIZATIONAL MATTERS

On Monday, 6 March 2000, delegates convened in three informal Working Groups. Working Group I was chaired by Kristen Mlacak (Canada) and met throughout the PrepCom to negotiate the first three sections of the outcome document, including the introduction (Section I). The Working Group established a contact group on Section I on Friday, 10 March, facilitated by Christine Kapalata (Tanzania).

Working Group II, chaired by A.K. Bhattacharjee (India), concentrated on Section IV on actions and initiatives of the outcome document. A third Working Group, chaired by Rasa Ostrauskaite (Lithuania), met twice during the PrepCom to discuss the draft provisional agenda and organizational matters (E/CN.6/2000/PC.8) and the list of speakers (E/CN.6/2000/PC.9) for Beijing +5.

Additional closed contact groups were created to confer on the Draft Political Declaration and negotiate bracketed paragraphs contained in Section IV.

Delegates met in a final plenary session on Friday, 17 March, to evaluate progress and set dates for intersessional meetings.

The following is a summary of the outcome document at the conclusion of the PrepCom, with emphasis on remaining bracketed text. Paragraphs were discussed in an order determined by the availability of alternative text proposals from negotiating groups.

#### SUMMARY OF THE OUTCOME DOCUMENT

*Editor's note: Respecting the confidential nature of some of the negotiations, the Bulletin does not use names of countries and/or groups in parts of this summary. All paragraphs proceeded by an (\*) were discussed during the PrepCom.*

#### SECTION I: INTRODUCTION

\***Paragraph 1** reaffirms governments' commitment toward the goals and objectives contained in the Beijing Declaration and PFA, noting the goals and commitments made in the PFA have not been fully implemented. JUSCANZ and Mexico suggested additional reference

to regional preparatory meetings and their contribution to the PrepCom in ensuring a regional perspective on implementation and follow-up. The reference remains bracketed.

\***Paragraph 2** identifies the 12 critical areas for priority action contained in the PFA and recognizes that these actions form the basis for further progress and accountability to the world's women and toward achievement of gender equality, development and peace. The G-77/China called for reference to the elimination of all practices that discriminate against women and that inhibit their equal access to productive resources and economic independence. JUSCANZ suggested reference to, *inter alia*: barriers faced by women due to race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion or disability; collaboration with civil society; and the involvement of men in promoting gender equality. In the contact group, many delegates advocated referring to the role of CEDAW, but a group of countries opposed, preferring a general reference to human rights. The reference remains bracketed and was moved to a separate paragraph 3 *bis*. A regional group opposed reference to productive resources and economic independence and suggested instead language on access to economic, productive and social resources and services. Text remains bracketed.

\***Paragraph 2 bis** recognizes, *inter alia*, that: the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms is essential to the empowerment of women; national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind; states have a duty to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms; and states are responsible for PFA implementation. The paragraph remains bracketed.

The original formulation of \***paragraph 3** on an integrated approach toward implementing and advancing the PFA was replaced with a G-77/China proposal. The redrafted text states that the primary responsibility for implementing the PFA, as well as further actions and initiatives, lies with governments. The EU added a reference to mainstreaming gender concerns and promoting women's empowerment at all levels. The paragraph calls for: increased international cooperation; an enabling environment at all levels; allocation of sufficient resources; policies and legislation respecting the full diversity of women; recognition of barriers faced by women due to, *inter alia*, race, age, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, and disability; and the active involvement of men and boys. These references remain bracketed.

\***Paragraph 3 bis** refers to the implementation of CEDAW as a legal framework. The paragraph remains bracketed.

#### SECTION II: ACHIEVEMENTS AND OBSTACLES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 12 CRITICAL AREAS OF THE PFA

**WOMEN AND POVERTY:** On \***paragraph 4**, delegates agreed on text identifying: micro-credit and micro-financing as successful strategies for economic empowerment; policy development taking account the particular needs of female-headed households; and the enhanced understanding of the differing impacts of poverty on men and women. The G-77/China suggested reference to recognition of the gender dimensions of poverty, while the EU called for language referring to gender equality as a prerequisite to poverty education. The Holy See suggested reference to policies and programmes implemented to strengthen the family in performing its societal and developmental roles. The EU proposed placement of a reference to the relationship between remunerated and unremunerated work in a later section. References to gender equality, strengthening the family, and remunerated and unremunerated work remain bracketed.



On **\*paragraph 5**, delegates agreed to refer to income inequality, unemployment and deepening poverty among the most vulnerable and marginalized groups. 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. Proposed additions remain bracketed. The EU and JUSCANZ rejected a proposal from the Holy See to include unfulfilled commitments to provide development assistance, in a sentence listing factors that contribute to widening economic inequality between women and men. This reference remains bracketed.

**EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR WOMEN:** On **\*paragraph 6**, delegates agreed on text identifying, *inter alia*: progress achieved in women's and girls' education and training at all levels; measures taken in all regions to initiate alternative education and training systems to reach women and girls in indigenous communities and other disadvantaged and marginalized groups to encourage them to pursue all fields of study; and the need to remove gender biases from education and training. Delegates also accepted a G-77/China reference to particular non-traditional fields of study. The paragraph was adopted.

**\*Paragraph 7** calls for the eradication of illiteracy and strengthening of literacy among women and girls and their access to all levels and types of education. Delegates agreed to language specifying obstacles, including: lack of resources to improve educational infrastructure and undertake educational reforms; persisting gender discrimination and bias, including in teacher training; gender-based occupational stereotyping; lack of childcare facilities; persistent use of gender stereotypes in educational materials; and insufficient attention paid to the link between women's enrollment in higher educational institutions and labor market dynamics. On increasing access to all levels and types of education, JUSCANZ proposed a reference to pregnant adolescents and young mothers, which remains in brackets. The Holy See suggested language stating that the remote location of rural and indigenous communities and inadequate salaries and benefits creates obstacles in attracting and retaining teaching professionals and can result in lower quality education. This reference remains bracketed.

On a G-77/China proposal for **\*paragraph 7 bis** regarding the impact of structural adjustment policies on the education sector, JUSCANZ suggested reference to economic reform policies. The EU called for language referring to the inappropriate design of structural adjustment policies. The paragraph remains bracketed and its placement is yet to be determined.

**WOMEN AND HEALTH:** On **\*paragraph 8**, delegates agreed to text on: implementation of programmes that create awareness among policy-makers and planners of the need for health programmes to cover all aspects of women's health throughout the life cycle; increased attention to sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS; introduction of a gender perspective in health and health-related education and physical activities, as well as gender-specific prevention and rehabilitation programmes on substance abuse; increased attention to women's mental health; and increased attention to health conditions at work. The G-77/China called for language on the introduction of programmes creating awareness of the positive impact of breastfeeding on infants' and mothers' health and of programmes to combat malnutrition among pregnant and lactating mothers. South Africa and many delegates supported references to sexual and reproductive health and sexual and reproductive rights. The Holy See, supported by Syria and Iran, stated that the PFA does not mention sexual rights. Nicaragua, Poland, Algeria, Sudan, Morocco and Honduras opposed refer-

ence to sexual rights. Many delegations supported referring to family planning and contraceptive methods. JUSCANZ proposed text calling for increased awareness of the unequal burden placed on women as health-care providers within families and increased participation of women as workers in the health-care system. References to breastfeeding and malnutrition, sexual and reproductive health and rights, family planning and contraceptive methods, and women in the health-care system remain bracketed.

**Paragraph 9** notes the absence of a holistic approach to health care for women and girls, the lack of health research and technology, and shortage of financial and human resources.

**VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:** **Paragraph 10** addresses achievements such as government-initiated policy reforms, mechanisms, and laws to protect women from various forms of violence. It identifies progress made in services for abused women, promotion of education for law enforcement and welfare workers, and development of public awareness campaigns and educational materials. International policy support for the eradication of female genital mutilation is also highlighted.

**Paragraph 11** acknowledges the existence of inadequate data on the various forms of violence against women, weak response of legal officials, and fragmented and reactive prevention strategies.

**WOMEN AND ARMED CONFLICT:** **Paragraph 12** notes wider recognition of the differing impacts of armed conflict on men and women, and the relationship between gender concerns and the statutes and rules of the International Tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda and the International Criminal Court.

**Paragraph 13** addresses patterns of armed conflict, including targeting of civilians, the role of non-state actors, wide access to weapons and proliferation of the arms trade.

**WOMEN AND THE ECONOMY:** **Paragraph 14** identifies achievements, including enactment or introduction of government legislation that complies with international labor conventions, women's increased share of employment, and provisions made by governments to address discriminatory and abusive behavior in the workplace.

**Paragraph 15** acknowledges wider economic disparities, unsafe working environments, and women working in the rural and informal economy as subsistence producers with low levels of income and social security.

**WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING:** **\*Paragraph 16** recognizes the growing acceptance of the importance of women's full participation in decision-making and power at all levels and in all fora. Many delegates supported references to: reconciling responsibilities for family and work, including among self-employed women; affirmative and positive action policies; establishment and strengthening of national mechanisms for the advancement of women; and national and international networks of women politicians, parliamentarians, activists and professionals in various fields. The paragraph was adopted.

**\*Paragraph 17** identifies persistent gaps between *de jure* and *de facto* equality and a lack of women's representation at legislative, ministerial, sub-ministerial, and socio-economic levels. It acknowledges the constraints of traditional gender roles and the lack of human and financial resources allocated for training and advocacy of women's political careers. The EU supported references to: clear and transparent appointment and selection criteria; balanced participation



in decision-making; willingness to share power; sufficient dialogue and cooperation; and adaptation of political structures. This proposal remains bracketed.

**INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN:** On \***paragraph 18**, delegates agreed on text referring to: instituting and strengthening national machineries to promote and mainstream gender equality and to monitor of PFA implementation; enabling these machineries to contribute to the development of human resources in the field of gender studies; and acknowledging gender mainstreaming as a strategy to enhance the impact of policies that promote gender equality. Delegates supported a JUSCANZ proposal to add language on progress within the UN system in mainstreaming a gender perspective. Consensus was reached but an additional reference to CEDAW remains bracketed.

\***Paragraph 19** identifies obstacles to the creation of institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, including: lack of financial and human resources; lack of understanding of gender equality and gender mainstreaming; prevailing gender stereotypes; discriminatory attitudes; competing government priorities and insufficient links to civil society; marginalized location and paucity of authorities; and structural and communication problems within government agencies. Delegates agreed to delete a proposal referring to organizational, conceptual and structural constraints limiting governments' capacity to promote gender accountability. Text proposed by JUSCANZ referring to political will remains bracketed.

**HUMAN RIGHTS: Paragraph 20** notes that legal reforms have been undertaken and discriminatory provisions have been eliminated in civil, penal and personal status laws governing marriage and family relations, women's property and ownership rights, and women's political, work and employment rights. The text recognizes steps taken toward realization of women's *de facto* enjoyment of their human rights, including the adoption of policy measures, improvement of enforcement and monitoring mechanisms, implementation of legal literacy and awareness campaigns, and ratification of CEDAW.

**Paragraph 21** notes the existence of discriminatory legislation and recognizes that legislative and regulatory gaps perpetuate *de jure* and *de facto* inequality and discrimination. It further recognizes that women have insufficient access to the law due to a lack of legal literacy and resources, insensitivity and gender bias of law enforcement officials and the judiciary, and the persistence of traditional and stereotypical attitudes.

**WOMEN AND THE MEDIA: Paragraph 22** acknowledges: the increasing presence of women in local, national and international media, information dissemination, and the field of information and communication technologies; the increasing number of women's media organizations and programmes; increased participation and promotion of positive portrayals of women in the media; the creation of professional guidelines and voluntary codes of conduct encouraging fair gender portrayal; and the use of non-sexist language in media programmes.

**Paragraph 23** acknowledges negative stereotypes, increased pornography, biased journalism and limited access to the Internet.

**WOMEN AND THE ENVIRONMENT: Paragraph 24** states that national environment policies and programmes have begun to incorporate gender perspectives and that women's participation in decision-making has been enhanced, with more women assuming high-level and other posts in environmental agencies. Projects have also been launched to preserve and utilize women's traditional knowledge in the management of natural resources.

**Paragraph 25** notes a lack of public awareness about environmental issues and of the benefits of gender equality in promoting environmental protection.

**THE GIRL-CHILD: Paragraph 26** addresses progress made in primary and, to a lesser extent, in secondary and tertiary education for girls, attributing success to, *inter alia*, support mechanisms for pregnant girls and teenage mothers, and increased non-formal education opportunities.

**Paragraph 27** lists obstacles faced by the girl child, including traditional discriminatory attitudes against women and girls, inadequate awareness of the specific situations preventing girls from pursuing education, and a lack of opportunities for girls to become self-reliant and independent due to domestic responsibilities.

### **SECTION III: CURRENT CHALLENGES AFFECTING THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND THE PFA**

\***Paragraph 28** refers to review and appraisal of PFA implementation, which is occurring in a rapidly changing global context. Delegates agreed to delete language on further action and initiatives needed to respond to challenges and trends, and to add "as appropriate" to a reference to the role of governments, international organizations, the private sector, intergovernmental bodies and NGOs. The G-77/China suggested deleting a reference to analysis of gender equality, which remains in brackets.

**Paragraph 29** identifies impacts of the globalization process, including shifts toward open trade and privatization of state-owned enterprises. The paragraph notes that while globalization has brought greater economic opportunities and autonomy to some women, others have become more vulnerable and continue to be employed in low paid, part-time jobs marked by insecurity and by safety and health hazards.

\***Paragraph 30** addresses challenges such as increasing economic disparities, growing interdependence and dependence of states on external factors, and the feminization of poverty. Delegates agreed on text referring to:

- financial crises, which alter prospects of growth, and cause economic instability and impact women's lives;
- the ability of states to provide social protection and social security as well as funding for PFA implementation;
- limited funding at the state level requiring innovative approaches to the allocation of resources by governments and their partners; and
- gender analysis of national budgets as an effective tool for determining the differential impact of expenditures on women and men.

The EU proposed text on the shift of the cost of social reproduction and other welfare provisions from the public sector to the household, and language stating that the agreed ODA target of 0.7 percent of GNP has not been achieved. The G-77/China called for language stating that decreasing levels of funding available through international cooperation have marginalized and excluded most developing countries, within which women are among the poorest and most vulnerable, and that gender analysis is crucial to promotion of gender equality and equitable use of existing resources. The Holy See called for language on increased attention to strengthening the family. References to the cost of social reproduction, ODA targets, funding through international cooperation and strengthening the family remain bracketed.



Delegates agreed on **\*paragraph 30 bis**, proposed by the Russian Federation, which addresses challenges faced by women from countries with economies in transition, such as, *inter alia*, loss of childcare facilities due to elimination or privatization of state workplaces and continuing inequality of access to training for re-employment.

A G-77/China proposal for **\*paragraph 30 ter** regarding, *inter alia*, the critical role of women in the family, inadequate support to women, and insufficient protection and support to the family remains bracketed.

**Paragraph 31** states that science and technology are transforming patterns of production, creating jobs and ways of working, and contributing to the establishment of a knowledge-based society. The paragraph notes many women worldwide are using new communications technologies for networking, advocacy, exchange of information and e-commerce initiatives.

**\*Paragraph 32** addresses women and labor migration and notes that while migration can increase women's earning opportunities and self-reliance, it also exposes them to trafficking and other abuses. Delegates agreed to text referring to the changing patterns of migratory flows of labor. The G-77/China, supported by the Holy See, suggested language on: women's and girls' increased involvement in regional and international labor migration, mainly in farm labor, domestic work and the entertainment industry; exposure of migrant women to inadequate working conditions, increased health risks, economic and sexual exploitation, forced prostitution, racism, and xenophobia; and the separation of migrant women from their children. The EU called for language referring to internal migration and abuses impairing women's enjoyment of their human rights. Text proposals by the G-77/China and the EU remain bracketed.

**Paragraph 33** notes recent developments toward new alliances and coalitions of governments, trade unions, professional and consumer associations, foundations and NGOs within and across countries to promote human rights, codes of conduct and socially responsible forms of investment.

**\*Paragraph 34** addresses increased acceptance of gender equality based on principles, norms, rules, institutional mechanisms, and CEDAW and its Optional Protocol. Reference to incorporation of a gender perspective within the International Criminal Court and the *Ad Hoc* International Tribunals remains bracketed.

**Paragraph 35** addresses the under-representation of women in decision-making bodies related to politics, the economy and conflict resolution mechanisms, which hinders the inclusion of a gender perspective in critical spheres of influence.

**Paragraph 36**, on the ageing population, refers to: increased life expectancy and lower mortality rates; the increase of widows and older single women; and gains to society from the knowledge and life experience of older women.

**Paragraph 36 bis** refers to the rising epidemic of tobacco use among women and the increased risks of cancer, and notes the need for comprehensive solutions and prevention and cessation strategies.

**Paragraph 37** discusses impacts on women associated with the progression of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in the developing world and identifies areas not sufficiently addressed.

**Paragraph 37 bis** refers to mortality and morbidity among adults and children from infectious, parasitic and water-borne diseases, such as tuberculosis, malaria and schistosomiasis.

**Paragraph 37 ter** notes the impacts of long-term and large-scale environmental problems on the health and well-being of individuals.

**Paragraph 38** states that the increase in casualties and damage caused by natural disasters place a burden on women to meet the immediate daily needs of their families.

**Paragraph 39** notes armed conflict: roots in political transition, economic dislocation, fragile civil society and state weakening; influences arms and drug dealers and organized crime syndicates; and limits efforts at the international level to judge perpetrators of war-related gender-based crimes.

**Paragraph 40** acknowledges that violence against women is better understood and more broadly discussed by the public and addressed by legal and policy measures. The paragraph states that women's networks continue to advocate the eradication of domestic violence and that national authorities should be held accountable for the protection of human rights.

**Paragraph 41** refers to the reassessment of gender roles toward gender equality and the need for changing roles and identities of women and men.

**Paragraph 41 bis** notes that increased awareness of gender equality cannot be fully realized through institutional arrangements alone, and recognizes education as one of the most valuable means of realizing empowerment.

#### **SECTION IV: ACTIONS AND INITIATIVES TO OVERCOME OBSTACLES AND TO ACHIEVE THE FULL AND ACCELERATED IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND THE PFA**

**Chapeau: \*Paragraph 42** addresses governments' commitment to the PFA and to further actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles to women's advancement, and address challenges in view of the evaluation of progress since Beijing. It further notes governments' recognition that the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls is a prerequisite for realizing gender equality, development and peace in the 21st century. One delegate proposed reference to the outcome document, and a group of countries proposed including the right to development. The last references remain bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 43** calls upon UN organizations and the Bretton Woods institutions, the WTO, other international and regional inter-governmental bodies, parliaments, civil society, the private sector, NGOs, trade unions and other stakeholders to support government efforts and, where appropriate, develop complementary programmes of their own to achieve full and effective PFA implementation. The paragraph was adopted.

**\*Paragraph 43 bis**, proposed by a group of countries, reaffirms the contribution and complementary role of NGOs in ensuring effective PFA implementation and calls upon governments and intergovernmental organizations to strengthen these partnerships, particularly with women's organizations. A group of countries proposed reference to the autonomy of NGOs. This reference remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 43 ter**, proposed by a regional group, states that the goal of gender equality can be fully achieved only in the context of renewed relations among different stakeholders at all levels. A regional group suggested a reference stating that the full participation of women on the basis of equality in all spheres of society is essential for good governance, political legitimacy and effective management of social and economic resources. The reference remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 44** on achieving gender equality, states that women's as well as men's interests, concerns, experiences and priorities are an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all actions in all areas of development in society, and



calls for redressing inequalities between women and men and girls and boys. Variations on reference to national and international monitoring, suggested by many countries, remain bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 44 bis**, as proposed by a regional group, notes that policy design and implementation must address all stages of the life cycle, recognize barriers and reflect the full diversity of women. The paragraph remains bracketed and may be combined with paragraph 53 bis.

**\*Paragraph 45** acknowledges that adoption or endorsement of the PFA indicates agreement on a common development agenda with gender equality as an underlying principle, and establishes that sustainable human development for all societies is possible only when women become full and equal partners in, and benefit from, development policy-making and practice. Many countries supported reference to women's equitable access to financial and economic resources. Other delegations proposed language on "people-centered development" and new and further initiatives to PFA follow-up. These references remain bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 46** focuses on a holistic approach to women's participation in development, and calls for policies and programmes toward integration of a gender perspective in sustainable development, social protection, control of resources and poverty elimination. A group of countries supported inclusion of the right to development, and others added reference to women's and girls' universal, indivisible, interdependent, and interrelated human rights. The suggested additions remain bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 46 bis**, proposed by a regional group, highlights the right to health, education and social services and calls for increased efforts in providing equal access to adequate and affordable care throughout the life cycle. Reference to health services remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 47** notes that a majority of the world's women are subsistence producers and users of environmental resources, and recognizes there is a need to integrate women's knowledge and priorities in the conservation and management of such resources to ensure their sustainability. It calls for gender-sensitive programmes and infrastructures to respond effectively to disaster and emergency situations that threaten the environment, livelihood security and the management of basic daily requirements. The paragraph was adopted.

**\*Paragraph 47 bis**, proposed by a group of countries, further defines the plight of populations in states with scarce or limited resources, recognizing that women's customary knowledge, management and sustainable use of biodiversity plays a crucial role in preserving and protecting these environments. The paragraph was adopted.

**\*Paragraph 48** addresses maintenance of international peace and security, social justice and human rights as central goals of governments. It recognizes the necessity of women's participation in peace processes, conflict resolution, and decision-making at all levels. A group of countries proposed references to: the right to development; combating violence against women and girls in situations of armed conflict, including the use of systematic rape as a weapon of war; a gender approach to conflict resolution; and post-conflict reconstruction programmes and development assistance at all levels. A regional group supported reference to democracy, rule of law, good governance, and rehabilitation and post-conflict resolution. The paragraph remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 48 bis**, proposed by a group of countries, notes that PFA implementation is enhanced by strengthening international cooperation and understanding through, *inter alia*, the full recognition of

cultural diversity and dialogue among cultures and civilizations, which the international community recognizes as essential for the achievement of UN purposes. The paragraph remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 49** stresses the importance of political will and commitment at all levels in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the adoption and implementation of comprehensive and action-oriented policies in all areas. It notes that policy commitments are essential for further developing a framework that ensures women's equal access to, and control over, economic and financial resources, training, services and institutions as well as their participation in decision-making and management. The text refers to partnership of women and men at all policy-making levels, and active involvement of men and boys in achieving PFA goals. The paragraph was adopted.

**\*Paragraph 50**, proposed by a regional group, addresses: non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive legislative frameworks to ensure women's *de jure* equality; equal protection by or under the law, together with adequate means of redress against violations; knowledge about rights and access to resources; and a supportive law enforcement system. It calls for new regulatory measures in legislative reform processes stemming from globalization, privatization and liberalization, to ensure equal economic rights and opportunities. The paragraph remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 51** highlights violence against women as a major obstacle to gender equality, development and peace, and a human rights concern. Delegates debated inclusion of language defining various forms of violence, such as rape, sexual abuse and exploitation, trafficking, cultural prejudice, racism, pornography, ethnic cleansing, foreign occupation, religious extremism, terrorism, and war. Proposals were made by several delegations regarding reference to adoption and implementation of gender-sensitive legislation and international instruments. The paragraph remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 51 bis**, proposed by a regional group, addresses the threat of armed conflict and emergency situations to the well being of women and children, noting that measures to limit such threats are essential for the achievement of gender equality, development and peace. The paragraph remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 51 ter**, proposed by one delegate, addresses the issue of the family and its role in society. A group of countries preferred emphasizing the role of the family as the basic unit of society, noting that various forms of family exist, the burden of responsibility falls disproportionately on women, and women's roles are inadequately recognized. A regional group called for equal sharing of responsibilities among men and women to achieve full partnership. One delegate proposed reference to motherhood and family disintegration as a major cause of the feminization of poverty and other social problems affecting women and girls. No agreement was reached.

A regional group proposed new text on **\*paragraph 52**, underscoring the need for, *inter alia*: strong national machineries; institutional and conceptual changes; human and financial resources; and political commitment to initiate, recommend and facilitate the development, adoption and monitoring of policies, legislation, programmes and capacity building for the empowerment of women. The paragraph remains bracketed.

**\*Paragraph 53** underscores the need to enhance women's opportunities, potentials and activities through women-specific programmes aimed at meeting the basic and specific needs of women for capacity building, organizational development and empowerment and through gender mainstreaming in all programme formulation and implementa-



tion activities. The text emphasizes the importance of expanding into new areas of programming to advance gender equality in response to current challenges. The paragraph was adopted.

\***Paragraph 53 bis** addresses the needs and concerns of disabled girls and women, and calls attention to the need for special measures at all levels of policy-making and programming. The paragraph remains bracketed, pending a possible merger with paragraph 44 *bis*.

\***Paragraph 54** states that effective and coordinated plans and programmes for full PFA implementation require: clear knowledge of the situation of women and girls; sex-disaggregated data; short- and long-term time-bound targets and measurable goals; and follow-up mechanisms to assess progress. Delegates asked that reference to efforts needed to ensure capacity building, transparency and accountability remain bracketed.

\***Paragraph 55** notes that the realization of gender equality, development and peace needs to be supported by the allocation of human and financial resources. Inclusion of reference to support at local, national, regional and international levels remains bracketed.

\***Paragraph 55 bis** recognizes the persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women, particularly in developing countries, and stresses the importance of continued review, modification and implementation of integrated macro-economic and social policies and programmes, including, *inter alia*, those related to structural adjustment and external debt problems, and ensured universal and equitable access to social services, education, health care and economic resources. The text was adopted and delegates agreed to place this paragraph between paragraphs 46 and 46 *bis*.

#### **ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL:**

**Paragraph 56(a)** expands and encourages the use of specific, time-bound targets to achieve gender balance in the participation of women and men in all areas and at all levels of public life, especially in decision-making positions, and all political activities, including electoral processes.

**Paragraph 56(a) bis**, proposed by a group of countries, addresses barriers women face to participation in politics.

**Paragraph 56(b)** calls for explicit time-bound targets for women's full and equal participation at key policy-making levels in strategic and development institutions, including ministries of finance and planning, agriculture, education, health and environment.

**Paragraph 56(c)** calls for quotas on women's participation in local development bodies as part of the decentralization processes taking place in many countries.

\***Paragraph 56(d)** addresses policies ensuring equal access to education and elimination of gender disparities in education, including vocational training, science and technology, opportunities for continuing education at all levels and completion of basic education for girls. The paragraph was adopted.

\***Paragraph 56(d) bis** supports implementation of plans and programmes of action to ensure quality education, improve enrollment and retention rates, and eliminate gender discrimination in education. The paragraph was adopted.

\***Paragraph 56(d) ter** supports a gender-sensitive learning environment for girls and boys. Language on forms of diversity remains bracketed.

\***Paragraph 56(d) quarter**, was placed under paragraph 62, and addresses the needs of disabled women and girls in ensuring their equal access to education, employment, health care, and protection of human rights. The paragraph was adopted.

\***Paragraph 56(e)** calls for closing the gender gap in primary and secondary education by 2005 and ensuring universal primary education for both girls and boys by 2015. Delegates proposed adding reference to, *inter alia*, political commitment, the PFA and the Cairo Programme of Action, and deleting reference to global conferences. The paragraph was adopted.

**Paragraph 56(e) bis**, proposed by a group of countries, addresses policies and programmes aimed at reducing the illiteracy rate. The paragraph remains bracketed, and will be considered along with paragraph 63(h).

\***Paragraph 56(e) ter**, proposed by a regional group, calls for development of gender-sensitive curricula at all levels of education and training to address gender stereotyping as one of the root causes of segregation in working life. This paragraph was adopted.

\***Paragraph 56(f)** addresses follow-up to action plans and agreements. Delegates supported adding reference to relevant agreements and adjustment or development of new national plans, and deletion of language on international human rights instruments. While there was general agreement on proposed language, debate over linking the reference to human rights with paragraph 58(c) prevented this paragraph from being adopted. It will be considered again along with paragraph 58(c).

**Paragraph 56(g)** calls on states to repeal all discriminatory legislation by 2005.

**Paragraph 56(h)** calls on states to create and maintain a non-discriminatory, gender-sensitive legal environment.

**Paragraph 56(i)** asks states to review all legislation to ensure compatibility and compliance with CEDAW.

**Paragraph 56(j)** calls for adoption of incentive systems that facilitate and strengthen compliance with non-discriminatory legislation.

\***Paragraph 56(k)** addresses the development of laws prohibiting customary or traditional practices violating women's human rights. Inclusion of reference to the development, adoption, implementation and reinforcement of such laws and to female genital mutilation, forced marriages, and honor crimes remains bracketed.

**Paragraph 56(l) through paragraph 56(dd)** call upon governments to address, *inter alia*:

- legislation pertaining to domestic violence, indigenous knowledge, and health services;
- gender equality reflected in budgetary processes and social security systems;
- land reform and ownership; and
- limiting access to weapons by 2005.

**Paragraph 57** calls on governments and NGOs to: encourage coalitions to protect and promote women's human rights; review the impact of health sector reforms on women's health and ensure women's full and equal access to health services; reorient health information, services and training for health workers to incorporate gender sensitivity; and develop and use practical tools and indicators for gender mainstreaming.

**Paragraph 58** calls on governments, NGOs, the private sector and other civil society actors to, *inter alia*, establish institutional mechanisms that support women's career development and support women in senior positions.

**ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AT THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL:** **Paragraph 59** identifies actions to be taken by the UN, including regional commissions and international and regional organizations. Actions include: assisting governments in developing integrated programmes for the 12 critical areas; allocating resources to





national and regional programmes; and supporting women's NGOs in providing services, particularly health and reproductive services, as a way of increasing government capacity to meet commitments made at the Cairo Conference and follow-up.

**Paragraph 60** calls on the UN system, the Bretton Woods institutions and NGOs to: assist governments in developing gender-sensitive responses to humanitarian crises; ensure women's equal participation in reconstruction efforts; support the work of the international tribunals, particularly those related to gender; support women's networks in efforts to eradicate violence against women; hold all actors accountable for protecting and promoting women's human rights; and launch an international "zero tolerance" campaign on violence against women by 2001.

**Paragraph 61** asks the organizations of the UN system to: convene an international task force to develop consensus on indicators to measure all forms of violence; achieve 50/50 gender distribution in all professional posts; and introduce affirmative action and other special measures in recruitment and promotion until this goal is reached.

**ACTIONS TO BE TAKEN AT THE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL:** **Paragraph 62** calls on governments and international organizations, including the UN system, to work toward, *inter alia*:

- international cooperation;
- indicators on violence against women;
- collection of information on HIV/AIDS;
- training for public officials;
- accessibility of remedies for violations of rights;
- elimination of impunity for breaches of human rights and humanitarian law;
- private sector partnerships and media networks;
- capacity building of women's NGOs to use new information and communications technologies;
- a gender-sensitive global poverty eradication strategy during the 2000 Millennium Assembly;
- establishment of social development funds to minimize the negative impacts on women of SAPs and trade liberalization; and
- establishment of "lending windows" that cater to the needs of women.

**Paragraph 63** calls on governments and international organizations, including the UN system and relevant civil society actors, to, *inter alia*:

- develop policies to change men's attitudes and behaviors related to gender roles;
- expand gender-awareness campaigns to combat traditional stereotypes;
- apply affirmative action measures to enhance women's participation in decision-making;
- reach out to illiterate adult women;
- implement radio and advertising campaigns emphasizing the equal value of girls and boys;
- support NGO efforts in communities to protect women from HIV/AIDS and to provide care to infected women and girls;
- apply international and national labor laws to irregular forms of work created by globalization that remain unprotected by standard labor laws;
- re-orient agricultural extension services to strengthen women's role in food security;
- research emerging trends that are creating new gender disparities, such as migration;

- involve more women in conflict resolution, peacemaking and peace-building; and
- support women's NGOs in implementing Agenda 21.

## CLOSING PLENARY

On Friday, 17 March 2000, PrepCom Chair Rose Odera opened the fourth and final meeting of the Plenary at 4:00 pm. She introduced, and delegates adopted, the Draft Political Declaration (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.5) and the draft provisional agenda and organizational matters for the 23rd Special Session of the GA (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.6). Delegates also adopted documents relevant to: the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing PFA (E/CN.6/2000/PC/2/Corr.2); emerging issues containing additional material for further actions and initiatives for the preparation of the outlook beyond the year 2000 (E/CN.6/2000/PC/4); and the results of regional meetings held in preparation for the Special Session of the GA (E/CN.6/2000/PC/6 and Add.1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).

The Draft Political Declaration reaffirms the commitment of States to the goals and objectives of the Beijing Declaration and PFA and to the implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern. It recognizes that States have primary responsibility for the full implementation of the NFLS, the Beijing Declaration and PFA and, in this connection, calls upon developed countries to fulfill the internationally agreed target of 0.7% of the GNP for ODA. The Declaration welcomes progress made so far toward gender equality and achieving universal ratification of CEDAW. It also reaffirms the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the process of implementation of the outcome of other major UN conferences and the need for coordinated follow-up.

Chair Odera presented a draft decision (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.7) on intersessional informal meetings to finalize work on the outcome document. The draft decision proposes these meetings be held at UN Headquarters on: 20 April, 8, 9 and 11 May, and 30 May – 2 June 2000. It also provides for a formal meeting to adopt the outcome document and the report of the PrepCom and to forward these documents directly to the GA.

PAKISTAN, the HOLY SEE, SYRIA, and MOROCCO expressed concern that experts from capitals and NGO representatives would not be able to attend these meetings, and asked that intersessionals be held right before the Special Session in June.

Chair Odera noted these dates were subject to change but were possibly the only ones available according to UN Conference Services and that delegations should make the best use of them. Delegates adopted the draft decision.

Delegates, in closing statements, thanked Chair Odera, the Bureau and the Secretariat for helping the process move forward, and welcomed efforts that had led to the adoption of the resolutions on NGO participation at Beijing +5 and the Draft Political Declaration.

The EU stressed its willingness to cooperate on a strong, forward-looking outcome document. She underscored the importance of NGO participation in helping to devise future strategies and achieve gender equality, but regretted NGO activities had been challenged by groups trying to prevent ideas from being freely expressed. She remarked that core UN values include tolerance and freedom of expression, and said governments had a responsibility to ensure the free and active participation of NGOs.

The G-77/CHINA said they were looking forward to working hard to reach the goals of the PFA.



Angela King, Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, said the PrepCom had been an arduous process, and thanked the CSW Secretariat for facilitating the work. She also thanked: the Working Group Chairs for their leadership, guidance and patience; NGOs for their input on the 12 critical areas and for illustrating grassroots' priorities; UN agency colleagues for providing technical expertise; Yakin Ertürk, DAW Director, and her staff for their efficient work; interpretation services; and high-level officials for the importance they have granted to the Beijing process. She congratulated Venezuela, Cuba and the Dominican Republic for signing the Optional Protocol to CEDAW. She hoped that in future assignments, delegations would remember the achievements of the PrepCom and collaborative efforts among groups.

Chair Odera said it was "painfully clear" that the work had not been completed. She thanked the CSW Secretariat, Angela King, Kate Starr Newell, the Bureau, and Conference Services. She congratulated delegations for their teamwork, both on the floor and behind the scenes, and gavelled the PrepCom to a close at 5:00 pm.

### A BRIEF ANALYSIS OF THE PREPCOM

The Beijing+5 PrepCom may have been proof of the diplomatic truism that there are no permanent friends or enemies, only permanent interests. The closing plenary ended optimistically, with delegates celebrating, after many months of debate, the passage of two GA resolutions granting expanded access to NGOs during the Special Session. Agreement on a Political Declaration, including consensus on references to ODA and CEDAW, was welcomed as a statement of political support for the Beijing review process. Another highlight was an historical first statement from the Security Council on International Women's Day on the need to include women in all parts of peace processes.

Over the course of the PrepCom, however, concerns were regularly expressed in all quarters about the slow pace of negotiations. Many of the most difficult issues remain bracketed, and large sections of the text were never even discussed. There were frequent delays in presenting group positions and groups routinely had to stop informal consultations in order to reach consensus within their own ranks. G-77/China delegates noted problems with the competing requirements of other sets of negotiations, particularly those in preparation for the upcoming Social Summit review, and with a diverse mix of delegates, including those from capitals with gender expertise and those from New York who dwelled on longstanding diplomatic issues.

#### **BEIJING+5=?**

During the PrepCom, there was discussion among participants about whether the structure of the Beijing +5 process could even be effective. Some participants maintained that the Beijing review would prove again, as was the case in the five-year reviews of Rio and Cairo, that it is impossible to conduct a review in a highly politicized arena, where different groups cannot agree even on basic measurements of progress. To complicate matters further, Beijing +5 is considered an ambitious process since it is going beyond the Cairo and Rio reviews and attempting not only to forge consensus on future actions, but also to bring governments to negotiated agreements on their achievements and failures. Some observers note that governments are nervous about the review process because it reveals that very little has been accomplished since Beijing; others point out that gender equality is a long-term goal, and a five-year review may be too soon to capture progress. NGOs, who played a major role in shaping the Beijing commitments, expressed particular frustrations about the lack of progress during the

PrepCom. A few observers note that NGOs need to move beyond their current role as issue advocates and develop new strategies for rallying the high-level political will that is necessary to advance UN processes.

#### **JOCKYING FOR POSITIONS**

The positions of the various negotiating blocs remained similar to those in Beijing, although some new trends were evident as well. JUSCANZ and the EU continued to stand firmly behind their traditional support of human rights and good governance. There were indications that the American delegation, under constraints related to the uneasy relationship between Washington and the UN, was unable to lend outright support to potentially controversial issues such as references to all forms of diversity and sexual orientation. Canada, speaking for JUSCANZ, and the EU supported these issues as increasingly important to women in their countries, but would not predict whether references would survive the Special Session.

The Holy See, following past practice, backed proposals related to development opportunities, emphasized the role of the family and, with a few traditional Arab and Latin American partners, objected to references to reproductive and sexual rights. The G-77/China pursued its usual strong emphasis on issues relating to poverty, ODA shortfalls, and the right to development. Given the disparate benefits of globalization in recent years, some members urged a more hardline stance on political rights language, saying they would not consent to it without references to economic and social rights. This tactic held up agreement on references to CEDAW, although the treaty has been signed by most countries and appears in the PFA.

By some accounts, members of the G-77/China were more publicly divided on issues related to globalization than in past negotiations. Delegations from countries that have suffered under the new economic order expressed frustration with continued calls to implement the PFA when their countries are already struggling with shortfalls in resources and unsuitable economic frameworks. Some also felt ground was being lost on holding donor countries accountable for ODA commitments. Consensus was reached in the Draft Political Declaration that internationally agreed ODA targets have not been reached, but donor countries so far have preferred language in the outcome document calling for economic opportunities rather than rights or fundamental structural changes. In response, the G-77/China has sought to keep monitoring of implementation on the national level, maintaining that the lack of international support implies that any form of international monitoring should also be limited.

As expected, there was lengthy discussion on sexual and reproductive health and rights. In Working Group I, following the practice in Beijing, the G-77/China did not speak as a group on this issue. However, some observers noticed subtle shifts in the positions of several African and Latin American countries toward more open support for these references.

Proposals on targets and indicators also stirred debate, with both NGOs and some governments calling for specific numbers to back up ideas expressed in the PFA. This has met with mixed support among all delegations. Agreed language so far refers to time-bound targets and measurable goals, but often does not include specific numbers. It was difficult to predict whether a call for eliminating all discriminatory laws by the year 2005 would survive in the final document.

#### **THE DIFFICULTIES OF DEMOCRACY**

While NGOs could consider the GA resolutions expanding access during the Special Session as a victory, the PrepCom also posed difficult questions about the forms of dialogue and expression that should take place within the UN. There were reports of disruptive activities in



different NGO meetings and on the negotiating floor. In the closing Plenary, the EU, supported by JUSCANZ and Mexico, issued a strongly worded statement on those who had attempted to hinder the work of the PrepCom. The EU called for greater tolerance and dialogues in good faith as part of common striving for a better world. There was some speculation in the corridors that the Holy See hopes certain religious groups will continue to lobby for conservative positions on reproductive health that it can no longer openly call for within the context of post-Beijing and ICPD agreements.

### **ELEVEN WEEKS AND COUNTING**

By the close of the PrepCom, delegates were lamenting that more had not been accomplished, while admitting that, between the meeting's issues and logistics, obstacles to progress had been steep. Many expressed the conviction that the review would at least reaffirm the core ideas of the Beijing PFA and the Cairo Programme of Action, given the firm consensus on avoiding the renegotiation of existing agreements. Certain trends on critical issues have begun to emerge. The outcome document has put forward stronger language on poverty and economics, compared to the PFA, with these issues now perceived as cross-cutting, rather than sectoral. While disagreement about fundamental economic structures persists, there is growing consensus on the need to address the disproportionate impact of poverty on women. There is also agreement on the need to take holistic approaches to entrenched problems such as violence against women, and an indication that greater emphasis will be placed on the role of men in gender equality.

Some observers predicted that the PrepCom's slow pace will spark a sense of urgency between now and June, although negotiations may continue far into the Special Session, as was the case during Cairo +5. NGOs, members of the G-77/China and the Holy See have all expressed concerns about being able to bring in enough delegates to cover intersessional meetings, scheduled at different times over the next 11 weeks. In the end, however, delegates reaffirmed their commitment to negotiating a document that both supports the PFA and maps out future directions. The PrepCom was an opportunity to identify the strongest points of commonality and difference. The rest will be a diplomatic mix of good will, gracious accommodation and hard work.

### **THINGS TO LOOK FOR BEFORE BEIJING+5**

**WOMEN AND MEN IN THE 21st CENTURY - GENDER CONFLICT OR NEW ALLIANCES:** This conference, organized by the Institute for Future Studies in co-operation with the Swedish Government's Millenium Committee, will be held on 27 March 2000, in Stockholm. It will address historical experiences and future challenges. For more information, contact: the Institute for Future Studies: fax: +46-8-24 50 14; e-mail: info@framtidstudier.se.

**COPENHAGEN +5:** The Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the GA on the Implementation of the Outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and Further Initiatives will hold its second substantive session in New York from 3-14 April 2000. The Special Session will be held from 26-30 June 2000, in Geneva. For more information, contact: Gloria Kan, Chief, Intergovernmental

Policy Branch, Division for Social Policy Development, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations, Room DC2-1362, NY, NY 10017 USA; tel: +1-(212) 963-5873; fax: +1(212) 963-3062; e-mail: kan@un.org; Internet: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/geneva2000/>

**SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE:** The SAWC will be held in Los Angeles, California, from 6-7 May 2000. It is dedicated to promoting an interactive forum for the discussion of issues relating to South Asian women globally. The SAWC will include workshops for the discussion of issues relevant to the immigrant and second-generation population in the Diaspora. For more information, contact: Sangeeta Gupta, SAWC, PMB 260, 1198 Pacific Coast Hwy, Suite D, Seal Beach, CA 90740-6200; e-mail: [sangeetaucla@yahoo.com](mailto:sangeetaucla@yahoo.com).

**WOMEN, HEART DISEASE AND STROKE - POLICY IN ACTION:** The First International Conference on Women, Heart Disease and Stroke, sponsored by the World Health Organization, will be held from 8-10 May 2000, in Victoria, British Columbia, Canada. For more information, contact: WHO, Avenue Appia 20, 1211 Geneva 27, Switzerland; tel: +41(22) 791 21 11; fax: +41 (22) 791 07 46; e-mail: [info@who.ch](mailto:info@who.ch); Internet: <http://www.who.org>

**ISTANBUL +5 FIRST PREPARATORY MEETING:** The Commission on Human Settlements will meet in Nairobi, Kenya, from 8-12 May 2000. The Commission will be acting as the preparatory committee for a three-day special session in June 2001 to review and appraise the implementation of the outcome of the Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II). For more information, contact: Ms. Axumite Gebre-Egziabher, Coordinator, Istanbul +5, United Nations Center for Human Settlements (UNCHS-Habitat), P.O. Box 30030, Nairobi, Kenya; tel: +254 (2) 623831; fax: +254 (2) 624262; e-mail: [Axumite.Gebre-Egziabher@unchs.org](mailto:Axumite.Gebre-Egziabher@unchs.org); Internet: <http://www.istanbul5.org>

**INTER-AGENCY SYMPOSIUM ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN:** This meeting, sponsored by the World Health Organization, will be held at a date to be determined in May 2000. For more information, contact: WHO, tel: +41 (22) 791 21 11; fax: +41 (22) 791 07 46; e-mail: [info@who.ch](mailto:info@who.ch); Internet: <http://www.who.org>.

**BEIJING +5:** The GA Special Session on gender equality, development and peace for the 21st century will be held from 5-9 June 2000 at UN Headquarters in New York. It will be preceded by intersessional informal meetings to finalize work on the outcome document, currently scheduled for 20 April, 8, 9 and 11 May, and 30 May - 2 June 2000, at UN Headquarters. The Special Session will review and assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, adopted in 1985, and the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing. It will also consider future actions and initiatives for the year 2000 and beyond. For more information, contact: UN Division for the Advancement of Women, 2 UN Plaza, DC 2-12th Floor, New York, NY 10017 USA; tel: +1 (212) 963-1234; fax +1 (212) 963-3463; e-mail: [daw@un.org](mailto:daw@un.org); Internet: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/beijing+5.htm>