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**Reference document on the participation of civil society  
in United Nations conferences and special sessions of the General  
Assembly during the 1990s**

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## 1. GENERAL

### 1.1 Introduction

The accreditation and participation of civil society, including NGOs in United Nations conferences and special sessions is one way they contribute to the work of the UN. This practice has evolved and developed in particular during the 1990s when many of the major UN conferences took place. In the Millennium Declaration and its follow up resolution, enhanced partnership and co-operation with civil society as a whole was called for to ensure its contribution to the implementation of the Declaration.

In context of all conferences and General Assembly special sessions Member States make recommendations for civil society activities at the national, regional, subregional and international levels. These recommendations include ways and means how civil society will participate in awareness raising, information campaigns, national delegations, as well as in reporting, monitoring and implementation. These aspects are not dealt with in this document. They comprise, however, an important part of civil society participation, because one of the main reasons for civil society to participate in conferences and General Assembly special sessions is to contribute to the outcome of these meetings and take part in the implementation and follow up processes.

In order to facilitate the discussion on the participation of civil society in the work of the United Nations, this document compiles the history, including the legislative background and existing practice of civil society participation as far as UN conferences and special sessions in the 1990s are concerned. The upcoming conferences are included with information on decisions made so far.

This document should be treated as "work in process" and any comments and additions for its improvement would be appreciated.

### 1.2 Background on the relationship with civil society

Based on the [Charter](#) provisions, both in the preamble and article 71, the United Nations has had a relationship with civil society since its establishment. The first NGOs were granted consultative status by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as early as in 1948. The first set of rules on this relationship was adopted in 1950 by the ECOSOC in resolution 288 B(X). These rules were reviewed by the General Assembly in 1968 in resolution 1296, which became the basis for establishing criteria for the participation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) at the United Nations, which remained in use for almost three decades. The resolution also provided the framework for the funds and programmes of the United Nations to appoint NGO liaison officers and to have their own procedures for NGO access.

In 1993, Member States decided that the resolution 1296 needed to be reviewed in order to update and accommodate changes since 1968. The relationship between NGOs and the United

Nations had developed, as NGOs had become more present, active and influential at the international level, and more directly engaged in the intergovernmental processes. The ECOSOC decision 1993/214 of February 1993 established the parameters and mandate for a review. The review took place from February 1993 to July 1996, under the auspices of a Working Group comprised of Member States.

In 1996, ECOSOC concluded this major review. The arrangements for NGOs at the United Nations as a whole were updated and adopted by [ECOSOC resolution 1996/31](#). This resolution is the current basis for partnership between NGOs and the United Nations.

In 1998, the Secretary-General elaborated arrangements and practices for NGOs in his report A/53/170. Furthermore, the Secretary-General reflected the views of Member States, members of the specialized agencies, observers, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs from all regions in another report A/54/329, in 1999. As stated above, also the Millennium Declaration gave a new mandate to enhance this partnership.

### 1.3 Current legislation

Partnership arrangements between NGOs and the United Nations are outlined in the following documents. The preamble of the UN Charter begins with "We, the peoples of the United Nations". This has come to mean both Member States and civil society. More details are given in the article 71 of the Charter, which recognizes NGOs legally and formally as partners within the UN system. The article states that the ECOSOC may make arrangements for both national and international NGOs:

*The Economic and Social Council may make suitable arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations which are concerned with matters within its competence. Such arrangements may be made with international organizations and, where appropriate, with national organizations after consultation with the Member of the United Nations concerned. (UN Charter, Article 71: Untitled; Arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations)*

The review process of NGO arrangements, held in 1993-96, resulted in ECOSOC resolution 1996/31, which defines the criteria and principles for establishing consultative relationships for NGOs. Resolution 1996/31 defines NGOs "any international organization which is not established by a governmental entity or intergovernmental agreement". It also says that organization refers to NGOs at the national, subregional, regional and international levels, except where expressly stated otherwise. The resolution establishes three categories of consultative status for NGOs. General consultative status is for large international NGOs whose work covers most issues on the ECOSOC agenda. Special consultative status is for NGOs that have special competence in a few fields of the ECOSOC activity. The third category, which is inclusion on the roster, is for NGOs whose competence enables them to make occasional and useful contributions to the work of the UN and that are available for consultation upon request. NGOs on the roster may also include organizations in consultative status with a specialized

agency or other UN body. The resolution also formulated guidelines for written statements, oral statements and attendance during meetings.

The applications of NGOs for consultative status or roster status, or requests for change of status, are reviewed by the ECOSOC Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations, which is the only intergovernmental Committee in the UN that focuses exclusively on relations with NGOs. The Committee, which is responsible for monitoring the relationship between NGOs and the UN, is composed of 19 Member States and meets annually. The Committee holds annual consultations with NGOs about this relationship, and transmits reports of such consultations to ECOSOC for action.

The resolution further decided that NGOs can be invited to participate in all international conferences and their preparatory processes convened by the United Nations. As a rule, NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC are accredited for participation; merely need to express their interest to participate to become accredited. Other NGOs wishing to participate can apply through the respective conference secretariat. It was decided that accreditation processes are the prerogative of Member States, exercised through the respective preparatory committee:

*Non-governmental organizations in general consultative status, special consultative status and on the Roster, that express their wish to attend the relevant international conferences convened by the United Nations and the meetings of the preparatory bodies of the said conferences shall as a rule be accredited for participation. Other non-governmental organizations wishing to be accredited may apply to the secretariat of the conference for this purpose... (Article 42 of ECOSOC resolution 1996/31)*

On modalities of participation, resolution 1996/31 stated that NGOs, which have been accredited to an international conference, may be given an opportunity to speak at the preparatory meetings and at the event itself. During the preparatory process NGOs may make written statements:

*The non-governmental organizations accredited to the international conference may be given, in accordance with established United Nations practice and at the discretion of the chairperson and the consent of the body concerned, an opportunity to briefly address the preparatory committee and the conference in plenary meetings and their subsidiary bodies. (Article 51 of ECOSOC resolution 1996/31)*

*Non-governmental organizations accredited to the conference may make written presentations during the preparatory process in the official languages of the United Nations as they deem appropriate. Those written presentations shall not be issued as official documents except in accordance with United Nations rules of procedure. (Article 52 of ECOSOC resolution 1996/31)*

In the [Millennium Declaration](#), that was adopted by resolution 55/2, civil society participation is taken up in three separate parts:

*We also resolve...*



*To develop strong partnerships with the private sector and with civil society organizations in pursuit of development and poverty eradication. (paragraph 20)*

*We resolve therefore...*

*To strengthen further cooperation between the United Nations and national parliaments through their world organization, the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in various fields, including peace and security, economic and social development, international law and human rights and democracy and gender issues. (paragraph 30)*

*To give greater opportunities to the private sector, non-governmental organizations and civil society, in general, to contribute to the realization of the Organization's goals and programmes. (paragraph 30)*

In the follow-up resolution to the Millennium Summit ([A/RES/55/162](#)) the following commitments were made:

*Calls for enhanced partnership and co-operation with national parliaments as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, as set out in the Millennium Declaration, to ensure their contribution to the implementation of the Declaration. (paragraph 14)*

These procedures and arrangements form the legislative background for the relationship between the UN and NGOs. It is important to note that the phase and scope of accreditation and modalities varies among individual processes of special sessions, conferences and summits.

One should also remember that the UN secretariat and agencies have their own accreditation procedures and fields of co-operation with civil society, which are not covered by this document. To mention one example, the Department of Public Information (DPI) recognized the importance of working with and through NGOs as an integral part of United Nations information activities, when the DPI was established in 1946. The relationship between the DPI and NGOs was based on the General Assembly resolution 13 (I) and later on the resolutions 1296 and 1996/31.

(For more information on the role and tasks of DPI/NGOs, visit at:

[http://www.un.org/partners/civil\\_society/ngo/ngos-dpi.](http://www.un.org/partners/civil_society/ngo/ngos-dpi.))

(For more information on the application process, visit at:

<http://www.un.org/MoreInfo/ngolink/brochure.htm>)

## **1.4 Practical arrangements**

It has become an established practice that the conference secretariat would inform NGOs about the decisions concerning civil society by a note or an invitation letter. The UN Information Centres and Services (UNICs and UNISs) play an important role to disseminate information at

the national, subregional and regional levels, which has not yet fully utilized. The NGO community itself informs its members at various meetings and through worldwide newsletters and the internet.

As conference space at the UN Headquarters is limited and the number of accredited NGOs may be high, the secretariat may recommend NGOs to list their members in the order of priority for registration. Secretariat and the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee would at some point decide, how many badges one NGO-delegation may have to attend the meetings.

For NGOs, seating in meeting rooms is on a first-come/first-served basis with overflow into other conference rooms. In the case of the General Assembly Hall, the number of seats at the public gallery is limited and may be allocated on the basis of tickets or transferable badges. These tickets and badges would be distributed among NGO delegations as equally as possible in consultation with the NGO community. If the meeting space is not limited, there is no reason to restrict the attendance by tickets or transferable badges.

It has also become an established practice that the secretariat would provide, for example, together with the NGO-Liaison Office or other entities, a briefing for accredited NGOs one or two days before a meeting. A briefing session usually covers an introduction to the UN, its work, rules and practices, as well as to the substantive issues of the upcoming event. The NGO-community usually would organize side-events, which take place before or at the same time as the actual meetings. It is thus an established practice to make separate meeting space available for NGOs. In addition, the NGOs often organize briefing sessions every morning during the official meetings. These events would be open for all NGO-delegates. Increasingly, representatives of Member States and the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee attend these events to meet and brief NGOs.

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## **2. UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON ENVIRONMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (UNCED/Earth Summit/Rio Summit); 3-14 June 1992, Rio de Janeiro**

### **Summary**

#### Accreditation:

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee decided on the broad-based participation of relevant NGOs. The General Assembly endorsed the decision ([A/RES/45/211](#)). At its second session, the Preparatory Committee decided that both the NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC and other NGOs could apply for accreditation. In case of ECOSOC/NGOs, no new information was necessary, as the information they had submitted as part of the consultative status application was deemed to be sufficient. ECOSOC/NGOs could express their interest to participate to the secretariat and become accredited to the process. Applications of the other NGOs needed to include information on their relevance and competence on areas of Conference

preparations.

The Secretariat evaluated the applications and recommended lists of NGOs for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee. In case the secretariat was unable to recommend a NGO for accreditation it had to explain the reasons for its decision. The lists of recommended NGOs were made available at the beginning of each session. The Committee had to take a decision on accreditation within 24 hours after the lists had been introduced. In case the Committee was unable to decide on accreditation of a recommended NGO, an interim accreditation was to be granted until a decision was taken.

Accreditation was a continuous process during which the Preparatory Committee accredited all together 1378 NGOs by consensus. Only in three cases the secretariat's recommendation for accreditation was not agreed upon.

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/46/168](#)) that all NGOs that had been accredited to the Preparatory Committee were to be invited to the Conference.

#### Modalities:

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee decided that relevant NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC could make oral statements in the Preparatory Committee. Other relevant NGOs could also make oral statements. The Committee could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if a number of requested statements was high. Oral statements could be made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Committee or the Working Group. Relevant NGOs were allowed to distribute written statements. These decisions of the Preparatory Committee were endorsed by the General Assembly (A/RES/45/211).

At its fourth session, the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities for the conference (Rules of Procedure), according to which the representatives of NGOs were able to attend the Conference as observers. They were able to make oral statements upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. They were also able to distribute written statements.

At the Preparatory Committee meetings, individual NGOs, including NGO networks and caucuses made numerous oral interventions, which were usually represented also in written statement. In addition, there were thousands of reports, as well as position and issue papers in almost all official languages, which were made available by and at the expense of individual NGOs or network. At the Conference, individual NGOs, NGO networks and caucuses made oral statements and provided thousands of written presentations on the whole range of the conference topics. The NGO Forum was organized during the Conference by the host country.

During the preparatory process, civil society and other stakeholders started an International Facilitating Committee to provide non-political organizational support and to assist organizing the Global Forum. Both structures were temporary and closed after the Summit. Agenda 21 and the other Rio agreements emphasized the multi-stakeholder approach and importance of local and

grassroots action, as well as the participation of civil society in every stage of decision-making and implementation, which had an impact on the civil society participation throughout the process.

Besides NGOs, the special contribution and participation of representatives of indigenous people and local communities and of national liberation movements was emphasized during the preparatory process.

Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) was created in December 1992 as a functional commission of the ECOSOC, to ensure effective follow-up of the Conference. NGOs accredited to the Conference were automatically given the right to accreditation to the Commission.

One of the significant outcomes of the Conference and its preparatory process was the creation of the so called major groups within civil society. The concept of major groups has been used during several other conference processes in the 1990s and within the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Conference secretariat: Ad hoc secretariat at the United Nations Office in Geneva, with a unit in New York and another unit in Nairobi.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UNCED Secretariat

## 2.1 Introduction

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/43/196](#)), in December 1988 the Secretary-General to elaborate the views of the organizations and programmes of the United Nations system and relevant intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations on the objectives, content and scope of an international conference on environment and development. The Secretary-General was requested to report these views to the General Assembly, through the Economic and Social Council.

The Economic and Social Council decided to convene the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development for the duration of two weeks ([ECOSOC 1989/87](#)). The General Assembly affirmed the decision in December 1989 ([A/RES/44/228](#)). The GA resolution requested relevant NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to contribute to the Conference:

*12. Requests relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to contribute to the Conference, as appropriate. (A/RES/44/228)*

The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report with recommendations on an adequate preparatory process for the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee in March 1990. In his report (A/CONF.151/PC/2), the Secretary-General stressed the importance of effective participation of NGOs:

*33. The community of non-governmental organizations has an extensive network and keen interest in a wide range of environmental issues. It can enrich and enhance the deliberations of the Conference and its preparatory process through its contributions and serve as an important channel to disseminate its results, as well as to mobilize public support for strengthened environmental policies at the national and international levels. The Secretary-General therefore considers it important that non-governmental organizations participate effectively in the Conference and its preparatory process. The form and manner of their participation in the preparatory process and in the Conference itself can be determined in the light of the preparatory arrangements to be agreed upon by the Committee. At the national level, the Secretary-General recommends that the guidelines for national contributions provide for the effective involvement of non-governmental organizations. At the intergovernmental level, arrangements for the participation of non-governmental organizations can be worked out in the light of the experience gained.*

At the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee, the Secretary-General of the Conference introduced the suggested guidelines for the contribution of relevant NGOs for the Conference (A/CONF.151/PC/CRP.5):

*5. The Committee, in considering appropriate arrangements for non-governmental organization participation in the preparatory process and in the light of the provisions of General Assembly resolution 44/228, might wish to take the following into account:*

*(a) The need to receive and benefit fully from inputs of non-governmental organizations, including business, industries and the scientific community, with specialized capabilities of direct relevance to the Conference mandate. Their contributions will in many cases be particularly relevant to the work of the Preparatory Committee;*

*(b) The need to facilitate the contributions to the Conference and its preparatory process by environmental/developmental non-governmental organizations and associations, including those from developing countries which, through their outreach programmes, have the capacity to disseminate widely information on the agenda and results of the Conference and foster public interest in its goals;*

*(c) Consistent with General Assembly resolutions 43/196 and 44/228, the need to provide in the preparatory process for the contribution of citizens-level constituencies;*

*(d) The possibility of using a variety of forums to facilitate production interaction between the Conference preparatory process and non-governmental organizations, such as national or international briefings, non-governmental organization conferences and national participatory arrangements;*

*(e) The Preparatory Committee may wish to ask the Secretariat to consult with non-governmental bodies to harness the potential of such organizations to contribute, in accordance with General*

*Assembly resolution 44/228, to the preparatory process and to the Conference.  
(A/CONF.151/PC/CRP.5)*

At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee decided (A/44/48, section IV) upon a mandate and responsibility for the secretariat to take measures towards participation of NGOs in the preparatory process and the Conference. At the same session, the Committee also decided (A/44/48, decision IV) that the Secretariat should submit to the first session of the Preparatory Committee suggested arrangements for participation of NGOs, including at the Conference itself:

*Decides that the Secretariat should submit to the Preparatory Committee at its first session suggested arrangements for the Conference in accordance with the General Assembly resolution 44/228 and, at the later stage, make suggestion regarding the participation of the NGOs at the Conference itself. (A/44/48, decision IV)*

At its first session, in August 1990 the Preparatory Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General of the Conference (A/CONF.151/PC/9), which included proposals from NGOs themselves on their participation. The report recommended that NGOs should participate through dialogue events, presentations and disseminating papers:

*11. At the global level, non-governmental organizations may contribute to the preparatory process by providing information and counsel on matters of special relevance to the non-governmental community, to the Preparatory Committee, its working groups and the Conference secretariat.*

*12. It is recommended that non-governmental organizations with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and others with special competence in the area under consideration be encouraged to contribute through papers and presentations, as appropriate, to the substantive work of the Preparatory Committee and its working groups, and to speak at meeting of them on matters related to their special competence, at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Preparatory Committee or the working groups, as the case may be.*

*13. The Preparatory Committee might also wish to decide to adopt a procedure by which it and, as appropriate, its working groups, at each future session, would include, at an early stage of the session, an informal dialogue meeting with non-governmental organizations, lasting at least half a day. The preparatory Committee might also wish to recommend that other United Nations agencies, organizations and programmes adopt similar procedure in intergovernmental meetings devoted to preparations for the Conference.*

*14. In facilitating such participation by non-governmental organizations, the Preparatory Committee and its working groups may wish to take into account the desirability of providing, to the maximum extent possible, that such participation be of a broadly representative character with an appropriate and equitable balance in the representation of various regions and in the orientation and competence of the organizations in respect of environment and development, with*

*particular regard to the need to ensure the full participation of developing country organizations, including grass-roots organizations.*

*15. The Conference secretariat should encourage and support appropriate actions in addition to the official process which support the Conference and its preparatory process. That may involve providing and disseminating information on preparations for the Conference and its preparations for the Conference, consultations, and supporting efforts by the non-governmental organizations to communicate and co-operate so that they may contribute effectively to the preparatory process. (A/CONF.151/PC/9)*

## **2.2 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations**

At its first session, in August 1990 the Preparatory Committee adopted after informal consultations a draft decision (A/CONF.151/PC/L.8) entitled "Role of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development" (A/45/46, annex I, decision 1/1).

Through the decision, the Preparatory Committee decided on the broad-based participation of NGOs. The Secretary-General was requested to seek and use extra-budgetary resources to enable participation of representatives of relevant NGOs from developing countries, in particular from least developed countries. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly should consider during its next session the participation of NGOs. The Committee also decided that the rules adopted by the Committee would apply without prejudice to any decision that might be taken by the General Assembly at its next session.

*1/1. Role of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development*

*1. At its 22nd meeting, on 14 August 1990, the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development agreed that the effective contributions of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process were in its interests.*

*2. There was agreement on broad-based involvement by relevant non-governmental organizations.*

*3. The Preparatory Committee's policy should be to encourage an equitable representation of non-governmental organizations from developed and developing countries and from all regions and also to ensure a fair balance between non-governmental organisations with an environment focus and those with a development focus. The Preparatory Committee would encourage the participation of scientific and other organisations. (A/45/46, annex I, decision 1/1; see the paragraph 4 in chapter on modalities)*

*5. The Committee noted with appreciation the initiative taken by the Secretary-General of the Conference to seek extra-budgetary resources, in addition to the voluntary fund establishment*

*pursuant to General Assembly resolution 44/228 of 22 December 1989, in order to facilitate access in the preparatory process to especially important contributions that would not otherwise be available, particularly through the effective participation of institutions and experts from developing countries in various aspects of the preparatory process. In that context, the Secretary-General was requested to utilize those resources, inter alia, to enable representatives of relevant non-governmental organizations from developing countries, in particular the least developed among them, to participants in the preparatory and the Conference, either independently or as members of official delegations if their countries so decide.*

*6. The Chairman would, with the assistance of the chairmen of the regional groups, other coordinating groups and the Secretariat, propose a procedure for determining non-governmental organizations' competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee.*

*7. The Preparatory Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it consider at its forty-fifth session the question of the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process for the Conference taking into account the decision adopted by the Preparatory Committee at its first session.*

*8. The Preparatory Committee endorsed the proposals made by the Secretary-General of the Conference in his report (A/CONF.151/PC/9) subject to the present decision (A/45/46, annex I, decision 1/1).*

The General Assembly took note ([A/RES/45/211](#)) in December 1990 of the outcome of the first session of the Preparatory Committee and authorized the Committee to continue to apply the arrangements for the participation of the NGOs in all the sessions of the Preparatory Committee:

*13. Takes note of the provisions of Preparatory Committee decision 1/1 of 14 August 1990 and authorizes the Preparatory Committee, without prejudice to the provisions of resolution 44/228, to continue to apply, for the purpose of the preparatory process, the provisional arrangements agreed upon in that decision concerning the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process (A/RES/45/211).*

At the second session of the Preparatory Committee, in March - April 1991, after informal consultations the Chairman proposed a procedure (A/CONF.151/PC/L.27) for the accreditation of NGOs. The proposal was adopted after the general debate. According to the decision, NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and other NGOs could apply for accreditation. In case of ECOSOC/NGOs, no new information was necessary, as the information they had submitted as part of the consultative status application was deemed to be sufficient. Applications of other NGOs needed to include information on their relevance and competence on the areas of Conference preparations.

The Secretariat evaluated the applications and prepared the lists of NGOs, which were recommended to the Preparatory Committee for accreditation. In case the secretariat was unable to recommend a NGO for accreditation it had to explain the reasons for its decision. These lists of



recommended NGOs were made available at the beginning of each session. The Committee had to take a decision on accreditation within 24 hours after the lists had been introduced. In case the Committee was unable to decide on accreditation of a recommended NGO, an interim accreditation was to be granted until a decision was taken. Only in three cases the secretariat's recommendation for accreditation was not agreed upon.

*2/1. Procedure for determining non-governmental organizations' competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee*

*At its 28th meeting, on 18 March 1991, the Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on Environment decided on the following procedure for determining non-governmental organizations' competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee:*

- 1. Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and others desiring to be accredited for participation in meetings of the Preparatory Committee, in accordance with decision 1/1 of the first session of the Preparatory Committee as endorsed by General Assembly resolution 45/211 of 21 December, may apply to the Conference secretariat for this purpose.*
- 2. All such applications must be accompanied by information on the organization's competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee, indicating the particular areas of the Conference preparations which such competence and relevance pertains and which could include, inter alia, the following information:*
  - (a) The purposes of the organization;*
  - (b) Information as to the programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the Conference and its preparatory process, and in which country(ies) they are carried out;*
  - (c) Copies of its annual reports with financial statements, and a listing of governing body members and their country nationality;*
  - (d) In respect of membership organizations, a description of its membership, indicating total numbers and their geographical distribution;*
  - (e) Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council shall be deemed to have satisfied these requirements to the extent that they have already provided such information to the United Nations.*
- 3. In cases where the Conference secretariat believes, on the basis of the information provided in accordance with paragraph 2 above, that the organization has established its competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee, it will recommend to the Preparatory Committee that the organization be accredited. In cases where the Conference secretariat does not recommend the granting of accreditation, it will make available to the Preparatory Committee the reasons for not doing so. The Conference secretariat should make its recommendations available to the Preparatory Committee at the start of the session.*
- 4. The Preparatory Committee will decide on all cases within 24 hours of the Conference*

*secretariat's recommendations having been made available to its members. In the event of a decision not being taken within this time-frame, interim accreditations shall be accorded until such time as a decision is taken.*

*5. A non-governmental organization that has been granted accreditation to attend a session of the Preparatory Committee may attend all future sessions. (A/46/48, annex I, decision 2/1).*

At its third session, in August - September 1991, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision (A/46/48, Vol. II, annex I, decision 3/7) entitled "Indigenous people and local communities", recognizing the important contribution made by organizations of indigenous people and local communities to the preparatory process.

Accreditation of NGOs was a continuous process, where a total number of 1378 NGOs were accredited to the Preparatory Committee:

1st session, 6-31 Aug. 1990: (no accreditations)

2nd session, 18 Mar.-5 Apr. 1991: Accreditation for 190 NGOs was approved (A/CONF.151/PC/L.28 and Add.1; A/46/48, annex I, decision 2/2 A, B, C).

3rd session, 12 Aug.-4 Sept. 1991: Accreditation for 163 NGOs) was approved with the exception of three organizations ((A/CONF.151/PC/L.28/Add. 4-6; A/46/48, Vol. II, annex I, decision 3/1 A, B).

4th session, 2 Mar.-3 Apr. 1992: Accreditation for 1061 NGOs was approved (A/CONF.151/PC/128, annex I, decision 4/1).

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/46/168](#)) in December 1991 upon the accreditation for the Conference. The Secretary-General was requested to invite to the Conference all NGOs accredited to the Preparatory Committee:

*9. (f) All non-governmental organizations accredited to participate in the work of the Preparatory Committee by the conclusion of its fourth session; those organizations should receive invitations to participate as observers at the Conference. (A/RES/46/168)*

### **2.3 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee decided that relevant NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC could make oral statements in the Preparatory Committee. Other relevant NGOs could also make oral statements. The Committee could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if a number of requested statements was high. Oral statements could be made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Committee or the Working Group. Relevant NGOs were allowed to distribute written statements. These decisions of the Preparatory Committee were endorsed by the General Assembly (A/RES/45/211):

*4. The Preparatory Committee decides that, only for the purpose of its first session, the following rules would apply without prejudice to any decision that might be taken by the General Assembly at its forty-fifth session:*

*(a) Non-governmental organizations shall not have any negotiating role in the work of the Preparatory Committee;*

*(b) Relevant non-governmental organizations may, at their own expense, make written presentations in the preparatory process through the Secretariat in the official languages of the United Nations as they deem appropriate. Those written presentations will not be issued as official documents except in accordance with the United Nations rules of procedure;*

*(c) Relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may be given an opportunity to briefly address plenary meetings of the Preparatory Committee and meetings of the Working Groups. Other relevant non-governmental organizations may also ask to speak briefly in such meetings. If the number of such requests is too large, the Preparatory Committee shall request the non-governmental organizations to form themselves into constituencies and each constituency to speak through one spokesman. Any oral intervention by a non-governmental organization would, in accordance with normal United Nations practice, be at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Preparatory Committee or the Working Group, as the case may be. (A/45/46, annex I, decision 1/1)*

The General Assembly took note ([A/RES/45/211](#)) in December 1990 of the outcome of the first session of the Preparatory Committee and authorized the Committee to continue to apply the arrangements for the participation of NGOs (the same applied for the accreditation process, see above):

*13. Takes note of the provisions of Preparatory Committee decision 1/1 of 14 August 1990 and authorizes the Preparatory Committee, without prejudice to the provisions of resolution 44/228, to continue to apply, for the purpose of the preparatory process, the provisional arrangements agreed upon in that decision concerning the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process. (A/RES/45/211)*

At its fourth session, in March-April 1992 the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities for the conference (Rules of Procedure; A/CONF.151/2), according to which the representatives of NGOs were able to attend the Conference as observers. They were able to make oral statements upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. They were also able to distribute written statements:

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 65):*

*1. Non-governmental organizations accredited invited to the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and the Main Committee.*

*2. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the conference body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence.*

*Written statements (Rule 66):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 60 to 65 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Conference, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Conference and is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence.*

## **2.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[ECOSOC 1989/87](#)

[A/RES/44/228](#); [A/RES/45/211](#); [A/RES/46/168](#)

Report of the Secretary-General: A/CONF.151/PC/2

Org. session 5 - 16 Mar. 1990, New York: A/44/48

1st session 6 - 31 Aug. 1990, Nairobi: A/45/46 and A/CONF.151/PC/9

2nd session 18 Mar. - 5 Apr. 1991, Geneva: A/46/48, vol. I and A/CONF.151/PC/L.27

3rd session 12 Aug. - 4 Sept. 1991, Geneva: A/46/48, vol. II

4th session 2 Mar.- 3 Apr. 1992, New York: A/CONF.151/PC/128

Rules of Procedure A/CONF.151/2

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## **3. WORLD CONFERENCE ON HUMAN RIGHTS**

14-25 June 1993, Vienna

### **Summary**

#### Accreditation:

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/45/155](#)), that the Preparatory Committee has a mandate concerning the agenda, date, duration and venue for the Conference, including arrangements for participation of various actors. NGOs were requested, among others, to assist the Preparatory Committee and participate in the Conference.

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision by consensus entitled "Participation of human rights experts in the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference". According to the decision, the Preparatory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should encourage human rights experts to participate as observers in the Committee and the Conference. The Committee also decided to recommend convening regional meetings in

preparation for the Conference.

At its second session, the Preparatory Committee considered a draft decision concerning the invitation for NGOs to participate in the regional meetings for the Conference. The draft proposal was orally amended, but the Committee did not take action on the matter. At its third session, the Preparatory Committee reconsidered the proposal and decided to invite to the regional preparatory meetings NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, which are active in the field of human rights and/or development. The Committee invited into regional meetings also other NGOs that are active in the field of human rights and/or development and have their headquarters in the concerned region. These other NGOs were accredited in consultation with the countries of the region. The General Assembly approved ([A/RES/47/122](#)), the recommendation made by the Preparatory Committee.

In accordance with these decisions, regional meetings were convened for each region in the course of the preparatory process. NGOs accredited to a regional meeting were invited to participate in the Conference. In Europe, there was no regional meeting, but the secretariat evaluated applications and accredited European NGOs to the Conference. The reports of the regional meetings, including regional declarations were part of preparations for the Conference. The Preparatory Committee considered these reports during its sessions.

#### Modalities:

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee decided that the rules of procedure governing its meetings should be those of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

At its third session, the Preparatory Committee adopted the draft Rules of Procedure (A/CONF.157/PC/1/Add.1), which were endorsed by the General Assembly (A/RES/47/122). According to the Rules of Procedure, representatives of national institutions in the field of human rights could participate the Conference and its Main Committees, and, as appropriate, any other committee or working group as observers. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council could also participate as observers. Other NGOs, which had participated the Preparatory Committee or the regional meetings could also participate as observers. NGOs could distribute written statements.

The World Conference on Human Rights was attended by the representatives of 24 national institutions and 6 Ombudsmen, 11 United Nations human rights and related bodies, 9 other organizations, 248 non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and 593 other non-governmental organizations.

At the Conference, NGOs made joint statements through spokespersons on themes, such as disabled persons, indigenous people, refugees and displaced persons, and torture.

Secretariat of the Preparatory Committee: Same as the Secretariat of the world Conference, supported by the staff of the Centre for Human Rights.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: Commission on Human Rights and regional commissions.

### 3.1 Introduction

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/44/156](#)), in December 1989 the Secretary-General to seek the views of Governments, specialized agencies, NGOs and United Nations bodies concerned with human rights on the desirability of convening a world conference on human rights. The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/45/155](#)), in December 1990 to convene at a high level a World Conference on Human Rights. By the same resolution, the GA decided that the Preparatory Committee has a mandate concerning the agenda, date, duration and venue for the Conference, including arrangements for participation of various actors. NGOs were requested, among others, to assist the Preparatory Committee and participate in the Conference:

*Noting the expressions of support for the convening of a world conference on human rights from many Governments, specialized agencies and United Nations bodies concerned with human rights and from non-governmental organizations;*

*3. Also decides that the Preparatory Committee should have the mandate to make proposals for the consideration of the General Assembly regarding the agenda, date, duration, venue of and participation in the Conference, preparatory meetings and activities at the international, regional and national levels, which should take place in 1992, and on desirable studies and other documentation;*

*10. Requests Governments, the specialized agencies, other international organizations, concerned United Nations bodies, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights to assist the Preparatory Committee and to undertake reviews and submit recommendations concerning the Conference and the preparations therefor to the Preparatory Committee through the Secretary-General and to participate actively in the Conference. (A/RES/45/155)*

### 3.2 Accreditation of civil society

At its first session, in September 1991 the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision by consensus entitled "Participation of human rights experts in the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference". According to the decision, the Preparatory Committee recommended that the General Assembly should encourage human rights experts to participate as observers in the Committee and the Conference itself (A/46/24, annex II, decision PC/6). The Committee also decided to recommend convening regional meetings in preparation for the Conference (A/46/24, annex II, decision PC/4):

*PC/6. Participation of human rights experts in the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference:*

*At its 8th meeting, on 13 September 1991, the Preparatory Committee decided, without a vote, to recommend that the General Assembly encourage the Chairman of the Commission on Human*

*Rights, the Chairmen or other designated members of human rights bodies including the Chairman of bodies established under international human rights agreements or their designated representatives, as well as special and thematic rapporteurs and the Chairmen or designated members of working groups, to contribute as observers by taking part as appropriate in the work of the Preparatory Committee and the World Conference.*

The General Assembly recognized ([A/RES/46/116](#)), in December 1991 the contribution of NGOs in the preparatory meetings and again requested NGOs, among others, to assist the Preparatory Committee and participate in the Conference:

*Taking note also of the views and recommendations of Governments, specialized agencies, other international organizations, concerned United Nations bodies, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights, contained in the report of the Secretary-General;*

*2. Expresses its appreciation to Governments, bodies and organs of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations for their contributions to the preparatory meetings;*

*5. Renews its request to Governments, the specialized agencies, other international organizations, concerned United Nations bodies, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights to assist the Preparatory Committee and to undertake reviews and submit recommendations concerning the Conference and the preparations therefore to the Preparatory Committee through the Secretary-General and to participate actively in the Conference. (A/RES/46/116)*

At its second session, in March-April 1992, the Preparatory Committee considered a draft decision concerning the invitation for NGOs to participate in the regional meetings for the Conference. According to the decision, the Committee recommended to the General Assembly that it request the Secretary-General to invite representatives of national institutions and other entities on the field of human rights, as well as NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Those NGOs without the consultative status, which had participated the regional meetings were also invited to participate. The draft proposal was orally amended, but the Committee did not take action on the matter.

At its third session, in September 1992, the Preparatory Committee decided to invite to the regional preparatory meetings NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, which are active in the field of human rights and/or development. The Committee invited into regional meetings also other NGOs that are active in the field of human rights and/or development and have their headquarters in the concerned region, in consultation with the countries of the region:

*PC.3/2 Participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations at regional meetings: At its 9th meeting on 18 September 1992, the Preparatory Committee decided, without a vote, to recommend to the General Assembly that it request the Secretary-General to invite the following*

*non-governmental organizations to the regional meetings for the World Conference on Human Rights:*

- a) Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council which are active in the field of human rights and/or development as well as in the concerned region;*
- b) Other non-governmental organizations which are active in the field of human rights and/or development, and have their headquarters in the concerned region, in prior consultation with the countries of the region; which designate representatives properly accredited by them to participate as observers in the regional meeting. (A/CONF.157/PC/54, annex II)*

The General Assembly approved ([A/RES/47/122](#)), in December 1992, the recommendation made by the Preparatory Committee at its third session regarding the participation of NGOs in regional meetings related to the preparatory process:

*5. Approves the recommendation made by the Preparatory Committee at its third session regarding the participation of non-governmental organizations in regional meetings related to the preparatory process;*

*8. Renews its request to Governments, the specialized agencies, other international organizations, regional organizations and non-governmental organizations concerned with human rights or development to participate actively in the preparatory process and in the Conference itself. (A/RES/47/122)*

In accordance with these decisions, regional meetings were convened for each region in the course of the preparatory process. The regional meeting for Africa was held at Tunis from 2 to 6 November 1992. The regional meeting for Latin America and the Caribbean was held at San José from 18 to 22 January 1993. The regional meeting for Asia was convened at the headquarters of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific at Bangkok from 29 March to 2 April. In Europe, there was no regional meeting, but the secretariat evaluated applications and accredited European NGOs to the Conference. The reports of the regional meetings, including regional declarations were part of the preparations for the Conference. The Preparatory Committee considered these reports during its sessions.

### **3.3 Modalities for participation of civil society**

At its first session, in September 1992, the Preparatory Committee decided that the rules of procedure governing its meetings should be those of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

At its second session, in March-April 1992, the Preparatory Committee considered a draft rules of procedure for the Conference, but no action was taken. At its third session, in September 1992, the Committee adopted the draft rules of procedure, which were endorsed by the General Assembly ([A/RES/47/122](#)), in December 1992:



2. Expresses its appreciation to Governments, the bodies and organs of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations for their contributions to the preparatory process;

3. Approves the draft rules of procedure for the World Conference on Human Rights, as recommended by the Preparatory Committee at its second and third sessions, with the exception of rule 15 (e).

According to the Rules of Procedure (A/CONF.157/PC/1/Add.1), representatives of national institutions in the field of human rights could participate the Conference and its Main Committees, as well as, as appropriate, any other committee or working group as observers. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council could also participate as observers. Other NGOs, which had participated the Preparatory Committee or the regional meetings could also participate as observers. NGOs could also distribute written statements:

*Representatives of national human rights institutions (Rule 64):*

*Representatives designated by national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights may participate as observers in the deliberations of the Conference, any Main Committee and, as appropriate, any other committee or working group on questions within the scope of their activities.*

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 66):*

*Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and with competence in the field of human rights, and other non-governmental organizations which participated in the work of the Preparatory Committee (or the regional meetings) may designate representatives properly accredited by them to participate as observers in the Conference, its Main Committees and, as appropriate, any of the committees or working groups, on questions within the scope of their activities.*

*Written statements (Rule 67):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 59 to 66 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Conference, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Conference and is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence.*

The World Conference on Human Rights was attended by the representatives of 24 national institutions and 6 Ombudsmen, 11 United Nations human rights and related bodies, 9 other organizations, 248 non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and 593 other non-governmental organizations.

At the Conference, NGOs made joint statements through spokespersons on themes, such as disabled persons, indigenous people, refugees and displaced persons, and torture.

### **3.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/44/156](#); [A/RES/45/155](#); [A/RES/46/116](#); [A/RES/47/122](#)

Commission for Human Rights decision 1990/110; resolution 1991/30; resolution 1992/37

1st session 9-13 Sept. 1991, Geneva: A/CONF.157/PC/13; A/46/24

2nd session 30 Mar.-10 Apr. 1992: A/CONF.157/PC/37; A/47/24

3rd session 14-18 Sept. 1992: A/CONF.157/PC/54; A/47/24/Add.1

4th session 19 Apr.-7 May 1993: A/CONF.157/PC/98

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#### **4. GLOBAL CONFERENCE ON THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**

25 April - 6 May 1994, Barbados

##### **Summary**

##### Accreditation:

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/47/189](#)) to invite relevant NGOs, particular those from small island developing States and those related to major groups to participate in the preparatory process and the Conference, in accordance with the procedures established for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). The GA also decided to invite to the Conference those NGOs, which were accredited to the Preparatory Committee.

Along with the UNCED practice, the NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC and other NGOs were able to apply for accreditation. In the case of ECOSOC/NGOs, no new information was necessary, as the information they had submitted already as part of their consultative status application was deemed to be sufficient. The ECOSOC/NGOs could express their interest to participate to the secretariat. Applications of other NGOs needed to include information on their relevance and competence on the areas of Conference preparations. The secretariat evaluated applications and prepared the lists of NGOs, which were recommended to the Preparatory Committee for accreditation. In case the secretariat did not recommend a NGO for accreditation it had to explain the reasons for its decision. These lists of NGOs needed to be available at the beginning of each session. The Committee had to take a decision upon accreditation within 24 hours after the lists of recommendation had been introduced. In case the Committee was unable to decide upon accreditation of the recommended NGOs, an interim accreditation was granted until a decision was taken.

At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee affirmed the guidelines for accreditation in the line with the General Assembly resolution 47/189. The decision of the Preparatory Committee was once again endorsed by the General Assembly ([A/RES/48/193](#)).

Accreditation was a continuous process during which the Preparatory Committee accredited all together 89 NGOs by consensus.

Modalities:

At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities for the Conference (Rules of Procedure, A/CONF.167/2). The decision was endorsed by the General Assembly (A/RES/48/193) and finally adopted by the Conference. According to the decision, representatives of NGOs could make oral statements at the Conference and the Main Committee upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. Representatives of NGOs were allowed to distribute written statements on the issues, which were related to the Conference and in the field of their special competence.

Conference Secretariat: Commission on Sustainable Development.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UN/DESA.

**4.1 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/47/189](#)), in December 1992 to convene the Conference. The General Assembly invited relevant NGOs, in particular those from small developing States and those related to major groups to participate. It was decided that the accreditation procedure should follow the practice established at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED):

*18. Invites relevant non-governmental organizations from developed and developing countries, in particular those from small island developing States, including those related to major groups, to contribute to the Conference, within the areas of their competence and expertise, on the basis of the procedures for their accreditation followed for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, as recommended in paragraph 38.44 of Agenda. (A/RES/47/189)*

The General Assembly requested by the same resolution the Secretary-General to invite to the Conference all NGOs accredited to the preparatory process. The Secretary-General was also requested to prepare a report to the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee containing recommendations on an adequate preparatory process. These recommendations needed to take into account the provisions of the resolution A/RES/47/189 and the views expressed by Governments during the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development.

At its organizational session, in April 1993 the Preparatory Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/CONF.167/PC/2). The report stressed the importance of NGOs in the

preparatory process and the Conference:

*22. As with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the community of non-governmental organizations clearly has a major contribution to make to the deliberations of the Conference and its preparatory process and is expected to serve once again as an important channel for disseminating the results of the Conference, as well as for mobilizing public support for strengthened policies at the national and international levels.*

Against this background, the Preparatory Committee decided to invite NGOs to participate in the preparatory process and the Conference itself. The draft proposal was made by the representative of Canada and amended by the representative of China by inserting the words "including major groups":

*At its 3rd meeting, on 16 April 1993, the Preparatory Committee for the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States decided to invite non-governmental organizations, including major groups, to contribute actively to the Conference and its preparatory process in accordance with the procedures followed for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. (A/48/36, section VI, decision 4)*

The decision was endorsed by the General Assembly ([A/RES/48/193](#)) in December 1992:

*6. Endorses Preparatory Committee decisions 1 and 4 concerning the participation of associate members of regional commissions and of non-governmental organizations, including major groups, in the Conference and its preparatory process. (A/RES/48/193)*

Accreditation was a continuous process, where all together 89 NGOs were accredited by the Preparatory Committee.

First session, 30 Aug.-10 Sept. 1993: Accreditation for 68 NGOs was approved (A/CONF.167/PC/L.4; A/48/36, part two, section VIII, decision 9).

First session, resumed, 7-11 Mar. 1994: Accreditation for 21 NGOs was approved (A/CONF.167/PC/L.4/Add.1; A/48/36/Add.2, decision 21).

#### **4.2 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/47/189](#)), in December 1992 the Secretary-General to provide a draft rules of procedure for the consideration of the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee. At its organizational session, in April 1993 the Preparatory Committee approved a provisional rules of procedures on modalities for participation of NGOs. The decision was endorsed by the General Assembly ([A/RES/48/193](#)) and finally adopted by the Conference (A/CONF.167/2).

The Committee decided that representatives of NGOs could participate the Conference as observers. They could make oral statements upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the

approval of the body concerned. They could also distribute written statements on the issues related to the Conference and in the area of their special competence:

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 67):*

1. *Non-governmental organizations invited to the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and the Main Committee.*
2. *Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the conference body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence.*

*Written statements (Rule 68):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 60 to 66 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Conference, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Conference and is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence.*

### **4.3 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/47/176](#); [A/RES/48/186](#)

Org. session 15-16 Apr. 1993, New York: A/48/36: A/CONF.167/PC/2

1st session 30 Aug.-10 Sept. 1993, New York: A/48/36

Resumed 1st session 7-11 Mar. 1994, New York: A/48/36/Add.1

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## **5. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT**

(ICPD) 5-13 September 1994, Cairo

### **Summary**

#### Accreditation:

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/47/176](#)) the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) to formulate arrangements for participation of relevant NGOs in the preparatory process and the Conference. The arrangements were requested to follow the practice established for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the experience of previous UN population conferences. In response, the ECOSOC formulated the arrangements simultaneously for accreditation ([ECOSOC/1993/4](#)) in the Preparatory Committee and the Conference. The General Assembly endorsed the decision ([A/RES/48/186](#)).

NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC were accredited to the Preparatory Committee and the Conference without further screening, after they had expressed their interest to participate to the secretariat. Other NGOs could apply. Their applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence in the population and development issues, as well as their interests in the objectives of the Conference. Applications were first evaluated by the secretariat, which recommended NGOs for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee. The recommendations had to be available at least one week before each session of the Committee. The secretariat needed to explain to the Committee, in the case of NGOs it was unable to recommend, reasons for rejecting their applications. The Committee had to make its decision on accreditation within 24 hours, after recommendations had been introduced. In case of those NGOs, the Committee was unable to decide on accreditation within this timeframe, recommended NGOs were to be granted an interim accreditation until the decision was taken.

Accreditation was a continuous process, were the Preparatory Committee accredited all together 934 NGOs by consensus.

Modalities:

The General Assembly requested (A/RES/47/176) the Economic and Social Council to formulate arrangements for participation of relevant NGOs in the preparatory process and the Conference, according the practice established for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and the experience of previous UN population conferences. In response, the ECOSOC formulated the arrangements simultaneously for modalities (ECOSOC/1993/4) in the Preparatory Committee and in the Conference. The General Assembly endorsed the decision (A/RES/48/186).

Relevant NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC could speak in the Preparatory Committee. Other relevant NGOs could also speak. The Committee could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if a number of requested statements was high. Oral statements could be made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Committee or the body concerned. Relevant NGOs were allowed to distribute written statements.

At its third session, the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities for the Conference (Rules of Procedure, A/CONF.171/2). Representatives of NGOs were able to attend the Conference as observers. Otherwise, the modalities at the Conference were the same as those at the Preparatory Committee.

After the Conference, the Population Commission was renamed as the Commission on Population and Development.

Conference Secretariat: The Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund was appointed as Secretary-General of the Conference and the Director of the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Development as the Deputy Secretary-General of the Conference.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UN/DESA and UNFPA

## 5.1 Introduction

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/47/176](#)) to convene the Conference on Population and Development in December 1992. The resolution endorsed the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council one year earlier (ECOSOC 1989/91).

At its first session, in March 1991, the Preparatory Committee emphasized the role of NGOs:

*8. Requests the Secretary-General of the Conference to make use of the substantive contribution of all organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system concerned, as well as of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the preparatory activities for the Conference. (E/1991/47)*

At the same meeting, the Committee also considered the draft provisional Rules of Procedure (E/CONF.84/PC/2), but decided to defer its consideration to a subsequent session (E/1991/47, chapter II).

The General Assembly recognized (A/RES/47/176), in December 1992 the importance of the participation of relevant NGOs:

*12. Recognizes the importance of the participation in the Conference and its preparatory process of all relevant non-governmental organizations from developed and developing countries. (A/RES/47/176)*

The same resolution also requested the Economic and Social Council to formulate and adopt modalities for participation of relevant NGOs. The arrangements for the participation of NGOs were requested to follow the procedures established for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and experience of previous UN population conferences:

*13. Requests the Economic and Social Council, at its organizational session for 1993, to formulate and adopt modalities to ensure the participation in and contribution to the Conference and its preparatory process of relevant non-governmental organizations, in particular those from developing countries, taking into account the procedures followed in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development process and the experience gained in this regard during previous United Nations population conferences. (A/RES/47/176)*

## 5.2 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations

At the request of the General Assembly (A/RES/47/176), the Economic and Social Council formulated arrangements for accreditation of relevant NGOs (ECOSOC 1993/4). NGOs in

consultative status with the ECOSOC, who would express their interest to participate, would be accredited to the Preparatory Committee without further screening.

Other NGOs could apply by sending an application to the conference secretariat. These applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence in the population and development issues, as well as their interests in the objectives of the Conference. Applications were first to be evaluated by the secretariat, which would recommend NGOs for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee. The secretariat needed to explain to the Committee, in the case of a NGO it was unable to recommend, reasons for rejecting their applications. The recommendations had to be made available at least one week before each session of the Committee. The Committee had to make its decision on accreditation within 24 hours, after recommendations had been introduced. In case of those NGOs, whose accreditation the Committee was unable to decide upon within the 24-hour timeframe, recommended NGOs was to be granted an interim accreditation until the decision was taken:

*Recalling also General Assembly resolution 47/176 of 22 December 1992, in which, inter alia, the Assembly recognized the importance of ensuring an adequate intergovernmental preparatory process for the Conference, as well as the importance of the participation in the Conference and its preparatory process of all relevant non-governmental organizations from developed and developing countries:*

*4. Adopts the modalities for the participation in and contribution to the Conference and its preparatory process of non-governmental organizations, as set out in the annex to the present resolution;*

*6. Recognizes the importance of non-governmental participation in the preparatory process and the Conference itself and encourages all support to enable representatives of non-governmental organizations from developing countries to participate fully.*

*Annex: Participation of Non-governmental organizations in the International Conference on Population and Development and its Preparatory Process*

*1. Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council which express their wish to attend the Conference and its Preparatory Committee meetings shall be accredited for participation. Others wishing to be accredited may apply to the Conference secretariat for this purpose in accordance with the requirements of the present resolution.*

*2. The secretariat of the International Conference on Population and Development shall be responsible for the receipt and preliminary evaluation, in accordance with the provisions of this resolution, of requests from non-governmental organizations for accreditation to the Conference and its preparatory process.*

*3. All such applications must be accompanied by information on the organization's competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee, indicating the particular areas of the*



*Conference preparations to which such competence and relevance pertain, and should include, inter alia, the following:*

- (a) The purposes of the organization;*
- (b) Information on its programmes and activities in areas relevant to the Conference and its preparatory process and in which country(ies) they are carried out;*
- (c) Confirmation of its activities at the national and/or international level;*
- (d) Copies of its annual reports with financial statements, and a list of members of the governing body and their country of nationality;*
- (e) A description of its membership, indicating the total number of members and their geographical distribution.*

*4. In the evaluation of the relevance of non-governmental applications for accreditation to the Conference and its preparatory process, it is agreed that their background and involvement in population issues or population and development issues, including those mentioned in paragraph 4 of Council resolution 1991/93, will determine their relevance.*

*5. Non-governmental organizations seeking accreditation shall be asked to confirm their interest in the goals and objectives of the Conference.*

*6. In cases where the Conference secretariat believes, on the basis of the information provided in accordance with the present resolution, that the organization has established its competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee, it will recommend to the Preparatory Committee that the organization be accredited. In cases where the Conference secretariat does not recommend the granting of accreditation, it will make available to the Preparatory Committee its reasons for not doing so. The Conference secretariat should ensure that its recommendations are available to members of the Preparatory Committee at least one week prior to the start of each session.*

*7. The Preparatory Committee will decide on all proposals for accreditation within twenty-four hours of the Conference secretariat's recommendations having been taken up by the Preparatory Committee in plenary meeting. In the event of a decision not being taken within this period, interim accreditation shall be accorded until such time as a decision is taken. (ECOSOC/1993/4, see the rest of the annex on the chapter on modalities)*

The General Assembly reaffirmed ([A/RES/48/186](#)), in December 1993 the guidelines for participation of NGOs, which had been formulated and adopted by the ECOSOC ([ECOSOC/1993/4](#)):

*8. Reaffirms the importance of the participation in and contribution to the preparatory process and the Conference itself of non-governmental organizations, in accordance with the relevant provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/4. (A/RES/48/186)*

Accreditation of NGOs was a continuous process. A total number of 934 non-governmental organizations were accredited by the Conference:

1st session, 4-8 Mar. 1991: (no accreditation)

2nd session, 10-21 May 1993: Accreditation for 336 non-governmental organizations: E/CONF.84/PC/10 and Add. 1 - 3 was approved (E/1993/69, chapter I, section C, decision 2/1).

3rd session, 4-22 Apr. 1994: Accreditation for 598 non-governmental organizations: A/CONF.171/PC/6 and Add. 1 - 5) was approved (A/CONF.171/PC/9, annex I, decision 3/1).

### **5.3 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

At its first session, in March 1991, the Preparatory Committee emphasized the substantive contribution of NGOs to the preparatory process:

*8. Requests the Secretary-General of the Conference to make use of the substantive contribution of all organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system concerned, as well as of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations in the preparatory activities for the Conference. (E/1991/47)*

At the same meeting, the Committee also considered a draft provisional rules of procedure. During the debate some delegations suggested that the status of NGOs should be revised in order to increase their role in the preparatory process and the event itself. The Commission decided to defer consideration of the draft to a subsequent session. (E/1991/47, section II.)

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/47/176](#)), in December 1992 the ECOSOC to formulate and adopt modalities for participation of relevant NGOs:

*13. Requests the Economic and Social Council, at its organizational session for 1993, to formulate and adopt modalities to ensure the participation in and contribution to the Conference and its preparatory process of relevant non-governmental organizations, in particular those from developing countries, taking into account the procedures followed in the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development process and the experience gained in this regard during previous United Nations population conferences. (A/RES/47/176)*

Following the request by the General Assembly, the ECOSOC adopted in February 1992 ([ECOSOC/1993/4](#)) the modalities for the participation of NGOs. According to a decision, relevant NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC were able make oral statements at the Preparatory Committee. Also other relevant NGOs could speak. The Committee could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if a number of requested speakers was high. Oral statements were made at the discretion of the Chairman and at the approval of the Committee:

*8. A non-governmental organization that has been granted accreditation to attend a session of the Preparatory Committee may attend all its future sessions.*

*9. In recognition of the intergovernmental nature of the International Conference on Population and Development, non-governmental organizations shall have no negotiating role in the work of the Conference and its preparatory process.*

*10. Relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may be given an opportunity to briefly address the Preparatory Committee in plenary meeting and its subsidiary bodies. Other relevant non-governmental organizations may also ask to speak briefly at such meetings. If the number of requests is too large, the Preparatory Committee shall request the non-governmental organizations to form themselves into constituencies, each constituency to speak through one spokesperson. Any oral intervention by a non-governmental organization should, in accordance with normal United Nations practice, be made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Preparatory Committee.*

*11. Relevant non-governmental organizations may, at their own expense, make written presentations during the preparatory process in the official languages of the United Nations as they deem appropriate. Those written presentations will not be issued as official documents except in accordance with United Nations rules of procedure. (ECOSOC/1993/4, Annex)*

The General Assembly reaffirmed (A/RES/48/186), in December 1993 the guidelines for participation of NGOs, which had been formulated and adopted by the ECOSOC (ECOSOC/1993/4):

*8. Reaffirms the importance of the participation in and contribution to the preparatory process and the Conference itself of non-governmental organizations, in accordance with the relevant provisions of Economic and Social Council resolution 1993/4. (A/RES/48/186)*

At the third session, in April 1994 the Preparatory Committee approved a provisional rules of procedure (A/CONF.171/PC/9, annex I, decision 3/2), which were finally adopted by the Conference (A/CONF.171/2). Representatives of NGOs were able to attend the Conference as observers. Otherwise, the modalities at the Conference were the same as at the Preparatory Committee:

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 65):*

*1. Non-governmental organizations accredited to participate in the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and the Main Committee.*

*2. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the conference body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence. If the number of requests to speak is too large, the non-governmental organizations shall be requested to form themselves into constituencies, such constituencies to speak through spokespersons.*

*Written statements (Rule 66):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 59 to 65 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Conference, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Conference and is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence. Written statements shall*

*not be made at United Nations expense and shall not be issued as official documents.*

#### **5.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[ECOSOC 1989/91](#); [ECOSOC 1991/93](#); [ECOSOC 1992/37](#); [ECOSOC 1993/76](#); [ECOSOC 1993/4](#)

[A/RES/47/176](#); [A/RES/48/186](#)

1st session 4-8 Mar. 1991, New York: E/1991/47 + Add.1

2nd session 10-21 May 1993, New York: E/1993/69

3rd session 4-22 Apr. 1994, New York: A/CONF.171/PC/9

Rules of Procedure A/CONF.171/2

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### **6. WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT**

6 - 12 March 1995, Copenhagen

#### **Summary**

##### Accreditation:

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/47/92](#)) the NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC to participate in the Summits and its preparatory process. At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee decided upon the accreditation process for NGOs at the preparatory process and the Summit itself. ECOSOC/NGOs were invited to participate in the Preparatory Committee and the Summit without further screening, by expressing their interest to the secretariat. Other NGOs were able to apply. Their applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence in social development issues, as well as their interest in targets of the Summit. Applications were evaluated by the secretariat, which recommended NGOs for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee. The secretariat needed to explain to the Committee, in the case of NGOs it was unable to recommend, reasons for rejecting their applications. The recommendations had to be available at least one week before each session of the Committee. The Committee had to take its decision on accreditation within 24 hours, after recommendations had been introduced. In case the Committee was unable to decide on accreditation within this timeframe, recommended NGOs were to be granted an interim accreditation until the decision was taken.

Accreditation was a continuous process, where all together 1138 NGOs were accredited by consensus. The secretariat postponed the final date for applications once during the process. Only once the secretariat's positive recommendation was not agreed upon.

The NGOs, which were accredited to the Preparatory Committee, were automatically invited to the Summit.

Modalities:

At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities for participation of NGOs in the preparatory meetings. The relevant ECOSOC/NGOs were able to address the Committee. The other NGOs were also able to speak at the Committee meetings. The Committee could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if a number of requested speakers was high. Oral statements were made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Committee. Relevant NGOs could distribute written statements.

At its second session, the Preparatory Committee took a decision on the modalities for the Summit (Rules of Procedure, [A/CONF.166/2](#)), according to which the representatives of NGOs were able to attend the Summit as observers. They could make oral statements upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. In the field of their special competence, they could also distribute written statements, which were related to the Summit.

At the Summit, during the general debate 29 NGOs and NGO coalitions made oral statements. NGO Forum was organized by the Host country. The outcome of the Forum was not part of the final report of the Summit.

Summit secretariat: Ad hoc secretariat consisting of relevant personnel from the UN secretariat and agencies was constituted within the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development at the UN Secretariat in New York.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UN/DESA and Division for Social Policy and Development

## **6.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/47/92](#)), in December 1992 to convene the Social Summit. The GA called by the same resolution the NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC to participate in the Summit and its preparatory process:

*17. Requests the non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to contribute in accordance with established practice to the Summit and the preparatory process, as appropriate. (A/RES/47/92)*

## **6.2 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations**

At its organizational session in April 1993, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on accreditation for NGOs at the preparatory process and the Summit itself. According to the decision, ECOSOC/NGOs needed to indicate their interest to participate in order to become accredited. They did not need to apply or send any further information to the Preparatory

Committee. Other NGOs could apply for accreditation. Their applications needed to include information, which proved their competence and relevance in social development issues, as well as their interest in the objectives of the Summit. Their applications were evaluated by the Secretariat and recommended to the Preparatory Committee:

*ANNEX II: Decisions adopted by the Preparatory Committee at its organizational session*

*2. Non-governmental organizations*

*At its 5th meeting, on 16 April 1993, the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development:*

- (a) Adopted the modalities for participation in and contribution to the World Summit for Social Development and its preparatory process of non-governmental organizations, as set forth in the annex to the present decision;*
- (b) Recognized the importance of the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process and in the Summit itself, and requested all possible aid to ensure full participation of representatives of non-governmental organizations from developing countries.*

*Annex: Participation of non-governmental organizations in the World Summit for Social Development and its preparatory process*

*Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that express the wish to attend the World Summit for Social Development and the meetings of its Preparatory Committee will be accredited for participation. Others wishing to be accredited may apply to the Summit secretariat for this purpose in accordance with the following requirements:*

- (a) The secretariat of the World Summit for Social Development will be responsible for the receipt and preliminary evaluation, in accordance with the provisions given below of requests from non-governmental organizations for accreditation to the Summit and its preparatory process;*
- (b) All such applications must be accompanied by information on the competence of the organizations and on its relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee, indicating the particular areas of the Summit preparations to which such competence and relevance pertain, and should include, inter alia, the following:*
  - (i) Purposes of the organization;*
  - (ii) Information on its programmes and activities in areas relevant to the Summit and its preparatory process and on the country or countries in which those programmes and activities are carried out;*
  - (iii) Confirmation of its activities at the national and/or the international level;*
  - (iv) Copies of its annual reports with financial statements, and a list of members of the governing body and their country of nationality;*
  - (v) A description of its membership, indicating the total number of members and their geographical distribution;*
- (c) In the evaluation of the relevance of non-governmental organizations applying for accreditation to the Summit and its preparatory process, it is agreed that the background of those*

*organizations and their involvement in social development issues, including core issues as defined in paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 47/92 of 16 December 1992, will determine such relevance;*

*(d) Non-governmental organizations seeking accreditation will be asked to confirm their interest in the goals and objectives of the Summit;*

*(e) In cases where the Summit secretariat believes, on the basis of the information provided in accordance with the present document, that an organization has established its competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee, it will recommend to the Preparatory Committee that the organization be accredited. In cases where the Summit secretariat does not recommend the granting of accreditation, it will make available to the Preparatory Committee its reasons for so acting. The Summit secretariat should ensure that its recommendations are available to members of the Preparatory Committee at least one week prior to the start of each session;*

*(f) The Preparatory Committee will decide on all proposals for accreditation within 24 hours of the Summit secretariat's recommendations' having been taken up by the Preparatory Committee in plenary meeting. Should a decision not be taken within that period, interim accreditation will be accorded until such time as a decision is taken.*

*(g) A non-governmental organization that has been granted accreditation to attend one session of the Preparatory Committee may attend all future sessions, as well as the Summit itself. (A/48/24, annex II, decision 2, see the rest in the chapter on modalities).*

At its organizational session, in April 1993, the Preparatory Committee also decided to take special measures to facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations from developing countries in the Summit and its preparatory process (A/48/24, annex II, decision 4).

The secretariat evaluated the applications and recommended NGOs for accreditation with relevant information on their competence in the field of social development. A total number of 1,132 non-governmental organizations were accredited by the Preparatory Committee. (A/CONF.166/4)

First session, Jan. - Feb. 1994: Accreditation for 76 non-governmental organizations was approved ([A/CONF.166/PC/11](#); A/49/24, annex III, decision 1/1).

Second session, Aug. - Sept. 1994: Accreditation for 282 non-governmental organizations was approved ([A/CONF.166/PC/11/Add.1](#); A/49/24/Add. 1, annex I, decision 2/1).

Third session, Jan. 1995: The Summit secretariat decided to postpone the original deadline for submission of applications from non-governmental organizations from 15 December 1994 to 31 January 1995. Accreditation for 608 non-governmental organizations and for another 167 non-governmental organizations was approved with an exception of one organization ([A/CONF.166/PC/11/Add.2](#); [A/CONF.166/PC/11/Add.3](#); [A/CONF.166/PC/28](#), annex 1, decision 3/1).

### 6.3 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations

At its organizational session, in April 1993, the Preparatory Committee decided upon the modalities for the meetings of the Preparatory Committee. The relevant ECOSOC/NGOs could address the Preparatory Committee. Other relevant NGOs could also speak at the Preparatory Committee. The Committee could request the NGOs to select spokespersons, if a number of requested speakers was high. The oral interventions were made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Preparatory Committee. Relevant NGOs were also able to distribute written presentations in the meetings of the Preparatory Committee:

*(h) In recognition of the intergovernmental nature of the World Summit for Social Development, non-governmental organizations will have no negotiating role in the work of the Summit and its preparatory process;*

*(i) Relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may be given an opportunity to briefly address the Preparatory Committee in plenary meeting and its subsidiary bodies. Other relevant non-governmental organizations may also ask to speak briefly at such meetings. If the number of requests is too large, the Preparatory Committee will request that the non-governmental organizations form themselves into constituencies, with each constituency speaking through one spokesperson. Any oral intervention by a non-governmental organization should, in accordance with normal United Nations practice, be made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Preparatory Committee;*

*(j) Relevant non-governmental organizations may, at their own expense, make written presentations in the official languages of the United Nations during the preparatory process, as they deem appropriate. Those written presentations will not be issued as official documents unless they are in accordance with United Nations rules of procedure. (A/48/24, annex II, decision 2)*

The General Assembly called again ([A/RES/48/100](#)), in December 1993 upon the NGOs in consultative status with the United Nations and those accredited to the Summit and its preparatory process to contribute fully to the work of the Preparatory Committee and to the Summit:

*Considering also the contributions of non-governmental organizations;*

*9. Calls upon the non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the United Nations and those accredited to the Summit and its preparatory process to contribute fully to the work of the Preparatory Committee and to the Summit. (A/RES/48/100)*

At its second session, in August-September 1994 the Preparatory Committee, took a draft decision on the provisional Rules of Procedure for the Summit, which were recommended to the Summit for adoption. The Summit adopted them as a document A/CONF.166/2, According to the decision, representatives of accredited NGOs were able to attend meetings as observers. They



could make oral statements upon the invitation by the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. The NGOs could also be requested to speak through spokespersons. The NGOs could distribute written statements, which were related to the Summit and reflected their special competence:

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 62):*

1. *Non-governmental organizations accredited to participate in the Summit may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Summit and the main committee.*
2. *Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence. If the number of requests to speak is too large, the non-governmental organizations shall be requested to form themselves into constituencies, such constituencies to speak through spokespersons.*

*Written statements (Rule 63):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 57 to 62 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Summit, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Summit and is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence. Written statements shall not be issued at United Nations expense and shall not be issued as official documents.*  
(A/CONF.166/2)

#### **6.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/47/92](#); [A/RES/48/100](#)

Org. session 12 - 16 Apr. 1993, New York: A/48/24

1st session 31 Jan. - 11 Feb. 1994, New York: A/49/24

2nd session 22 Aug. - 2 Sept. 1994, New York: A/49/24/Add.1

3rd session 16 - 27 Jan. 1995, New York: [A/CONF.166/PC/28](#)

Rules of Procedure [A/CONF.166/2](#)

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### **7. THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN: ACTION FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE**

4 - 15 September 1995, Beijing

#### **Summary**

#### Accreditation:

In March 1992, the Commission on Status on Women, acting as the preparatory body for the Conference adopted a decision 36/8, where the Commission made recommendations regarding participation in the Conference. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to participate.

In May 1993, the Commission considered the accreditation for NGOs not in consultative status. In resolution 37/7, the Commission urged a series of steps to permit non-governmental organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to participate in the Conference. Many Member States stressed the importance of NGOs and referred to the precedents set by the other conference. The importance of the need for close proximity between the NGO Forum and the Conference, as well as the hope that many women's organizations would participate in the Forum, was expressed by a few representatives.

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/48/108](#)) upon the guidelines for accreditation and modalities for participation of NGOs to the Fourth Conference on Women and its preparatory process. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to express their interest to participate and become accredited to the process. Other NGOs were able to apply. Their applications needed to include information on their competence and relevance on gender issues, as well as their interest on the objectives of the Conference. The secretariat evaluated the applications and recommended NGOs for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee. The Committee had to take a decision on accreditation within 24 hours after the lists of recommended NGOs had been introduced. In case the Committee was unable to decide on accreditation within this timeframe, an interim accreditation was granted until the decision was taken.

#### Modalities:

The General Assembly decided (A/RES/48/108), in December 1993 on the modalities for participation of NGOs in the preparatory process. Relevant ECOSOC/NGOs could make oral statements in the Commission acting as a preparatory body. Other relevant NGOs could also speak. The Commission could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if a number of requested speakers was high. All oral statements were made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Commission. Relevant NGOs could also distribute written presentations.

In 1995, the Commission on the Status on Women approved at its thirty-ninth session, as the preparatory body for the Conference a draft Rules of Procedure, which were endorsed by the General Assembly (A/RES/49/482) and finally adopted by the Conference (A/CONF.177/2). According to the decision, representatives of NGOs were able to participate the Conference as observers. They were able to speak upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. The Conference could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if the number of requested speakers was high. The representatives of NGOs were able to distribute written statements.

At the plenary of the Conference, 51 statements were made by individual NGOs and NGO

coalitions. Non-governmental organizations did not address the Main Committee. NGO Forum was organized by the International Steering Committee. The outcome of the Forum was not part of the Final Report.

Preparatory Committee: The Commission on the Status of Women

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UN/DESA/DAW

## 7.1 Introduction

The General Assembly endorsed ([A/RES/45/129](#); [A/RES/46/98](#)) the Economic and Social Council resolution 1990/12, in which the Council recommended convening a world conference on women and requested the Commission on the Status of Women to act as the preparatory body for the conference.

## 7.2 Accreditation of non-governmental organizations

In March 1992, the Commission on Status on Women, acting as the preparatory body for the Conference adopted a decision 36/8, entitled "Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace" (E/CN.6/1992/13). The Commission made recommendations regarding participation in the Conference, the preparatory process of the Conference at the national and regional levels, as well as for the non-governmental organizations forum. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to participate:

*(f) Interested non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, to be represented by observers at the Conference;*

*3. Requests the Economic and Social Council to request the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations to consider on a priority basis, in advance of the Conference, the granting of consultative status to more non-governmental organizations concerned with the advancement of women, with particular attention being given to applications from non-governmental organizations from developing countries, and also requests that the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations be provided with additional resources to deal with the additional workload;*

*4. Recommends that the arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations, as approved by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1296/(XLIV) of 23/May/1968, be reviewed to make consultative status more accessible to non-governmental organizations, particularly those from developing countries.*

In May 1993, the Commission considered the accreditation for NGOs not in consultative status. In resolution 37/7, the Commission urged a series of steps to permit non-governmental organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to participate in

the Conference. Many Member States stressed the importance of NGOs and referred to the precedents set by the other conference. The importance of the need for close proximity between the NGO Forum and the Conference, as well as the hope that many women's organizations would participate in the Forum, was expressed by a few representatives:

Bearing in mind the important role of non-governmental organizations in all activities for the advancement of women and the fact that some of them, specially those from developing countries, do not enjoy consultative status with the Economic and Social Council:

*1. Invites Governments to include, whenever possible, non-governmental organizations in their delegations;*

*3. Also requests the Secretary-General of the Conference to obtain from the regional commissions a list of those non-governmental organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council which were determined to be eligible, which will be submitted to the Commission at its thirty-ninth session so that the Commission may make the list of those to be invited to the World Conference, bearing in mind that for the proper functioning of the Conference and the efficient participation of non-governmental organizations themselves, their number should not be excessive and that the list should have a regional balance; attention will be given to the existing resources and facilities available in the host country;*

*4. Further requests the Secretary-General of the Conference to submit to the Commission at its thirty-ninth session a proposal for criteria to be used by the Commission in drawing up the final list.*

In October 1993, the conference secretariat conducted a two-day informal workshop on information and communication strategy for the Conference. More than 100 organizations from all over the world participated the workshop. At the meeting, NGOs emphasized that global participation of the preparatory process should be extended to as many groups and organizations as possible.

The General Assembly emphasized ([A/RES/48/108](#)), in December 1993 the fact that several NGOs from developing countries do not enjoy consultative status with the Economic and Social Council:

*Bearing in mind the important role non-governmental organizations play in all activities for the advancement of women and the fact that some of them, especially those from developing countries, do not enjoy consultative status with the Economic and Social Council.*  
(A/RES/48/108)

Therefore, the General Assembly adopted the guidelines for accreditation and modalities for participation of NGOs to the Conference and its preparatory process. The resolution emphasized particularly the participation of NGOs from the developing countries. The NGOs in consultative

status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to express their interest to participate and become accredited to the process. Other NGOs were able to apply. Their applications needed to include information on their competence and relevance on gender issues, as well as their interest on the objectives of the Conference. The secretariat was to evaluate the applications and recommend NGOs for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee. The Committee had to take a decision on accreditation within 24 hours after the lists of recommended NGOs had been introduced. In case the Committee was unable to decide on accreditation within this timeframe, an interim accreditation was granted until the decision was taken.

*30. Decides, taking into account Commission on the Status of Women resolution 37/7 of 25 March 1993, to adopt the modalities for the participation in and contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women and its preparatory process by the non-governmental organizations, particularly those from the developing countries, set out in the annex to the present resolution. (A/RES/48/108)*

*ANNEX: Participation of non-governmental organizations in the Fourth World Conference on Women and its preparatory body:*

*Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that express the wish to attend the Conference and the meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as its preparatory body, will be accredited for participation. Others wishing to be accredited may apply to the Conference secretariat for that purpose in accordance with the following requirements:*

*(a) The secretariat of the Fourth World Conference on Women will be responsible for the receipt and preliminary evaluation, in accordance with the provisions set out below, of requests from non-governmental organizations for accreditation to the Conference and the Commission on the Status of Women acting as preparatory body;*

*(b) All such applications must be accompanied by information on the competence of the organization and on its relevance to the work of the preparatory body, indicating the particular areas of the preparations for the Conference to which such competence and relevance pertain, and should include the following:*

*(i) The purposes of the organization;*

*(ii) Information on its programmes and activities in areas relevant to the Conference and on the country or countries in which those programmes and activities are carried out;*

*(iii) Confirmation of its activities at the national and/or the international level;*

*(iv) Copies of its annual reports, with financial statements and a list of members of the governing body and their country of nationality;*

*(v) A description of its membership, indicating the total number of members of the governing body and their country of nationality;*

*(c) Non-governmental organizations seeking accreditation will be asked to confirm their interest in the goals and objectives of the Conference;*

*(d) In cases where the Conference secretariat believes, on the basis of the information provided in accordance with the present document, that an organization has established its competence and relevance to the work of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as preparatory body, it will recommend to the Commission that the organization be accredited. In cases where the Conference secretariat does not recommend the granting of accreditation, it will make such information available to members of the Commission at least one week prior to the start of each session;*

*(e) The Commission on the Status of Women will decide on all proposals for accreditation within twenty-four hours of the recommendations of the Conference secretariat having been taken up by the Commission in plenary session. Should a decision not be taken within that period, interim accreditation will be accorded until such time as a decision is taken. (A/RES/48/108, Annex)*

In March 1995, at its thirty-ninth session, the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as the preparatory body for the Fourth World Conference on Women, recommended a draft resolution on accreditation of non-governmental organizations to the Conference for adoption by the General Assembly and recommended the provisional rules of procedure of the Conference, as amended, for approval by the General Assembly (see chap. II). The Commission recommended the provisional agenda and proposed organization of work of the Conference for adoption by the Conference (resolution 39/1). The Commission also decided to grant observer status to a number of intergovernmental organizations and other entities (decision 39/1), approved the list of non-governmental organizations recommended for accreditation to the Conference (decision 39/2). ([E/1995/26 - E/CN.6/1995/14](#))

The deadline of 13 January 1995 for accreditation to the 39th session of the Commission was the final deadline for application for accreditation to the Fourth World Conference.

### **7.3 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

In March 1992, the Commission on Status on Women, acting as the preparatory body for the Conference adopted a decision 36/8. One part of the resolution concerned the NGO Forum. The Commission emphasized the importance of close proximity between the forum and the official meetings:

#### *Forum for non-governmental organizations*

- 1. Emphasizes the importance of close proximity between the forum and the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, as well as some concurrence in time;*
- 2. Invites the committee of non-governmental organizations arranging the forum and national and regional activities to provide information, including media arrangements, to the Commission through a report of the Secretary-General on preparations for the Conference;*
- 3. Emphasizes the importance of unrestricted participation by the media in covering the forum.*

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/48/108](#)), in December 1993 on the modalities for participation of NGOs in the preparatory process. Relevant ECOSOC/NGOs could make oral statements in the Commission acting as a preparatory body. Other relevant NGOs could also speak. The Commission could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if a number of requested speakers was high. All oral statements were made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Commission. Relevant NGOs could also distribute written presentations.

*(f) A non-governmental organization that has been granted accreditation to attend one session of the Commission on the Status of Women acting as preparatory body may attend all future sessions and the Conference;*

*(g) In recognition of the intergovernmental nature of the Fourth World Conference on Women, non-governmental organizations will have no negotiating role in the work of the Conference and its preparatory process;*

*(h) Relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may be given the opportunity briefly to address the Commission on the Status of Women acting as preparatory body in plenary meeting and its subsidiary bodies. Other relevant non-governmental organizations may also ask to speak briefly at such meetings. If the number of requests is too large, the Commission will request that non-governmental organizations form themselves into constituencies, with each constituency speaking through one spokesperson. Any oral intervention by a non-governmental organization should, in accordance with usual United Nations practice, be made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Commission;*

*(i) Relevant non-governmental organizations may, at their own expense, make written presentations in the official languages of the United Nations during the preparatory process, as they deem appropriate. Those written presentations will not be issued as official documents unless they are in accordance with the rules of procedure of the Conference. (A/RES/48/108, Annex)*

In 1995, the Commission on the Status on Women approved at its thirty-ninth session, as the preparatory body for the Conference a draft Rules of Procedure, which were endorsed by the General Assembly ([A/RES/49/482](#)) and finally adopted by the Conference ([A/CONF.177/2](#)). According to the decision, representatives of NGOs were able to participate the Conference as observers. They were able to speak upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. The Conference could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if the number of requested speakers was high. The representatives of NGOs were able to distribute written statements:

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 65):*

*1. Non-governmental organizations accredited to participate in the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and the Main Committees.*

2. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence. If the number of requests to speak is too large, the non-governmental organizations shall be requested to form themselves into constituencies, such constituencies to speak through spokespersons.

*Written statements (Rule 66):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 59 to 65 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Conference, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Conference and is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence. Written statements shall not be issued at United Nations expense and shall not be issued as official documents.*  
(A/CONF.177/2)

#### **7.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[ECOSOC 1990/12](#)

[A/RES/45/129](#); [A/RES/46/98](#); [A/RES/48/108](#)

38th session of the Commission on the Status on Women, March 1994

39th session of the Commission on the Status on Women, 1995

Rules of Procedure [A/CONF.177/2](#)

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### **8. UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**

(Habitat II) 3 - 14 June 1996, Istanbul

#### **Summary**

##### Accreditation:

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/47/180](#)) to invite NGOs, particularly those from developing countries and those related to major groups to participate in the Conference and its preparatory process. The arrangements for participation were requested to follow the practice established at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED).

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee adopted the guidelines for NGO participation, which had been proposed by the Secretary-General in his report, with one additional paragraph. The Committee decided simultaneously on the accreditation for the Preparatory Committee and



the Conference. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to participate without further screening, by expressing their interest to the secretariat. Other NGOs were able to apply. Their applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence in human settlement issues, as well as their interest in the objectives of the Conference. Applications were first evaluated by the Secretariat, which recommended NGOs for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee. The secretariat needed to explain to the Committee, in the case of a NGO it was unable to recommend, reasons for rejecting the application. The recommendations needed to be available at least one week before each session of the Committee. After a recommendation had been introduced, the Committee had to make its decision on accreditation within 24 hours. Otherwise, recommended NGOs were to be granted an interim accreditation until the decision was taken.

Accreditation was a continuous process, where all together (correct number still missing) NGOs and international associations of local authorities were accredited by consensus. During the process, special references were made to the participation of indigenous people and local communities. At its second session, the Committee decided that NGOs accredited to the Commission on Sustainable Development could be accredited without further screening, by expressing its interest to the secretariat.

Accredited NGOs were automatically able to attend the Conference.

#### Modalities:

The General Assembly requested (A/RES/47/180) the Secretary-General to make recommendations on a preparatory process. At its first session, the Preparatory Committee adopted the guidelines for NGO participation in the preparatory process, proposed by the Secretary-General in his report, with one additional paragraph. According to the decision, relevant ECOSOC/NGOs could make oral statements at the Preparatory Committee. Other NGOs could also make oral statements. The Committee could request the NGOs to speak through spokespersons, if a number of requested speakers was high. Oral statements could be made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Committee. Relevant NGOs were allowed to distribute written statements.

The General Assembly called ([A/RES/49/109](#)) upon the broad-based participation of civil society, including local authorities, academia, trade unions, and the private sector. At its third session, the Preparatory Committee affirmed the need to involve civil society at large in the process and recommended that the General Assembly should authorize a special modality on the participation of representatives of local authorities.

At its third session, the Preparatory Committee also decided on the modalities for the Conference (Rules of Procedure), which were endorsed by the General Assembly ([A/RES/50/100](#)) and finally adopted by the Conference ([A/CONF.165/2](#)). According to the decision, representatives of local authorities may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference and its bodies. Representatives of NGOs may participate as observers and make oral statements upon

the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. NGOs may also be requested to speak through spokespersons. They could distribute written statements.

NGOs made oral statements at the Preparatory Committee. At the Conference, 27 NGOs (mostly representing caucuses) made oral statements. At the Hearings Committee (Committee II) presentations were heard from NGOs, local authorities, academia, trade unions, and the private sector. A summary of the outcome of each of the Hearing was included as an integral part of the final report of the Conference.

Besides speaking arrangements at the official meetings, civil society was able to shape the outcome of the conference through participating in meetings of the informal drafting group on the Istanbul Programme of Action. Their participation was extended to tabling textual amendments directly.

The NGO Forum was organized by the Host Country. Its programme included the Youth Day, event for the Decade of Indigenous People, as well as the International Trade Fair, which accommodated over 1000 companies from 40 countries. The outcome of the NGO Forum was not part of the Final Report.

Conference secretariat: Ad hoc secretariat as part of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: Habitat (UNCHS)

### **8.1 Accreditation for civil society participation**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/47/180](#)), in December 1992 to convene the Conference and invited NGOs, particularly those from developing countries and those related to major groups to participate in the Preparatory Committee and the Conference. It was decided that the arrangements for participation of NGOs should follow the practice established for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED):

*6. Invites non-governmental organizations, particularly those from developing countries and including those related to major groups, to participate in and contribute to the Conference and its preparatory process, and, to this end, decides that the Preparatory Committee shall formulate and adopt modalities for the accreditation and participation of those organizations, taking into account the procedures followed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. (A/RES/47/180)*

The resolution also requested the Secretary-General to prepare a report with recommendations on an adequate preparatory process for the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee. At its organizational session, in March 1993 the Committee considered the report of the Secretary-General (A/CONF.165/PC/2). The report stressed a broad-based participation of civil society, such as mayors, local authorities, parliamentarians, private sector and community-based

organizations as a means to enrich the deliberations and mobilize support for the Conference:

*(f) Arranging for participation of local authorities and the non-governmental sector*

*24. As has been previously pointed out, intensive participation by all important sectors and organizations outside the national government, i.e. mayors of cities, local authorities, parliamentarians, housing finance organizations and other parts of the private sector, community sector groups and other non-governmental organizations, as well as associations of these entities, is considered essential to the preparation of a credible plan of action. Their extensive participation can enhance and enrich the deliberations of the Committee and the Conference, as well as mobilize support for the Conference findings. Therefore every effort should be made to involve the greatest representation of interested groups.*

*26. The involvement of mayors of cities, local authorities, and their associations should be promoted and encouraged by inviting them to participate, as part of national delegation or otherwise, in relevant meetings, and by suggesting that they organize and conduct their own meetings in such a way as to prepare and make the necessary contributions to preparatory process and the Conference itself. (A/CONF.165/PC/2)*

The Secretary-General's report included draft guidelines for civil society participation in the process (A/CONF.165/PC/2, annex I). At its first session, in April 1994 the Preparatory Committee approved the proposed guidelines with an additional paragraph 9 (A/48/37). According to the decision, the ECOSOC/NGOs could be accredited to the preparatory process without further screening, by expressing their interest to the secretariat. Other NGOs were able to apply for accreditation. Their applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence in the human settlement issues, as well as their interest in the objectives of the Conference. Applications were first evaluated by the Secretariat, which recommended NGOs for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee. The secretariat needed to explain to the Committee, in the case of a NGOs it was unable to recommend, reasons for rejecting the application. The recommendations needed to be available at least one week before each session of the Committee. After a recommendation had been introduced, the Committee had to make its decision on accreditation within 24 hours. In case the Committee was unable to decide on accreditation within this timeframe, recommended NGOs were to be granted an interim accreditation until the decision was taken:

*13. Decides that, in order to enable non-governmental organizations effectively to participate in the Conference and its preparatory process, their participation shall be governed by the procedures annexed to the present resolution:*

*ANNEX :Rules of procedure for the participation of non-governmental organizations*

*1. Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that express their wish to attend the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and the meetings of its Preparatory Committee shall be accredited for participation. Others wishing to be accredited may apply to the Conference secretariat for this purpose in accordance*

*with this decision.*

*2. The secretariat of the Conference shall be responsible for the receipt and preliminary evaluation of requests from non-governmental organizations for accreditation to the Conference and its preparatory process.*

*3. All such applications must be accompanied by information on the organization's competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee, indicating the particular areas of the Conference preparations to which such competence and relevance pertain, and which should include, inter alia, the following information:*

*(a) The purpose of the organization, and the country or countries in which it is active;*

*(b) Date of establishment and location of the principal office of the organization and confirmation of its activities at the national and/or international level;*

*(c) Information as to the programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the Conference and its preparatory process, and the country or countries in which they are carried out;*

*(d) Copies of its annual reports with financial statements and a list of members of the governing body and their country of nationality;*

*(e) A description of its membership, indicating the total number of members and their geographical distribution.*

*4. In the evaluation of the relevance of non-governmental applications for accreditation to the Conference and its preparatory process, it is agreed that their background and involvement in human settlement issues will determine their relevance.*

*5. Non-governmental organizations seeking accreditation shall be asked to confirm their interest in the goals and objectives of the Conference.*

*6. In cases where the Conference secretariat believes, on the basis of the information provided in accordance with this decision, that the organization has established its competence and relevance to the work of the Preparatory Committee, it will recommend to the Preparatory Committee that the organization be accredited. In cases where the Conference secretariat does not recommend the granting of accreditation, it will make available to the Preparatory Committee the reasons for not doing so. The Conference secretariat should ensure that its recommendations are available to the Preparatory Committee at least one week prior to the start of the session.*

*7. The Preparatory Committee will decide on all cases and proposals for accreditation within twenty-four hours of the Conference secretariat's recommendations having been taken up by the Preparatory Committee in plenary meeting. In the event of a decision not having been taken within this period, interim accreditations shall be accorded until such time as a decision is taken.*

*8. A non-governmental organization that has been granted accreditation to attend a session of the Preparatory Committee may attend all its future sessions. (A/48/37, see the rest of the annex in the chapter on modalities)*

The accreditation of NGOs was a continuous process, where accreditation was granted by consensus:

1st session of the Preparatory Committee, 11 to 22 April 1994: Accreditation for 35 NGOs was approved (A/CONF.165/PC.1/CRP.5; A/49/37, decision I/3).

2nd session of the Preparatory Committee, 24 April - 5 May 1995: Accreditation for 93 NGOs was approved (A/CONF.165/PC.2/CRP.1; A/50/37, annex, decision II/9); the Committee also took note of the decision of the Economic and Social Council, dated 25 July 1994, which stated that NGOs accredited to the Commission on Sustainable Development should be placed on the Roster.

3rd session of the Preparatory Committee, 5 - 16 February 1996: Accreditation for (correct number still missing) NGOs (A/CONF.165/PC.3/2 and Add.1) was approved with two exceptions (A/CONF.165/PC.3/7, annex I, decision 3/1 A, B and C); accreditation for 4 international associations of local authorities was approved (A/CONF.165/PC.3/2/Add.2; A/CONF.165/PC.3/7, annex I, decision 3/2); the consideration for accreditation to one organization was postponed to the pre-Conference consultations.

## **8.2 Modalities for civil society participation**

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/47/180](#)), in December 1992 the Secretary-General to prepare a report with recommendations on an adequate preparatory process for the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee in March 1993. The Secretary-General's report, including draft guidelines for civil society participation (A/CONF.165/PC/2, annex I) were introduced at the organizational session. At its first session, in April 1994 the Preparatory Committee approved the proposed guidelines with an additional paragraph 9 (see the chapter on accreditation above for the first paragraphs of the annex). According to the decision, ECOSOC/NGOs could make oral statements at the Preparatory Committee. Other NGOs could also speak. The Committee could request the NGOs to make statements through spokespersons, if the number of requested speakers was high. All the oral statements were made at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Committee. Relevant NGOs could also distribute written statements, which were in the area of their special competence and related to the Conference:

*9. In recognition of the intergovernmental nature of the Conference, non-governmental organizations shall have no negotiating role in the work of the Conference and its preparatory process.*

*10. Relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may be given an opportunity to address the Preparatory Committee briefly in plenary meeting and in its subsidiary bodies. Other relevant non-governmental organizations may also ask to speak briefly at such meetings. If the number of requests is too large, the Preparatory Committee shall request the non-governmental organizations to form themselves*

*into constituencies, each constituency to speak through one spokesperson. Any oral intervention by a non-governmental organization should, in accordance with normal United Nations practice, be at the discretion of the Chairman and with the consent of the Preparatory Committee.*

*11. Relevant non-governmental organizations may, at their own expense, make written presentations during the preparatory process in the official languages of the United Nations as they deem appropriate. Those written presentations will not be issued as official documents except in accordance with United Nations rules of procedure. (A/48/37, annex)*

The General Assembly called again ([A/RES/49/109](#)), in December 1994 upon the participation of NGOs from developing countries and the broad-based participation of civil society, including local authorities, academia, trade unions, and the private sector:

*13. Encourages all relevant interested non-governmental organizations, particularly those from developing countries, to participate in, and contribute to the Conference and its preparatory process, on the basis of procedures followed at recent United Nations conferences;*

*14. Also encourages the above-mentioned organizations to contribute fully to increasing world awareness of the problems and potential of human settlements as important inputs to social progress and economic growth, and world leaders to commit themselves to making cities, towns and villages in their countries healthy, safe, just and sustainable;*

*16. Calls upon all States to encourage the broad-based participation of local authorities and all relevant actors, including the scientific community, industry, trade unions, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in the national, regional and international preparatory process and to encourage a wide exchange of information and experience in this respect, in particular on the programmes of work and activities of national committees. (A/RES/49/109)*

Against this background, at its third session, the Preparatory Committee affirmed the need to involve civil society at large in the process. The Committee recommended that the General Assembly would authorize a special modality on the participation of representatives of local authorities:

*2. To ensure a meaningful broad-based participation of local authorities, non-governmental organizations and all other relevant actors, Habitat II needs to become a conference of partnerships, as has been the case for the preparatory process at the national, regional and international levels, in accordance with paragraph 16 of the above-mentioned General Assembly resolution. This partnership includes a wide-exchange of information and experiences between Member States and representatives designated by international associations, consisting of: local authorities; relevant professionals; researchers and academics; non-governmental and community-based organizations; youth organizations; industry, commerce, finance and services; trade unions; parliamentarians; and media invited to the Conference. Also included are all agencies, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system, which have been called upon to be actively associated in the preparatory process of the Conference. In order to facilitate*

*this process, the secretariat should continue to solicit and encourage the participation of non-governmental partners in the preparatory process, with a view to attaining representation of the broadest possible spectrum of views and contributions in terms of geographical coverage and different constituencies.*

*3. Member States have the sole and final responsibility in the decision-making process. (A/CONF.165/PC/3/7, Decision II/3, annex, paragraphs 2 and 3)*

## VI. PARTICIPATION OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

*19. To ensure the broad-based participation of local authorities in Habitat II, as foreseen by the General Assembly in resolution 49/109, the Preparatory Committee recommends to the General Assembly that it authorize a special modality, comparable to that provided to the representatives of national human rights institutions at the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, and to the representatives of selected scientific associations at the World Conference on Natural Disaster Reduction, held at Yokohama, Japan, from 23 to 27 May 1994.*

*20. The appropriate modality for Habitat II would be to encourage the full participation of local authorities. Consequently, an additional rule, Rule 61, is added to the provisional rules of procedure, to provide the following: Representatives of local authorities, designated by accredited international associations of local authorities in consultation with national associations of local authorities, invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and, as appropriate, any other committee or working group, on questions within the scope of their activities. Every effort shall be made to make the representation of local authorities balanced in terms of region, size and type of local authorities. (A/CONF.165/PC/3/7, Decision II/3, annex, paragraphs 19 and 20)*

At its third session, the Preparatory Committee also decided upon the provisional rules of procedure for the Conference, which were endorsed by the General Assembly ([A/RES/50/100](#)) and finally adopted by the Conference ([A/CONF.165/2](#)). According to the decision, representatives of local authorities may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference and its bodies. Representatives of NGOs may participate as observers and make oral statements upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. NGOs may also be requested to speak through spokespersons. They could distribute written statements.

*Representatives of local authorities (Rule 62):*

*Representatives of local authorities, designated by accredited international associations of local authorities in consultation with national associations of local authorities, invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and, as appropriate, any other committee or working group, on questions within the scope of their activities. Every effort shall be made to make the representation of local authorities balanced in terms of region, size and type of local authorities.*

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 63):*

1. *Non-governmental organizations accredited to participate in the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and the Main Committees.*
2. *Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence. If the number of requests to speak is too large, the non-governmental organizations shall be requested to form themselves into constituencies, such constituencies to speak through spokespersons.*

*Written statements (Rule 64):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 57 to 63 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Conference, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Conference and is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence. Written statements shall not be issued at United Nations expense and shall not be issued as official documents.  
(A/CONF.165/2)*

### **8.3 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/47/180](#); [A/RES/49/109](#); [A/RES/48/37](#); [A/RES/50/100](#)

Org. session 3-5 Mar. 1993, New York: A/48/37  
 1st session 11-22 Apr. 1994, Geneva: A/49/37  
 2nd session 24 Apr.-5 May 1995, Nairobi: A/50/37  
 3rd session 5-16 Feb. 1996, New York: A/CONF.165/PC/3/7

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## **9. THIRD UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES**

14-20 May 2001, Brussels

### **Summary**

#### Accreditation:

The General Assembly emphasized (A/RES/55/) the participation of NGOs, in particular from the



least developed countries in the preparatory process and the Conference. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to participate without further screening, by expressing their interest to the secretariat. Invitation was also addressed to NGOs who were accredited to the Second Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in 1990 and NGOs who are in consultative status with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Other interested NGOs and the private sector were able to apply using the form designed by the secretariat. The Bureau of the Preparatory Committee was to consider applications on a no-objection basis by 31 January 2001, for final decision of the second session of the Preparatory Committee.

At its second session, in February 2001, the Preparatory Committee approved ad referendum the list of civil society actors applying for accreditation in the preparatory process and the Conference. The deadline for any objections was 16 of February 2001. The Committee took a decision, where the deadline of NGO applications for accreditation was extended until the end of March.

#### Modalities

At its first session, in July 2000, the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities (Rules of Procedure) for the Conference. According to the decision, representatives of NGOs could attend the Conference and its Committee of the Whole as observers. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned, NGOs could speak at the meetings. NGOs could also distribute written statements.

A representative of NGOs made a statement at the first session of the Committee on the outcome of the parallel NGO Forum. A representative of NGOs addressed the Committee also during the second and third session.

Preparatory Committee: Open-ended Preparatory Committee with the UNCTAD secretariat.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UNCTAD

### **9.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/45/206](#), [A/RES/50/103](#)), in December 1995 to consider to convene a global review and appraisal of the Programme of Action on the Least Developed Countries in the end of the decade. The GA decided ([A/RES/52/187](#)), in December to convene the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries at a high level in 2001.

### **9.2 Accreditation for civil society**

In December 1998 and December 1999, the General Assembly invited the Secretary-General of the Conference to facilitate the participation of NGOs and the private sector in the preparatory process and the Conference:

*9. Invites the Secretary-General of the Conference to make arrangements, on the basis of consultations with Member States, to facilitate the involvement of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in the preparatory process and the Conference. (A/RES/53/182; A/54/235)*

The Conference secretariat encouraged civil society groups to be part of the preparation of national programmes of action. Several meetings for NGOs were organized at regional and international levels prior to the Conference. The Liaison Committee of Development NGOs to the European Union agreed to act as the focal point and convenor of an NGO Forum parallel to the Conference. An NGO steering group was established to plan the Forum, which would take place just before and during the official Conference.

The Secretary-General of the Conference sent an invitation for NGOs to participate during the first session of the Preparatory Committee, in July 2001. A large number of NGOs attended the first session and the parallel NGO Forum on 24-26 of July. The outcome of the Forum was represented to the Preparatory Committee through a spokesperson, who made a statement on behalf of 50 NGOs from South and North.

The General Assembly emphasized ([A/RES/55/214](#)), in December 2000 the participation of NGOs, in particular from the least developed countries in the preparatory process and the Conference. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to participate without further screening, by expressing their invitation to the secretariat. Invitation was also addressed to NGOs who were accredited to the Second Conference on the Least Developed Countries, in 1990 and NGOs who are in consultative status with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD). Other interested NGOs and the private sector were able to apply. The Bureau of the Preparatory Committee was to consider applications on a no-objection basis by 31 January 2001, for final decision of the second session of the Preparatory Committee. The Committee was invited to consider forms of participation of civil society in the final session of the Committee and at the Conference:

*7. Recognizes the importance of the contribution of civil society actors at the Conference and its preparatory process, stresses, in this regard, the need for their active participation, including those from the least developed countries, and invites donors to make appropriate contributions for that purpose;*

*8. Invites the participation in the Conference and in its preparatory process of*  
*(a) the relevant non-governmental organizations that are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in accordance with Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996;*  
*(b) the non-governmental organizations that were accredited to the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held from 3 to 14 September 1990 and*  
*(c) the non-governmental organizations that are in consultative status with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, decides that the accreditation of other interested civil society actors, in particular non-governmental organizations and the business sector, to the Conference and its preparatory process shall be considered by the Bureau of the Preparatory*

*Committee on a no-objection basis before 31 January 2001 for final decision by the Committee at its second session, provided that requests for accreditation are submitted to the secretariat of the Conference before 15 January 2001 and are accompanied by the relevant information, and requests the Secretary-General of the Conference to inform the community of civil society actors appropriately about this accreditation process;*

*9. Also invites the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee to make recommendations for the consideration of Member States during the second session of the Committee as to the form of involvement of civil society actors in the final session of the Committee and at the Conference. (A/RES/55/214)*

At its second session, in February 2001, the Preparatory Committee approved ad referendum the list of civil society actors applying for accreditation in the preparatory process and the Conference (A/CONF.191/IPC/CRP.5). The deadline for any objections was 16 of February 2001.

At the same session, a representative of International Steering Committee made a statement on behalf of NGOs at the Preparatory Committee. A large number of NGOs was again attending the session. The Committee took a decision, where the deadline of NGO applications for accreditation was extended until the end of March. The secretariat was invited to provide a list of NGOs for the approval of the Committee:

*Annex I: decision on Accreditation on Civil Society Actors*

*The Intergovernmental Preparatory Committee for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, at its second session,*

*Decides to extend to 31 March 2001 the deadline for the accreditation of interested civil society actors, as referred to in paragraph 8 of General Assembly resolution 55/214, and requests the Secretary-General of the Conference to submit the list of interested civil society actors that have met the extended deadline for decision by the Committee at its third session. (A/CONF.191/3)*

### **9.3 Modalities for participation of civil society**

At its first session, in July 2000, the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities (Rules of Procedure, [A/CONF.191/IPC/L.2](#)) for the Conference. According to the decision, representatives of NGOs could attend the Conference and its Committee of the Whole as observers. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned, NGOs could speak at the meetings. NGOs could also distribute written statements.

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 64):*

*1. Non-governmental organizations invited to the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and its Committee of the Whole.*

*2. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the Conference body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence.*

*Written statements (rule 65):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 60 to 64 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the languages in which the statements are made available to the secretariat for distribution, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence and is related to the work of the Conference. (A/CONF.191/IPC/L.2)*

A representative of NGOs made a statement at the first session of the Committee on the outcome of the parallel NGO Forum. A representative of NGOs addressed the Committee also during the second and third session.

#### **9.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/45/206](#); [A/RES/50/103](#); [A/RES/52/187](#); [A/RES/53/182](#); [A/RES/54/235](#)

1st session 24-28 of July 2000, New York: [A/CONF.191/2](#)

2nd session 5-9 of February 2000, New York: [A/CONF.191/3](#)

3rd session 2-6 of April 2000: [A/CONF.191/IPC/L.7](#)

Rules of Procedure [A/CONF.191/IPC/L.2](#)

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### **10. UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON THE ILLICIT TRADE IN SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

9 - 20 July 2001, New York

#### **Summary**

##### Accreditation:

At its third session, the Preparatory Committee decided on the accreditation of NGOs in the preparatory process and the conference itself. Relevant NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to participate, through expressing their interest to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. Other interested NGOs could apply for accreditation through the Chairman. Their applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence to the scope and purpose of the Conference.

In June 2001, the conference secretariat circulated to Member States a list of 177 NGOs that were applying for accreditation at the conference. Following the draft rule 64, these NGOs were to be accredited without any separate decision, if no objection was expressed by 25 of June. The list of NGOs was circulated with copies of applications of each NGO, as well as a note verbale

explaining the background for accreditation process.

There were no objections NGO on the list. All together 50 NGOs with consultative status with the ECOSOC and 127 NGOs without consultative status with the ECOSOC were accredited to the conference.

Modalities:

At its third session, the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities for participation of NGOs. Accredited NGOs could attend the meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the Conference, except the meetings announced to be closed. Accredited NGOs could speak at the Preparatory Committee and the Conference during one meeting, which is especially allocated for this purpose. This one meeting should not take place simultaneously with other meetings of the Committee and the Conference. Upon request, accredited NGOs could receive documents of the Committee and the Conference. They could also circulate written material outside the conference room, in the area of the meeting.

The conference heard statements of NGOs and other concerned civil society actors on the morning session of July 16. Representatives of 42 organizations addressed a variety of issues.

Preparatory Committee: Open-ended Preparatory Committee with the secretariat of the Department of Disarmament Affairs..

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: Department of Disarmament Affairs.

**10.1 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/54/54](#)), in December 1999 to convene an international conference on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects. In the same resolution, the GA recognized the important role of civil society, including NGOs on the issues of small arms and light weapons:

*Recognizing the importance of the role of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, in preventing and reducing the excessive and destabilizing accumulation of small arms and light weapons.*

*4. Decides that the specialized agencies, other relevant intergovernmental organizations and relevant entities, having received a standing invitation to participate as observers in the sessions and in the work of the General Assembly, shall participate, as observers, in the Preparatory Committee, and requests the Committee to take a decision on the modalities of attendance of non-governmental organizations at its sessions.*

*6. Stresses the need to ensure the widest possible and effective participation in the conference in 2001. (A/RES/54/54, section V)*

At its first session, in February-March 2000 the Preparatory Committee decided to defer the arrangements for participation of non-governmental organizations to the subsequent sessions of the Committee (A/CONF.192/1). Two working papers were submitted to the first session of the Committee on participation of NGOs (Working paper submitted by Algeria [A/CONF.192/PC/17](#); Working paper submitted by Canada [A/CONF.192/PC/15](#)).

At its second session, in January 2001 the Preparatory Committee decided to hold an informal meeting on 18 January to hear the views of NGOs. It was agreed that the decision of the Preparatory Committee had been taken without prejudice to its consideration of the draft decision on "modalities of attendance of NGOs at the sessions of the Preparatory Committee". It was also agreed that this decision would not constitute any precedent for the future. On 18 January, the Committee held an informal meeting during which over thirty representatives of the NGOs presented their views (see the list of NGOs: A/CONF.192/1). The Committee decided to defer the consideration of arrangements for participation of NGOs to the next session.

At its third session, in March 2001 the Preparatory Committee considered and took a decision upon the draft proposal of the Chairman on the accreditation of NGOs in the preparatory process and the conference itself. Relevant NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to participate, through expressing their interest to the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. Other interested NGOs could apply for accreditation through the Chairman. Their applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence to the scope and purpose of the Conference (CONF.192/PC/L.7/Rev.2; A/CONF.192/L.1).

Representatives of non-governmental organizations  
Rule 63:

*The Preparatory Committee for the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects decides that, with respect to the attendance of non-governmental organizations at the Preparatory Committee and the Conference, attendance will be open to:*

*(a) Relevant non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in accordance with the provisions of resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996. These non-governmental organizations should inform the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee about their interest to attend;*

*(b) Other interested non-governmental organizations relevant and competent to the scope and the purpose of the Conference provided that requests to do so are submitted to the Chairman of the Committee and are accompanied by information on the organization's purpose, programmes and activities in areas relevant to the scope of the Conference. The Chairman of the Preparatory Committee will subsequently provide the Committee with a list of these non-governmental organizations for consideration on a no-objection basis. A/CONF.192/L.1, see the rest below):*

In June 2001, the conference secretariat circulated to Member States a list of 177 NGOs that were applying for accreditation at the conference. Following the draft rule 64, these NGOs were to be accredited without any separate decision, if no objection was expressed by 25 of June. The list of NGOs was circulated with copies of applications of each NGO, as well as a following note verbale explaining the background for accreditation process:

*The Secretariat of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects presents its compliments to the Permanent Mission of...to the United Nations and has the honour to draw the attention of the Mission to the decision contained in paragraph 23 of the Report of the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference (A/CONF.192/PC/50) by which the Preparatory Committee adopted the modalities of attendance of non-governmental organizations at the Conference.*

*In accordance with the decision, which will be reflected in draft rule 64 of the draft rules of procedure for the Conference, attendance will be open to relevant NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) as well as other interested NGOs relevant and competent to the scope and purpose of the Conference. While relevant NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC were requested to inform the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee of their interest to attend, other interested NGOs were requested to submit information on their purposes, programmes and activities relevant to the scope of the Conference.*

*Enclosed please find the final list and copies of all NGOs having requested accreditation to the Conference. Section (A) reflects NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC while section (B) reflects non-ECOSOC NGOs.*

*NGO requests for accreditation were received primarily in English, while a large number also arrived in French and Spanish. To facilitate review by Member States, the Secretariat is providing unofficial translations of the French and Spanish documents into English. Those unofficial translations currently available are enclosed, each accompanying the request in its original language. All efforts are being made to expedite the translation into English of the remaining French and Spanish documents.*

*In accordance with draft rule 64, the President will not ask for a decision on section (A), but he will assume each NGO in section (B) of the list to which no objection has been made by Monday, 25 June, is accredited to the Conference.*

*There were no objections concerning one NGO on the list. All together 50 NGOs with consultative status with the ECOSOC and 127 NGOs without consultative status with the ECOSOC were accredited to the conference.*

## **10.2 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

During the second session, the Preparatory Committee considered the draft provisional rules of

procedure (A/CONF.192/PC/L.5), which was introduced by the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee. The Committee decided to continue the consideration at its third session.

At its third session, in March 2001, the Preparatory Committee decided on the modalities for participation of NGOs. Accredited NGOs could attend the meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the Conference, except the meetings announced to be closed. Accredited NGOs could speak at the Preparatory Committee and the Conference during one meeting, which is especially allocated for this purpose. This one meeting should not take place simultaneously with other meetings of the Committee and the Conference. Upon request, accredited NGOs could receive documents of the Committee and the Conference. They could also circulate written material outside the conference room, in the area of the meeting (CONF.192/PC/L.7/Rev.2; A/CONF.192/L.1):

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations*  
*Rule 63*

- (c) Non-governmental organizations accredited through the process specified above may attend meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the Conference, other than those designated as closed;*
- (d) Representatives of accredited non-governmental organizations will be allowed to address the Preparatory Committee and the Conference during one meeting specifically allocated for this purpose. These meetings will not coincide with other meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the Conference;*
- (e) Accredited non-governmental organizations will be provided, upon request, with documents related to the Preparatory Committee and to the Conference, and they may, at their own expense, provide material to the delegations, outside the conference room, in the area of the Preparatory Committee and the Conference;*
- (f) Arrangements concerning the accreditation and attendance of non-governmental organizations at the Preparatory Committee and the Conference shall in no way create a precedent for other United Nations conferences. (A/CONF.192/L.1, see the rest above)*

*Written statements*  
*Rule 64*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 59 to 63 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Conference, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Conference and is on a subject in which the organization has a special competence. Written statements shall not be made at United Nations expense and shall not be issued as official documents.*



The conference heard statements of NGOs and other concerned civil society actors on the morning session of July 16. Representatives of 42 organizations addressed a variety of issues. Medical doctors and community health officials addressed issues related to firearm injuries and the effects of trauma. Other speakers addressed the impact of the illicit trade in small arms on the development of communities. Several speakers also addressed the importance of domestic and international controls, as well as follow-up measures. Several representatives spoke of the humanitarian impact of the illegal arms trade on the world's most vulnerable populations, namely, disabled persons, women and children.

### **10.3 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/54/54](#)

A/RES/55/33

1st session 28 Feb.-3 Mar 2000, New York: (A/CONF.192/1)

2nd session 8-19 Jan. 2001, New York: (A/CONF.192/1)

3rd session 19-30 Mar. 2001: (A/CONF.192/1)

Rules of Procedure A/CONF.192/PC/L.1

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## **11. WORLD CONFERENCE AGAINST RACISM, RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, XENOPHOBIA AND RELATED INTOLERANCE**

31 August - 7 September 2001, Durban

### **Summary**

#### Accreditation:

The Commission on Human Rights, in April 2000 encouraged ([E/CN.4/RES/2000/14](#)) the participation of NGOs in the Preparatory Committee and the Conference. The Commission called the Secretary-General of the Conference to propose arrangements for the accreditation of the NGOs.

At its first session, in May 2000, the Preparatory Committee accredited 11 NGOs to the first session of the Preparatory Committee, based on their competence and relevance, which had been evaluated by the secretariat on (A/CONF.189/PC.1/20, decision PC.1/5). The Committee also decided that indigenous people that are accredited according to the ECOSOC resolution 1995/32 could apply for accreditation following the same practice as for NGOs.

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee also recognized the fact that the next session of the Committee was only one year later, which required arrangements for interim accreditation for NGOs not in consultative status with the ECOSOC. The Committee decided that the Bureau, in consultation with regional groups should accredit NGOs between the two sessions of the Committee. The secretariat was requested to review all the applications and circulate the lists to all Member States with a note verbale, giving the Governments 14 days to make comments on the application. In case, a consultative status of a NGO had been suspended or withdrawn, the secretariat was requested to inform on the reasons. In case Member States raised concerns on an application, the final decision was to be made at the second session of the Committee.

Modalities:

The Commission on Human Rights, in April 2000 requested the High Commissioner of Human Rights to consult NGOs on organizing a civil society forum. The High Commissioner was also invited to explore ways to involve national parliaments in the deliberations. All Member States were invited to promote the participation of NGOs.

As requested by the General Assembly ([A/RES/52/111](#); [A/RES/53/132](#)), several NGOs submitted reports, studies and other documents for the first session of the Preparatory Committee. All these documents were placed at the Conference website.

At its first session, in May 2000, the Preparatory Committee adopted a draft rules of procedure for the Conference (A/CONF.189/PC.1/2). According to the decision, representatives of NGOs and national human rights institutions were able to participate the Conference and its bodies as observers. The national human rights institutions could be replaced by ombudspersons or by specialized independent national bodies in the field of promoting racial equality. Representatives of NGOs were able to speak at the Conference upon the request of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. NGOs could also be requested to speak through spokespersons.

The General Assembly endorsed ([A/RES/54/154](#)) that interested NGOs could attend the Committee and the Conference as observers. NGOs were requested to assist the Committee to make recommendations concerning the preparatory process and the Conference.

Preparatory Committee: Commission on Human Rights

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

**11.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/52/111](#)), in December 1997 to convene the world conference against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance. The GA also decided that the Commission on Human Rights will serve as the Preparatory Committee for the conference. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights was appointed as the Secretary-General of the Conference.

## 11.2 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations

The General Assembly stressed (A/RES/52/111; [A/RES/53/132](#)), in December 1997 and December 1998 the importance of the participation of NGOs in the preparatory process and the Conference. The Commission on Human Rights, in August 1999 encouraged ([E/CN.4/SUB.2/RES/1999/6](#)) the participation of NGOs in the preparatory process:

*Encouraging the effective participation of nongovernmental organizations in the preparatory process for the World Conference. (E/CN.4/SUB.2/RES/1999/6)*

The Commission on Human Rights, in April 2000 encouraged ([E/CN.4/RES/2000/14](#)) the participation of NGOs in the Preparatory Committee and the Conference. The Commission called the Secretary-General of the Conference to propose arrangements for the accreditation of the NGOs:

*55. Encourages the participation of non-governmental organizations in the World Conference and in the sessions of the Preparatory Committee and calls upon the Secretary-General of the World Conference to expedite arrangements for accreditation of non-governmental organizations, including those that are not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with Council arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations, adopted by the Council in its resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996. (E/CN.4/RES/2000/14)*

At its first session, in May 2000, the Preparatory Committee accredited 11 NGOs to the first session of the Preparatory Committee, based on their competence and relevance, which had been evaluated by the secretariat on (A/CONF.189/PC.1/21, annex I, decision PC.1/5, A/CONF.189/PC.1/20). The Committee also decided that indigenous people that are accredited according to the ECOSOC resolution 1995/32 could apply for accreditation following the same practice as for NGOs:

*Participation of indigenous representatives (PC.1/11.): At its 11th meeting, on 5 May 2000, the Preparatory Committee decided, without a vote, that indigenous representatives that are accredited pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1995/32 of 25 July 1994 and that submit an application shall be accredited to the World Conference. Other interested indigenous representatives could also be accredited following normal procedures established by decision PC.1/5.*

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee recognized the fact that the next session of the Committee was only one year later, which required arrangements for interim accreditation for NGOs not in consultative status with the ECOSOC. The Committee decided that the Bureau, in consultation with regional groups should accredit NGOs between the two session of the Committee. The secretariat was requested to review all the applications and circulate the lists to all Member States with a note verbale, giving the Governments 14 days to make comments on the application. In case, a consultative status of a NGO had been suspended or withdrawn, the

secretariat was requested to inform on the reasons. In case Member States raised concerns on an application, the final decision was to be made at the second session of the Committee (A/CONF.189/PC.1/21, annex I, decision 1/5):

*Accreditation of non-governmental organizations (PC.1/5.):  
The Preparatory Committee,*

*Noting that the mechanism established by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1996/31 of 26 July 1996 should be the framework for accreditation of non-governmental organizations and noting, moreover, that, since the second session of the Preparatory Committee will not take place until May 2001, a process for interim accreditation is desirable, so that non-governmental organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council can be accredited between the two sessions of the Preparatory Committee and can participate fully in the preparatory process for the World Conference, decided, at its 9th meeting, on 4 May 2000, without a vote:*

*(a) That the Bureau, in consultation with regional groups, will act for the Preparatory Committee to accredit non-governmental organizations in the period between the two sessions of the Preparatory Committee;*

*(b) That the secretariat will continue to review all applications received to ensure that they meet the requirements set out in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31;*

*(c) That non-governmental organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council shall be accredited in accordance with Council resolution 1996/31; however, where non-governmental organizations have had their consultative status withdrawn or suspended under paragraph 57 (a) or (b) of Council resolution 1996/31, the secretariat will include information on the reasons for withdrawal or suspension, including the date of the decision, in the list circulated to all Governments;*

*(d) That, periodically, the secretariat will compile a list of those non-governmental organizations seeking accreditation which have met the requirements specified in Council resolution 1996/31; the secretariat will circulate these lists to all Governments with a note verbale, giving the Governments 14 days to make any comments on the application;*

*(e) That where no comments have been received, the names of the non-governmental organizations will be sent on to the Bureau for accreditation;*

*(f) That, in the event that a Government raises questions concerning the accreditation of a non-governmental organization, the final decision on those cases shall be taken by the Preparatory Committee, in accordance with the standard process set out in Council resolution 1996/31.*

The Commission on Human Rights, in August 2000 encouraged ([CN.4/SUB.2/RES/2000/3](#)) the participation of all parts of society, NGOs representing victims of racism and indigenous peoples:

*16. Encourages the active and effective participation in the World Conference of all organs of society from all parts of the world, including non-governmental organizations representing victims of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including those representing indigenous peoples. (CN.4/SUB.2/RES/2000/3)*

The Commission on Human Rights, in April 2001 welcomed ([E/CN.4/RES/2001/5](#)) the efforts of the Secretary-General of the Conference to elaborate arrangements for accreditation of NGOs:

*55. Encourages the participation of non-governmental organizations in the World Conference and in the sessions of the Preparatory Committee and welcomes the efforts of the Secretary-General of the World Conference to expedite arrangements for accreditation of non-governmental organizations, including those that are not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with the arrangements for consultation with non-governmental organizations adopted by the Council in its resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996. (E/CN.4/RES/2001/5)*

### **11.3 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/52/111](#)), in December 1997, among others, NGOs to assist the preparatory committee on reviewing and making recommendations concerning the preparatory process and the conference. The resolution of the Commission on Human Rights (1998/26) repeated the request, as well as the General Assembly again in December 1998 ([A/RES/53/132](#)):

*30. Requests Governments, the specialized agencies, other international organizations, concerned United Nations bodies, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and other human rights mechanisms to assist the preparatory committee, to undertake reviews and submit recommendations concerning the conference and the preparations therefor to the preparatory committee through the Secretary-General, and to participate actively in the conference. (A/RES/52/111)*

*35. Requests, in accordance with Commission on Human Rights resolution 1998/26, Governments, the specialized agencies, other international organizations, concerned United Nations bodies, regional and non-governmental organizations, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Subcommission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities of the Commission on Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and other human rights mechanisms to participate actively both in the preparatory process of the World Conference, including by assisting the Preparatory Committee, again in accordance with Commission resolution 1998/26, by, inter alia, undertaking reviews and studies and submitting recommendations concerning the Conference and the preparations therefore,*

*through the Secretary-General, to the Preparatory Committee, and in the Conference itself. (A/RES/53/132)*

The Commission on Human Rights, in August 1999 encouraged ([E/CN.4/SUB.2/RES/1999/6](#)) the participation of NGOs in the preparatory process:

*Encouraging the effective participation of nongovernmental organizations in the preparatory process for the World Conference. (E/CN.4/SUB.2/RES/1999/6)*

The Commission on Human Rights, in April 2000 requested the High Commissioner of Human Rights to consult NGOs on organizing a civil society forum. The High Commissioner was also invited to explore ways to involve national parliaments in the deliberations. All Member States were invited to promote the participation of NGOs:

*56. Requests the High Commissioner to undertake appropriate consultations with nongovernmental organizations on the possibility that they might hold a forum before and partly during the World Conference and, insofar as possible, to provide them with technical assistance for that purpose;*

*64. Invites Governments to promote the participation of national institutions and local nongovernmental organizations in the preparations and in regional meetings and to organize debates in national parliaments on the objectives of the World Conference;*

*65. Encourages all parliaments to participate actively in the preparation of the World Conference and requests the High Commissioner to explore ways and means of effective involvement of parliaments through the relevant international organizations. (E/CN.4/RES/2000/14)*

As requested by the General Assembly ([A/52/111](#); [A/53/132](#)), several NGOs submitted reports, studies and other documents for the first session of the Preparatory Committee, in May 2000. The documents submitted by the ECOSOC/NGOs, which had already been accredited to the Preparatory Committee received symbol numbers in the NGOs series of the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/2000/NGO/...). The documents submitted by other ECOSOC/NGOs received a symbol number of the Conference (A/CONF.189/PC.1/NGO/...). All these documents were placed at the Conference website.

At its first session, in May 2000, the Preparatory Committee considered the draft rules of procedure for the Conference (A/CONF.189/PC.1/2). After a number of amendments, the Committee adopted the rules by consensus. (A/CONF.189/PC.1/21, decision PC.1/4). According to the decision, representatives of NGOs and national human rights institutions were able to participate the Conference and its bodies as observers. The national human rights institutions could be replaced by ombudspersons or by specialized independent national bodies in the field of promoting racial equality. Representatives of NGOs were able to speak at the Conference upon

the request of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. NGOs could also be requested to speak through spokespersons:

*Representatives of national human rights institutions (Rule 65):*

*1. Representatives designated by national institutions for the protection and promotion of human rights may participate as observers in the deliberations of the Conference, any Committee and any other committee or working group on questions within the scope of their activities.*

*2. In the situation where a country does not have a national institution for the promotion and protection of human rights, representatives designated by ombudspersons or by specialized independent national bodies for the promotion and protection of racial equality may participate as observers in the deliberations of the Conference, any Committee and any other committee or working group on questions within the scope of their activities.*

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 66):*

*1. Non-governmental organizations accredited to participate in the Conference may designate representatives to participate as observers in the Conference, any Committee and any committee or working group on questions within the scope of their activities.*

*2. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence. If the number of requests to speak is too large, the non-governmental organizations shall be requested to form themselves into constituencies, such constituencies to speak through spokespersons.*

*Written statements (Rule 67):*

*Written statements submitted by the designated representatives referred to in rules 59 to 65 shall be distributed by the secretariat to all delegations in the quantities and in the language in which the statements are made available to it at the site of the Conference, provided that a statement submitted on behalf of a non-governmental organization is related to the work of the Conference and is on a subject in which it has a special competence.*

The General Assembly endorsed ([A/RES/54/154](#)), in December 2000 that interested NGOs could attend the Preparatory Committee and the Conference as observers. Among other actors, NGOs were requested to assist the Preparatory Committee to review and make recommendations concerning the conference and its preparations:

*30. Decides that the World Conference and the sessions of the Preparatory Committee should be open to the participation of: (g) Interested non-governmental organizations, which shall be represented by observers in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996;*

*37. Requests Governments, the specialized agencies, other international organizations, concerned United Nations bodies, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on contemporary forms of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the human rights of migrants and other human rights mechanisms to assist the Preparatory Committee and to undertake reviews and submit recommendations concerning the World Conference and the preparations therefore to the Preparatory Committee, through the Secretary-General, and to participate actively in the Conference. (A/RES/54/154)*

The Commission on Human Rights, in April 2001 welcomed ([E/CN.4/RES/2001/5](#)) the decision of NGOs to hold a forum before and partly during the Conference. Local NGOs and national parliaments were encouraged to participate:

*56. Welcomes the decision of non-governmental organizations, in consultation with the High Commissioner, to hold a forum before and partly during the World Conference, and requests the High Commissioner, insofar as possible, to provide them with technical assistance for that purpose;*

*59. Invites Governments to promote the participation of national institutions and local non-governmental organizations in the preparations for and the process of the World Conference and to organize debates in national parliaments on the objectives of the World Conference;*

*60. Encourages all parliaments to participate actively in the preparation of the World Conference and requests the High Commissioner to explore ways and means of effectively involving parliaments through the relevant international organizations. (E/CN.4/RES/2001/5)*

Several NGOs made oral statements and distributed documents at the Preparatory Committee. NGOs participated actively also at the regional level preparations.

#### **11.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/52/111](#); [A/RES/53/132](#); [A/RES/54/154](#)

[E/CN.4/SUB.2/RES/1999/6](#); [E/CN.4/RES/2000/14](#); [E/CN.4/RES/2001/5](#)

1st session 1-5 May 2000: A/CONF.189/PC.1/21; A/55/307

2nd session 21 May-1 June 2001, Geneva (documentation to be included when available)

Rules of Procedure A/CONF.189/PC.1/2

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## 12. INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE FINANCING FOR DEVELOPMENT

First Quarter of 2002, Mexico

### Summary

#### Accreditation:

At the resumed fifty-second session, the Second Committee organized a meeting to seek views of the Member States on the preparatory process. During the meeting, several Member States considered civil society, including NGOs and the private sector among key actors in the process.

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/53/173](#)) to establish the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group to elaborate the agenda, scope and form of the high level event. The Working Group held two dialogue events with the NGO community. In its report, the Working Group recommended an inclusive preparatory process, which would include all stakeholders. The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/54/196](#)) the Preparatory Committee to consider innovative ways to involve all relevant actors. The GA also requested the Secretary-General and the Bureau to continue consultations with all the stakeholders and propose modalities for their participation. As requested, the secretariat continued consultation through an online questionnaire and informal consultation for NGOs.

At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee decided to invite NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC without further screening, by expressing their interest to the secretariat. Other NGOs and the private sector were able to apply through the Bureau. The Committee requested the Bureau to make proposals on the participation of the private sector.

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee decided to extend the accreditation process for NGOs and the private sector beyond the original date. Accreditation was a continuous process (there is not yet a final number of accredited civil society actors).

#### Modalities:

As requested by the General Assembly ([A/RES/54/196](#)), at its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee proposed three types of modalities to engage the civil society in the process. The accredited NGOs could attend the meetings and distribute written statements at the Committee. The Preparatory Committee would seek policy proposals and comments on documents through web-site consultations. The Committee decided also to organize two sets of hearings for civil society.

At its third session, in May 2001, the Bureau reported on the outcome of its meetings with NGOs in Geneva. The Preparatory Committee considered modalities for business sector participation on the basis of the interim report of the special taskforce.

At the same session, the Preparatory Committee requested the Bureau to select topics for technical background notes. The Bureau was to prepare notes during summer months, in consultations with the major institutional stakeholders, as well as experts from civil society and

the business community. The Committee also encouraged implementing concrete initiatives, such as expert panels and roundtables and to have the outcomes of these efforts reported to the next session. Stakeholders organizing policy events, related to the process, were invited to inform the secretariat.

At the same session, the Committee also requested the secretariat to advise, assist and monitor a programme of work with the business sector organizations, and put in place a procedure for the participation of individual firms in the preparatory process. The General Assembly adopted a resolution on these arrangements in June 2001. In the resolution, Member States welcome the preparatory activities carried out so far, including the substantive interactive dialogue and contribution of all stakeholders. Member States also requested the coordinating secretariat in full consultation with the bureau to advise, assist and monitor a program of work developed with the business sector. This program of work was called to include workshops, seminars, round-tables, forums and other forms of input. The secretariat was invited to bring the outcome of this programme to the attention of preparatory committee

The resolution further decided on modalities of the participation of the business sector. Those business sector entities in consultative status with ECOSOC were to participate according to the existing rules. The ones without consultative status could participate for accreditation in a similar manner as NGOs. Their accreditation was to be decided on the non-objection basis.

According to the resolution, the other modalities, including arrangements for roundtables were to be decided during the resumed third session of the Preparatory Committee. Business sector activities at the national and regional levels were also encouraged. In addition, the resolution decided that NGOs and the business sector shall participate in the Conference.

## **12.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly took a decision during several sessions ([A/RES/46/205](#), [A/RES/48/187](#), [A/RES/50/93](#), [A/RES/52/179](#), [A/RES/53/173](#)) to consider convening an international conference on financing for development. In December 1997, the General Assembly decided ([A/RES/52/179](#)) to convene a resumed fifty-second session to collect views from the Member States on the key elements to be discussed and on the inputs required from the all the stakeholders.

At the resumed session, in March 1998, the Second Committee organized a meeting to provide the Member States with an opportunity to give their initial views on topics that should be addressed in the preparatory process. They also suggested key groups of stakeholders that they wished the Secretariat to contact on their behalf to obtain ideas, research studies and other inputs that could benefit the preparatory process. Civil society, including NGOs and the private sector were considered as one of key actors in the process by several Member States ([A/52/840](#)).

During the spring/summer of 1998, the Bureau of the Second Committee hosted a series of informal briefings for Member States, secretariat, media, and NGOs. These informal briefings provided an opportunity to examine a number of issues relating to financing for development.

In the fall of 1998, the delegations in the Second Committee held an open debate on the establishment of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group. Subsequently the General Assembly recalled the resolution 52/179 and decided (A/RES/53/173) to establish the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group to determine the agenda, form and scope of the high level event. The task of the working group was to examine all the inputs and report to the GA. The President of the General Assembly was requested to make arrangements regarding the working group. The Bureau of the Second Committee, with the assistance of the Secretariat, was requested to organize appropriate briefings or panel discussions.

The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group held its first session in December 1998 under the chairmanship of the President of the General Assembly. The Vice-Chairpersons of Austria and India chaired the second session (9-11 February 1999), third session (4 May 1999) and fourth session (28 May 1999). The working group held also two informal sessions (16-19 March 1999, 5-8 March 1999). The major topics to be considered were identified in the Index Report (A/53/470).

Before the informal consultations took place, there were two public events. On 15 March 1999, there was a panel consisting of two business leaders and two NGO leaders. On the afternoon of 15 March 1999, the Vice-Chairpersons of the Ad Hoc Working Group and delegations held an open dialogue with members of the ECOSOC/NGO community on the forthcoming series of informal discussions.

The first set of informal sessions on the high-level event were held from 16 to 19 March 1999. A further panel discussion consisting of research institutions was held on 1 April. The second set of informal discussions was held on 5-8 of April 1999. On 30 April, a second dialogue with civil society was held.

The Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group provided a report (A/54/28), which recommended that an inclusive and continuing preparatory process will increase awareness and build international support and participation towards the success of the international event:

*20. c) Both the final event and the preparatory process should involve participation by all relevant stakeholders, including interactive and other innovative modalities for exchange of views. (A/54/28, chapter IV)*

The General Assembly endorsed ([A/RES/54/196](#)), in December 1999 the report of the Working Group and decided to convene a high-level intergovernmental event, at least at the ministerial level on financing for development. The Preparatory Committee was requested to consider innovative ways and mechanisms to involve all relevant stakeholders in the preparatory process and the event itself. The Secretary-General and the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee were

requested to continue consultations with all the stakeholders and propose to the Committee modalities for various stakeholders. The Secretary-General was also requested to establish a secretariat for the financing for development under the authority of the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs:

*4. Reiterates that, as identified in the report of the Working Group, both the preparatory process and the high-level intergovernmental event should involve the participation of all relevant stakeholders;*

*6. Also decides that the Preparatory Committee, at its resumed organizational session, based on the results of consultations to be held with all relevant stakeholders in a flexible manner, should consider innovative ways and mechanisms to facilitate the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders in both the preparatory process and the high-level intergovernmental event;*

*7. Requests the Secretary-General, in consultation with Member States and in the context of paragraphs 20 and 21 of the report of the Working Group and paragraphs 17 and 18 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/51, to initiate as soon as possible preliminary consultations with all relevant stakeholders, in particular the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization, on the potential modalities for their participation in both the substantive preparatory process and the high-level intergovernmental event, and also requests the Secretary-General to provide the results of those consultations to the Preparatory Committee for consideration at the first part of its organizational session;*

*10. Requests the Bureau, inter alia, in the context of paragraphs 20 and 21 of the report of the Working Group and paragraphs 17 and 18 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/51 and with the further assistance of the Secretary-General, to continue consultations with all relevant stakeholders on the modalities for their participation, including the possibility of creating a joint task force, in both the substantive preparatory process and the high-level intergovernmental event, and also requests the Bureau to submit proposals to the Preparatory Committee at its resumed organizational session on the modalities of participation of all relevant stakeholders;*

*11. Decides that the resumed organizational session of the Preparatory Committee should be held as soon as possible and no later than March 2000, and, on the basis of the report of the Working Group and the proposals on modalities to be submitted by the Bureau, and taking into account the outcome of the consultations of the Secretary-General, will consider the following questions:*

*(f) Modalities for the participation of other stakeholders, notably non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in both the preparatory process and the high-level intergovernmental event;*

*14. Calls upon the relevant entities of the United Nations system, including the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the regional commissions, as well as the regional*

*development banks and all other relevant stakeholders, to provide inputs for consideration during the preparatory process. (A/RES/54/196)*

As requested, the Secretary-General provided the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee, in January 2000 with a report (A/AC.257/1) containing consultations on modalities for participation of all relevant stakeholders in the preparatory process and the event itself. In his report, the Secretary-General recognized that the secretariat had already contacted several stakeholders and invited them to make comments and suggestions on their participation. Besides panels and informal meetings held previously, the views of partners were invited through letters and an online questionnaire of the Financing for Development web site. In January 2000, there were also preliminary consultations with NGOs in New York. The report stressed different traditions and practices of various stakeholders. The Bureau and the Preparatory Committee were invited to consider means to involve all different stakeholders, such as NGO's, the private sector, academia, foundations, trade unions and religious organizations to engage with the United Nations. Therefore, the Bureau and the Preparatory Committee need to consider further, how to involve various stakeholders in the process. However, the consultations proved a wide willingness of stakeholders to participate in the process:

*20. Each of these communities of stakeholders has different traditions and practices regarding their engagement with the United Nations, a different potential contribution regarding the financing for development process and different priorities within the proposed scope and agenda of the final event. The Bureau and the Preparatory Committee will need to consider further how its wishes to engage each of these different stakeholder groups in the process and how to undertake its consultations on this matter.*

### *III. Conclusion:*

*21. The initial consultations indicated a wide willingness of stakeholders to participate in the financing for development process. Time did not permit many stakeholders, however, to formulate specific replies on the modalities of participation. Some stakeholders with specific areas of interest were awaiting the outcome of ongoing discussions in the preparatory process before proposing specific modalities for participation. All consultations held on behalf of the Secretary-General were preliminary to those of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee on these matters. (A/AC.257/1)*

## **12.2 Accreditation for civil society**

The General Assembly requested the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee was requested by the General Assembly resolution 54/196 (see above) to consult all relevant stakeholders on the modalities for their participation. The resolution also requested the Bureau to provide proposals to the resumed organizational session of the Preparatory Committee on the participation of all stakeholders. However, due to the delay in the selection of the Bureau not all aspects of the consultation process could be covered within this time frame.

The Bureau reported to the resumed organizational session, in March 2000, that due to the delay in the selection of the Bureau not all aspects of the consultation process had been covered within the proposed timeframe. The Bureau, however, reported that it had already benefited from some consultations, including the internet questionnaire, and was able to make recommendations on the participation of civil society (A/AC.257/6).

The Bureau recommended participation of NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC. Other NGOs and the private sector were to be able to apply for accreditation through the secretariat. The applications of NGOs needed to include information on their relevance and competence on the issues before the event. The Bureau was to decide on a no-objection basis upon the accreditation and inform the Preparatory Committee:

*16. Participation would be open to NGOs currently in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council. Other NGOs and business sector entities would be welcome to apply to the Preparatory Committee for consultative status. [largely copied from E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.4 for Beijing +5.] Applications for accreditation should be submitted by 1 January 2001 to a committee composed of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee and the Coordinating Secretariat and should contain, in the case of NGOs, the following information:*

- 1. The purpose of the organisation;*
- 2. Information identifying the programmes and activities of the organisation in areas relevant to the subject of the high-level event and indicating in which country or countries they are carried out;*
- 3. Confirmation of the activities of the organisation at the national, regional or international levels;*
- 4. Copies of annual or other reports of the organisation, with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions;*
- 5. A list of the members of the governing body of the organisation and their countries of nationality;*
- 6. A description of the membership of the organisation, indicating the total number of members, the names of organisations that are members and their geographical distribution; and*
- 7. A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organisation.*

*The Bureau would decide on a no-objection basis regarding accreditation of these NGOs and inform the Preparatory Committee. The Coordinating Secretariat will disseminate widely to the community of NGOs all available information on accreditation procedures. (A/AC.257/6)*

Based on the proposals of the Bureau, the Preparatory Committee adopted a draft resolution concerning preparations for the substantive preparatory process and the high-level international event. According to the draft resolution, the Bureau needed to submit to the Preparatory Committee the lists of NGOs, which are applying for accreditation. The Committee also requested the Bureau to make proposals and recommendations on the participation of the business sector:

2. Approves:

*(e) The recommendations regarding the participation of non-governmental organizations and the business sector, as contained in paragraphs 14 to 19 of the report, and requests the Bureau to submit to the Preparatory Committee for its approval the applications for accreditation of those non-governmental organizations which do not already have consultative status with the Economic and Social Council;*

*4. Also requests the Bureau to continue consultations intensively with the institutional stakeholders indicated in paragraph 11 (e) (i) of General Assembly resolution 54/196 of 22 December 1999 on modalities of their participation and to report to the Preparatory Committee as soon as possible with proposals and recommendations thereon, as well as possible proposals and recommendations for additional modalities of the participation of the private sector. (A/RES/54/279)*

At the second report of the Bureau (A/AC.257/8), prepared for the May resumed organizational session, the Bureau stated that the applications of NGOs will be brought to the Preparatory Committee, when the secretariat has received and processed a sufficient number of them:

*12. As far as Non Governmental Organisations is concerned, the receipt of registration applications of NGOs not already accredited to ECOSOC was begun on 3 April, following corresponding decisions taken by the Preparatory Committee at its resumed organisational session of 31 March. These applications will be referred to the membership of the Preparatory Committee by the Bureau once a sufficient number have been received and processed by the Coordinating Secretariat. (A/AC.257/8)*

At its first session, the Committee decided to extend the accreditation process for NGOs and the private sector beyond the original date, 1 of January 2001:

*Extension of the accreditation of non-governmental organizations (Decision 1/4): At its 12th meeting, on 16 November 2000, the Preparatory Committee decided to extend the accreditation of non-governmental organizations and business sector entities in the substantive preparatory process for the high-level international intergovernmental event on financing for development beyond 1 January 2001.*

At its third session, in May 2001, the Preparatory Committee agreed continuing to explore ways and means to deepen the efforts of all relevant stakeholders at the regional level as well as within civil society in support of the preparatory process. Interested NGOs, who were not currently accredited to ECOSOC, were invited to submit their accreditation papers apply on-line by the October 2001 session. Accreditation was a continuous process as follows:

1st resumed session: Accreditation for 18 NGOs was approved (A/55/26, chapter VI, section B, decision 1/2 and 1/3)

2nd session: Accreditation for 10 NGOs was approved (A/AC.257/10/Add. 2)

3rd session: Accreditation for 13 NGOs was approved (A/AC.257/10/Add.3)

### 12.3 Modalities for participation of civil society

The General Assembly requested ([A/RES/54/196](#)) the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee to consult relevant stakeholders and propose modalities for their participation. Still further, the resolution requested the Secretary-General to initiate as soon as possible consultations with all relevant stakeholders.

At the resumed organizational session, in May 2000 the Bureau responded to the request of the resolution 54/196 and proposed three types of modalities for participation of NGOs and the private sector: hearings, communications with the secretariat and the meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the event itself.

First, accredited NGOs could attend the meetings and circulate written statements. Second, the secretariat would arrange in consultation with the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee two sets of hearings, each of two days duration. The participants of hearings would include NGO community, academics, and the private sector. In addition, the Preparatory Committee should welcome initiatives by civil society to organize public discussions, where the members of the Preparatory Committee could also be invited. Third, the Preparatory Committee could seek policy proposals and comments on documents through web-based consultations:

*14. From the very start of the process of consideration of Financing for Development, the General Assembly made clear its intention to fully involve all relevant stakeholders. In addition to the official stakeholders noted above, modalities are required for the appropriate involvement of other stakeholders, notably non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the business sector. The Bureau envisages three modalities of participation of non-official stakeholders: in meetings of the Preparatory Committee and the high-level event; in hearings and other forms of consultation and dialogue; and in communications with the Secretariat.*

*15. Regarding the first modality, it is envisaged that NGOs could be accredited to the Preparatory Committee and the high-level event and that as such they would be welcome to attend formal meetings. Accredited NGOs would be invited to submit written statements to the Preparatory Committee.*

*17. The proposed second modality of participation of non-official stakeholders is for the Preparatory Committee to hold two sets of "hearings" in the fourth quarter of 2000 in New York, each of two days duration, comprised of morning and afternoon panel sessions. The FfD agenda would define the subjects of the hearings and the Coordinating Secretariat, acting in consultation with the Bureau, would invite individuals to participate. Participants would give brief statements and engage in a dialogue with Committee members. They would be selected from among NGO leaders, business leaders, academic and applied researchers, foundation leaders and so on. The Coordinating Secretariat would prepare a summary report of the hearings for the benefit of the Preparatory Committee.*



*18. By the same token, the Preparatory Committee should welcome initiatives by NGOs and other interested parties, including from the business sector, to organize public discussions for informational and analytical purposes in various venues to which members of the Preparatory Committee could be invited to participate in their personal capacity, including at the time of the final event.*

*19. The third modality of participation draws upon the technology of the Internet and the growing practice of international institutions seeking comment on policy proposals through "web-based consultations". Thus, the major documents being considered by the Preparatory Committee might be placed on the FfD web site for comment. Comments received could be edited and distributed to all commentators in an iterative process. A summary of views could be provided to the meetings of the Preparatory Committee, expected to take place in 2001.*

*20. Taking all the modalities together, the object would be to mobilise as much of the talent, expertise and experience as can be reached in the world at large in order to channel the very best ideas and proposals into the Financing for Development process. (A/AC.257/6)*

At its resumed organizational session, the Bureau informed the Committee that the secretariat has already started to categorize and collect lists of different type of private sector stakeholders in order to organize hearings later on the same year. The Bureau also informed that it intends to consider other possible means to engage the private sector in the process:

*13. The Preparatory Committee also requested the Bureau to report on possible proposals and recommendations for additional modalities for participation of the private sector. The coordinating Secretariat has begun the work of categorization and drawing up of lists of the different types of private sector stakeholders with a view to organizing the "hearings" which are to take place in the last quarter of this year. The Bureau intends to consider in due course other possible modalities for participation and involvement of the private sector in the Financing for Development process. (A/AC.257/8)*

The Secretary-General also prepared a note on the preparations for the substantive preparatory process and the high-level international event (A/AC.257/9) for the consideration of the resumed organizational session. The note included detailed information on the civil society hearings, such as time schedule and selection of participants:

*Preparation for the hearings Hearings with non-governmental organizations:*

*7. The Preparatory Committee accepted the Bureau's recommendation to hold a set of "hearings" with representatives of non-governmental organizations of two days' duration, consisting of morning and afternoon sessions in panel format. Tentative dates for these are 6 and 7 November 2000. The specific subjects for these hearings will be drawn from the financing for development agenda. It is expected that the participation will be welcomed of accredited non-governmental organization representatives, from, inter alia, the following broad categories: the academic and research community, foundations, religious organizations, trade unions, the media and other non-governmental organizations.*

8. *General participation in the financing for development process has been opened, according to the decision of the Preparatory Committee, to non-governmental organizations currently in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and other non-governmental organizations are welcome to apply for ad hoc consultative status (see A/54/L.82, operative para. 2 (e)). It is expected that the non-governmental organizations that participate in the hearings will be drawn from one of these two categories.*

9. *The financing for development coordinating secretariat may also seek the assistance of "organizing partners", from among the non-governmental organization community, who can help in carrying out the preparatory and logistic work for the hearings. (A draft list of non-governmental organizations participants should be available by 1 October 2000).*

10. *Each session of the hearings will start with a 15-minute presentation by each of the participants, followed by possible 10-minute reactions from appointed delegation "commentators". The remaining time will be devoted to an interactive dialogue between non-governmental organization participants and governmental delegates, moderated by the Co-Chairmen of the Preparatory Committee, without a previously fixed list of speakers. United Nations agencies and intergovernmental organization representatives may also participate in the discussion.*

11. *A Co-Chairman's general summary of the hearings will be prepared to serve as an informal record of the key views expressed and proposals made in the hearings, reflecting the nature of the debate as accurately as possible. This summary will hopefully provide a useful reference for delegations in their official deliberations.*

*Hearings with the business sector:*

12. *The Preparatory Committee also decided, upon the recommendation of the Bureau, to hold a two-day set of hearings with representatives of the business sector. Tentative dates for these hearings are 11 and 12 December 2000 and they also will comprise morning and afternoon sessions in panel format. The subject of the hearings would be defined by the financing for development agenda and the chairman of the hearings would prepare a summary of the views exchanged, similar to that for the non-governmental organization hearings. This summary, besides being made available to delegations, will be taken into account by the Secretariat in the preparation of the documentation that will be presented to the future substantive sessions of the Preparatory Committee.*

13. *The coordinating secretariat, in consultation with the Bureau, would invite business representatives from the following broad categories to participate in the hearings: private banks (including investment banks, commercial banks, savings institutions and savings and loan associations), institutional investors (including pension funds, mutual funds, hedge funds, micro-finance funds and venture capital companies), other market institutions (including markets, supervisory bodies and credit rating agencies), non-financial corporations, and business associations. Within each category, efforts will be made so that the "leading" institutions are selected to receive an invitation to the hearings, but other important criteria will also be taken*

*into consideration, such as, for example, an adequate representation of business entities from developing countries.*

*14. Apart from the two-day set of hearings in December, the Preparatory Committee and the Bureau may also consider additional modalities of engaging with the private sector. For example, they could encourage private initiatives to organize public discussions on financing for development topics that could be attended by members of the Bureau and the Preparatory Committee. Likewise, side activities, involving the private sector (for example, panels, discussions) could be organized in parallel to the final event and during the sessions in 2001 of the Preparatory Committee. (A/AC.257/9)*

At the resumed organizational session, the Preparatory Committee also had before it a conference room paper number one, which provided a summary of relevant paragraphs concerning the civil society participation. The paper also included some explanations by the secretariat on the concept of NGOs, accreditation of the private sector representatives, and the format of the civil society hearings. In addition, the secretariat stated that additional modalities to involve the private sector may also be applied for representatives of NGOs and civil society at large:

*Additional explanations provided by the Coordinating Secretariat:*

*At the resumed organizational session held on 30th May 2000, the Executive Coordinator addressed questions and comments posed by delegations on this subject and explained that the term "NGOs" was being understood broadly, meaning representatives of civil society in general. He also indicated that with reference to the Business hearings, if the Preparatory Committee so wished, the list of invitees will be brought by the Bureau to the attention of the Preparatory Committee for its approval, in the same way as it will be done with the NGOs hearings.*

*The Executive Coordinator said that the same additional modalities for participation referred in paragraphs 14 of the Secretary-General note (A/AC.257/8) that will be sought for the business sector, can also be applied, if so desired by the Preparatory Committee, to representatives of NGOs and civil society at large.*

*In addition, the Executive Coordinator clarified that the format of the hearings was designed to allow for a question and answer period to follow the initial presentations, and that it was in only this sense that the term "interactive dialogue" used in the Secretary-General's note should be understood. (A/AC.257/CRP.1)*

At the resumed first session, in May-June 2000, the Preparatory Committee took note of the list of panelists for both civil society (24 participants) and business sector hearings (18 participants). The Committee also took note of the list of representatives of NGOs (11 participants) seeking to participate in hearings as observers. In addition, the Committee adopted a decision, where it recognized the hearings organized for the civil society and upcoming hearings for the private sector:

*The General Assembly:*

*e) Welcomes the hearings held with the civil society, to support the financing for development process, looks forward to the contribution of the upcoming hearings with the private sector and encourages the deepening of these efforts in support of the financing for development preparatory process and the high-level international intergovernmental event, within the framework of its substantive agenda. (A/55/26)*

The report on the civil society hearings, on 6 and 7 November 2000 (A/AC.257/18.pdf) and the report on the business community hearings, on 11 and 12 December 2000 (A/AC.257/19.pdf) , as well as the statements made at the hearings were placed at the website.

At its second session, in February 2001, the Preparatory Committee adopted a draft resolution, where Governments and other relevant stakeholders, including civil society and the business sector at the regional level, were encouraged to design concrete initiatives within the process. The Bureau was again requested to explore and propose ways and means to engage civil society and business sector:

*Encouraging Governments and all other relevant stakeholders to continue considering concrete initiatives in support of the financing for development preparatory process and the high-level international intergovernmental event, within the framework of its substantive agenda,*

*Further encouraging the deepening of the efforts of all relevant stakeholders, including at the regional level, as well as by civil society and the business sector, in support of the financing for development preparatory process and the high-level international intergovernmental event, within the framework of its substantive agenda,*

*7. Further requests the Bureau to explore ways and means to deepen the efforts of all relevant stakeholders, including at the regional level, as well as by civil society and the business sector, in support of the financing for development preparatory process, within the framework of its substantive agenda, and to submit proposals for consideration and decision by the Preparatory Committee. (A/55/L.77)*

At its third session, in May 2001, the Bureau reported on the outcome of its meetings with NGOs in Geneva. Several NGO representatives had emphasized the need to strengthen the opportunities for civil society to contribute to the consultative process. In addition, the secretariat had reviewed a number of high-level policy statements from Heads of State and Government, civil society and business community and indexed those to the agreed agenda. Governments and other users were encouraged to forward to the secretariat any additional statements that should be included in the database.

The Preparatory Committee considered modalities for business sector participation on the basis of the interim report of the special taskforce:

18. *As indicated in the taskforce report, in order to engage the business sector in such a substantive manner, certain issues need to be addressed, including the substantive topics requiring business sector perspectives, the methods of identifying and approaching relevant representatives of the business community, the appropriate modalities for engagement, and the next practical steps forward.*

19. *Companies with significant business interests, and those considering investments, in developing countries (both multinationals and local companies, including small and medium sized enterprises) could be considered for engagement. The need to ensure geographical distribution as well as a gender perspective should be kept in mind so as to provide a diversity of perspectives. Where individuals from the business sector are invited to participate in round tables, workshops and panels, they should have hands-on expertise of the relevant issues - though they need not necessarily be the heads or chairpersons of companies, but rather professionals who are both influential and senior and able to provide an innovative input into our substantive deliberations.*

20. *Given the heterogeneity of the business sector and the difficulties involved in identifying the best representatives to engage with, it is useful to have appropriate interlocutors representative of different segments of the business community. Following this approach, suggested in the taskforce report, the Bureau has extended invitations to a first set of interlocutors (including representatives of international labour groupings) to participate in an informal dialogue with members of the Preparatory Committee on 2 May 2001, from 2 to 4 pm.*

21. *It seems that, based on previous experience, holding focused and interactive round table sessions, workshops and seminars (including those that bring together people from different backgrounds - business sector, civil society, academia and governments) offer a useful modality for engagement with the business community. Round tables could be held during inter-sessional periods as well as during the International Conference itself.*

22. *Panels, though less intensive than round table meetings and workshops, could also be appropriate as a forum, especially for presenting important business-community findings and ideas. Furthermore, entities like the World Economic Forum or the International Chamber of Commerce, from their internal deliberations, could produce papers containing their contributions on substantive issues (if required, these could then be presented at a panel). Similarly, surveys on business sector opinions conducted by the above interlocutors could be supplied to the Preparatory Committee and become an important substantive contribution.*

23. *The World Economic Forum and other such bodies should be encouraged to use their processes to generate outcomes related to substantive issues identified by the Preparatory Committee. During its visit to Geneva, the Bureau paid a visit to the headquarters of the W.E.F. and had a very fruitful meeting with its Director for Global Issues and other senior members of its Managing Board. The idea was raised, inter alia, of including Financing for Development as one of the agenda items for the 2002 annual Forum meeting in Davos.*

*24. Some business organizations, including the International Chamber of Commerce, have mentioned the possibility of organizing a meeting of business leaders from around the world that could take place in conjunction with the International Conference in Mexico next year. This idea should be further developed, in collaboration with the host country. Likewise, other business-sector organizations, including bodies linked with national U.N. Associations, have offered to help in the organization of workshops, seminars and side events during the remainder of the preparatory process.*

*25. The Bureau thus recommends that the Preparatory Committee, with the support of the Coordinating Secretariat, follow-up on the interaction with interlocutors scheduled for 2 May with respect to the engagement of the private sector with the Preparatory Committee and the International Conference. This follow-up should lead inter alia to the formulation of a work program from May to the date of the International Conference that may include round tables, workshops, seminars and panels as indicated above.*

*26. With regard to accreditation modalities, the Bureau notes that the Preparatory Committee has already decided that the procedure for ad-hoc accreditation of business associations is the same as for non-ECOSOC accredited non-governmental organizations.*

*27. As far as individual companies, on the basis of the issues to be discussed and keeping in mind the need for balanced representation, the Bureau might propose to the Prep Com to invite individual businesses enterprises that express an interest to participate as observers in the FfD preparatory process. Once the detailed format of the Conference is decided, the Preparatory Committee may also wish to make recommendations on possible modalities for the attendance of individual corporate officials in the International Conference itself. (A/AC.257/22).*

At the same session, the Preparatory Committee requested the Bureau to select topics for technical background notes. The Bureau was to prepare notes during summer months, in consultations with the major institutional stakeholders, as well as experts from civil society and the business community. The Committee also encouraged implementing concrete initiatives, such as expert panels and roundtables and to have the outcomes of these efforts reported to the next session. Stakeholders organizing policy events, related to the process, were invited to inform the secretariat.

At the same session, the Committee also requested the secretariat to advise, assist and monitor a programme of work with the business sector organizations, and put in place a procedure for the participation of individual firms in the preparatory process. The General Assembly adopted a resolution on these arrangements in June 2001. In the resolution, Member States welcome the preparatory activities carried out so far, including the substantive interactive dialogue and contribution of all stakeholders. Member States also requested the coordinating secretariat in full consultation with the bureau to advise, assist and monitor a program of work developed with the business sector. This program of work was called to include workshops, seminars, round-tables, forums and other forms of input. The secretariat was invited to bring the outcome of this

programme to the attention of preparatory committee:

*Encouraging Governments and all other relevant stakeholders to continue considering concrete initiatives in support of the financing for development preparatory process and the International Conference on Financing for Development, within the framework of its substantive agenda;*

*Further encouraging the deepening of efforts of all relevant stakeholders, including at the regional level as well as by the civil society and the business sector, in support of the financing for development preparatory process and the International Conference on Financing for Development within the framework of its substantive agenda;*

*Recalling the holistic nature of the financing for development preparatory process and the need to take into account other ongoing processes of relevance to the substantive agenda for the financing for development process.*

*2. Stresses the importance of effective preparations for the International Conference on Financing for Development, and welcomes the preparatory activities carried out so far, including the substantive interactive dialogue and contribution of all stakeholders held during the third Session of the Preparatory Committee;*

*8. Encourages Governments as well as all relevant stakeholders, including the World Bank, the IMF and the WTO, the UNCTAD, the UNDP, the regional development banks and all other relevant regional bodies, to continue considering concrete initiatives in support of the financing for development preparatory process and the International Conference on Financing for Development, within the framework of its substantive agenda, including through the organization of expert panels and roundtables, and in this regard requests the Coordinating Secretariat to bring information on this work to the attention of the Preparatory Committee at its resumed third substantive session.*

*9. Reaffirms the importance to continue strengthening ways and means to deepening the efforts of all relevant stakeholders, including at the regional level as well as by the civil society and the business sector, in support of the financing for development preparatory process and the International Conference on Financing for Development within the framework of its substantive agenda, and in this regard, having considered the report "Engaging with the business community" and the proposals contained therein (letter 21 March 2001 from the co-chairs) and on that basis.*

*a) Express its satisfaction with the informal discussion carried out with business sector interlocutors on 2 May 2001, and in this context, requests the coordinating secretariat in full consultation with the bureau to advise, assist and monitor a program of work developed with the business sector that draws on its perspectives relevant to the substantive agenda items. This program of work may run from May 2001 to the conference and may include workshops, seminars, round-tables, forums and other forms of input. The secretariat should bring the outcomes to the attention of preparatory committee.*

The resolution further decided on modalities of the participation of the business sector. Those business sector entities in consultative status with ECOSOC were to participate according to the existing rules. The ones without consultative status could participate for accreditation in a similar manner as NGOs. Their accreditation was to be decided on the non-objection basis:

*b) Decides to invite the participation of business sector entities as follows:*

*1.- Business sector entities in consultative status with ECOSOC will participate according to the existing rules,*

*2.- Business sector entities not having consultative status with ECOSOC will be accredited on an ad hoc basis in a similar manner as non-governmental organizations (3), using the following procedure: They shall provide the name and information about the company or organization such as annual reports and business prospectus to the coordinating secretariat which shall distribute the names and information of these entities to members of the Preparatory Committee which will decide on a non-objection basis.*

According to the resolution, the other modalities, including arrangements for roundtables were to be decided during the resumed third session of the Preparatory Committee. Business sector activities at the national and regional levels were also encouraged. In addition, the resolution decided that NGOs and the business sector shall participate in the Conference:

*c) Further decides that the modalities for their participation in the Conference will be finalized when the format of the Conference will be decided by the Preparatory Committee at the resumed session of the Third Preparatory Committee.*

*d) Encourages other initiatives to involve the business sector at national and regional levels and to inform the Preparatory Committee thereof.*

*2. Further decides that the Conference shall also include the participation of all relevant stakeholders, including the business sector and civil society*

*13. Requests, in reference to paragraphs 11 and 12, that the Bureau prepares a proposal for the consideration and decision of the session of the Preparatory Committee, at its third resumed session, on the specific format and rules of procedure of the Conference as well as possible roundtables or other suitable arrangements for the various segments.*

#### **12.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/46/205](#); [A/RES/48/187](#); [A/RES/50/93](#); [A/RES/52/179](#); [A/RES/53/173](#); [A/RES/54/196](#)

Index Report: A/53/470

Report of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group: A/54/28



Report of the Secretary-General: A/AC.257/1

Org. session February-March 2000

Resumed org. session 27-31 March 2000: A/AC.257/6

1st session 30 May and 2 June, 2000, New York: A/AC.257/8

Resumed 1st session 16, 20, 27 November, New York: A/55/26

2nd session 12-23 February 2001, New York

3rd session 2-8 May 2001

Resumed 3rd session 15-19 October 2001, New York

4th session 14-25 January 2001, New York

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**13. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR THE OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE AGENDA 21 (EARTH SUMMIT + 5); 23-27 June 1997, New York**

**Summary**

Accreditation:

The Commission on Sustainable Development served as a preparatory body. A number of NGOs were accredited to the Commission and no additional accreditation process was initiated.

Modalities:

The General Assembly recognized the important contributions made by major groups, including NGOs, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and in the implementation of its recommendations. The GA requested by the same resolution the President of the General Assembly to propose arrangements for the participation of NGOs.

At its fifth session, in April 1997, the Commission on Sustainable Development urged Governments, regional intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations system and major groups identified in Agenda 21 to participate in the preparatory process. A large number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or accredited to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development also attended the session. During the preparatory process, the Commission organized multi-stakeholder dialogues.

As requested by resolution [A/RES/51/181](#), in April 1997, the President of the General Assembly proposed modalities for the effective involvement of major groups in the special session. On the basis of the mandate given by the GA and following consultations with Member States, the President introduced a draft proposal (A/51/864, annex), which was orally amended and adopted

by the GA. According to the decision, the major groups as identified in Agenda 21 and represented by NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC and on the roster were invited to participate in the special session. The President of the General Assembly was invited to extend invitations. On the basis of this decision, 12 representatives of nine major groups identified in Agenda 21 made oral statements in the plenary meeting of the special session.

Preparatory Committee: Commission on Sustainable Development

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: Commission on Sustainable Development

### **13.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly endorsed ([A/RES/47/190](#)), in December 1992 the outcome documents of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) and decided to convene a special session for the purpose of an overall review and appraisal of Agenda 21. The GA requested the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly recommendations on the format, scope and organizational aspects of such a special session. The GA decided ([A/RES/50/113](#)), in December 1995 further details on organizing a special session.

### **13.2 Accreditation and modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

The General Assembly stressed (A/RES/50/113), in December 1995 the need for participation of NGOs and major groups in the preparatory process and the special session itself:

*11. Recognizes the important role played by major groups, including non-governmental organizations, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and in the implementation of its recommendations, and recognizes the need for their active involvement in preparations for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements for their contribution during the special session. (A/RES/50/113)*

The General Assembly recognized ([A/RES/51/181](#)), in December 1996 the important contributions made by major groups, including NGOs, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and in the implementation of its recommendations. The GA requested by the same resolution the President of the General Assembly to propose arrangements for the participation of NGOs:

*Recognizes the important contributions made by major groups, including non-governmental organizations, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and in the implementation of its recommendations, and the need for their effective participation in preparations for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements, taking into account the practice and experience gained at the Conference, for their substantive contributions to and active involvement in the preparatory meetings and the special session, and in that context invites the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States,*

*to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for the effective involvement of major groups in the special session;*

*10. Requests that other contributions to the special session, in addition to those identified in its resolution 50/113, include submissions from relevant bodies and organizations of the United Nations, including the Ad Hoc Intergovernmental Panel on Forests of the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Global Environmental Facility, information on the outcomes of United Nations conferences held since the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, such as the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, regional and subregional conferences, summits and other inter-sessional meetings on sustainable development organized by countries, and information on the activities of relevant United Nations conventions on the environment and development and the global freshwater assessment, and that account be taken of the activities organized by major groups, including business and industry and non-governmental organizations. (A/RES/51/181)*

At its fifth session, in April 1997, the Commission on Sustainable Development urged Governments, regional intergovernmental organizations, the United Nations system and major groups identified in Agenda 21 to participate in the preparatory process. A large number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or accredited to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development also attended the session:

*5. Urges all Governments, regional intergovernmental bodies or similar arrangements, relevant United Nations organizations, bodies and agencies of the United Nations system and major groups identified in Agenda 21 to commence preparations for the full review and comprehensive assessment of progress made in the implementation of the Programme of Action since its adoption at Bridgetown, Barbados, in 1994 by the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. (E/1997/29-E/CN.17/1997/25)*

The Commission on Sustainable Development served as a preparatory body. A number of NGOs were accredited to the Commission and no additional accreditation process was initiated. During the preparatory process, the Commission organized multi-stakeholder dialogues.

As requested by resolution A/RES/51/181, in April 1997, the President of the General Assembly proposed modalities for the effective involvement of major groups in the special session. On the basis of the mandate given by the GA and following consultations with Member States, the President introduced a draft proposal (A/51/864, annex), which was orally amended and adopted by the GA. According to the decision, the major groups as identified in Agenda 21 and represented by NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC and on the roster were invited to participate in the special session. The President of the General Assembly was invited to extend invitations:

*Participation of major groups, including non-governmental organizations, in the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly:*

*The General Assembly, recalling its resolution 51/181 of 16 December 1996, in which it recognized, inter alia, the important contributions made by major groups, including non-governmental organizations, at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 3 to 14 June 1992, and in the implementation of its recommendations, and recalling also that in the same resolution it invited the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for the effective involvement of major groups in the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly:*

- (a) Decides that major groups, as identified in Agenda 21 and represented by non-governmental organizations with consultative status with ECOSOC and on the roster, will be invited to participate in the plenary meeting of the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly in the debate on an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21;*
- (b) Decides also that representatives of such major groups, who cannot be accommodated in the debate on an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of Agenda 21 in the plenary meeting of the nineteenth special session may be invited to address the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the special session;*
- (c) Invites the President of the General Assembly to extend invitations to representatives of such major groups, to participate in the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly;*
- (d) Decides that arrangements concerning the participation of representatives of such major groups, in the nineteenth special session of the General Assembly will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the Assembly.*

On the basis of this decision, 12 representatives of nine major groups identified in Agenda 21 made oral statements in the plenary meeting of the special session.

### **13.3 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/47/190](#); [A/RES/50/113](#); [A/RES/51/181](#); [A/RES/51/864](#)

Ad Hoc Open-ended Inter-sessional Working Group 24 Feb.-7Mar. 1997, New York  
Commission on Sustainable Development, 5th session 7-25 April 1997, New York (E/1997/29-E/CN.17/1997/25)

Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly

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## **14. THE SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ICPD + 5) New York, 30 June - 2 July 1999**

## Summary

### Accreditation:

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee decided to invite all NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC to participate in the special session without further screening, by expressing their interest to participate. The invitation was extended also to those NGOs, which had been already once accredited to the International Conference on Population and Development and/or to the Preparatory Committee of the special session. No further screening was required from these NGOs. Other interested NGOs, including those who had applied for consultative status with the ECOSOC were invited to participate, by sending an application. These applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence on population and development issues. Applications were first evaluated by the committee composing of the secretariat and the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee. This committee recommended lists of NGOs to the Preparatory Committee.

At its resumed session, the Preparatory Committee approved by consensus the accreditation of 24 NGOs to the special session.

### Modalities:

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee adopted modalities for the participation of NGOs. According to the decision, a limited number of NGOs were able to make statements in the debate in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to ensure such participation on an equal and transparent basis. All representatives of NGOs were able to make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

Other characteristics: As part of the preparatory process, the United Nations Population Fund organized a number of round table and technical meetings, including the Hague Forum in The Netherlands, from 8-12 February 1999 for representatives of Member States, the United Nations system, and civil society.

The Hague Forum was preceded by the Parliamentarians' Forum (4-6 February) and the Youth and NGO Forum (6-7 February). The Hague Forum's outcome and conclusions contributed to the Report of the Secretary-General for the Special Session.

The United Nations Population Fund also organized a NGO Forum in order to elicit and ensure an adequate consultation with NGOs and civil society organizations. The final report of the Forum, entitled "Partnership with Civil Society", is accessible electronically through the website (<http://www.unfpa.org>).

Preparatory Committee: Commission on Population and Development

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: Commission on Population and Development.

## 14.1 Introduction

The Economic and Social Council made a recommendation (1997/42) to the General Assembly, in 1997 to consider convening a special session to review and appraise the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/52/188](#)), in December 1997 to convene a special session at the highest possible level of participation. The GA also decided that the Commission on Population and Development will serve as a preparatory body for the special session, reporting through the Economic and Social Council.

## 14.2 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations

The General Assembly stressed (A/RES/52/188), in December 1997 the need for effective participation of civil society, particularly NGOs in the preparatory process and the special session itself. The President of the General Assembly was invited to propose to Member States appropriate modalities:

*Recognizing the important contributions made by actors of civil society, particularly non-governmental organizations, to the Conference, its follow-up and the implementation of its Programme of Action;*

*11. Stresses the need for the effective participation of actors of civil society, particularly non-governmental organizations, in preparation for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements, taking into account the practice and experience gained at the International Conference on Population and Development, for their substantive contributions to and active involvement in the preparatory meetings and the special session, and in that context invites the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for their effective involvement in the special session. (A/RES/52/188)*

The Commission on Population and Development, acting as the Preparatory Committee for the special session held its first session of the Preparatory Committee in March-April 1999. The Committee orally revisited and adopted a draft decision (E/CN.9/1999/PC/L.2) entitled "Arrangements for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations at the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly". According to the decision, NGOs in consultative status with the ECOSOC were invited to participate in the special session without further screening, through expressing their interest to the secretariat. The invitation was extended also to those NGOs, which had been already once accredited to the International Conference on Population and Development and/or to the Preparatory Committee of the special session. No further screening was required from these NGOs. Other interested NGOs, including those who had applied for consultative status with the ECOSOC were invited to participate, by sending an application. These applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence on population and development issues. Applications were first evaluated by the committee composing of the secretariat and the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee. This committee recommended lists of NGOs to the Preparatory Committee:

*Arrangements for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations at the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly (decision 1999/PC/1):*

*At its 6th meeting, on 1 April 1999, the Commission on Population and Development acting at its thirty-second session as preparatory committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development noting that 2 pursuant to Assembly resolutions 52/188 of 18 December 1997, and 53/183 of 15 December 1998, the President of the Assembly was invited, in consultation with Member States to propose appropriate modalities for the effective involvement of non-governmental organizations in the special session:*

*(a) Decided to invite to the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly:*

*(i) Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council;*

*(ii) Non-governmental organizations already accredited to the International Conference on Population and Development and/or the Preparatory Committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly;*

*(b) Also decided that the accreditation of other interested non-governmental organizations including those that have applied for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council should be examined by a committee composed of the Bureau of the preparatory committee for the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly and the Secretariat by 14 May 1999, which will make appropriate recommendations to the preparatory committee at its resumed session for a decision, provided that requests for accreditation are accompanied by information on the organization's competence and relevance to the subject of the special session and include the following information to be submitted by 30 April 1999:*

*(i) The purpose of the organization;*

*(ii) Information identifying the programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the subject of the special session, and indicating in which country or countries they are carried out;*

*(iii) Confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international levels;*

*(iv) Copies of annual or other reports of the organization, with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions;*

*(v) A list of the members of the governing body of the organization and their countries of nationality;*

*(vi) A description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names of organizations that are members and their geographical distribution;*

*(vii) A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization. (A/S-21/2, chapter V, section B, decision 1999/PC/1)*

At its resumed session, in June 1999 the Committee approved by consensus the accreditation of 24 NGOs to the special session. (E/CN.9/1999/PC/6, A/S-21/2/Add.1, chapter V, decision 1999/PC/3).

### 14.3 Modalities for non-governmental organizations

The Commission on Population and Development, acting as the Preparatory Committee for the special session considered at its first session of the Preparatory Committee in March-April 1999 the note by the Chairman (E/CN.9/1999/PC/CRP.2) containing recommendations on a draft organizational arrangements. The draft was orally revised on the basis of informal consultations and adopted by the Committee. According to the decision, a limited number of NGOs may make statements in the debate in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to ensure such participation on an equal and transparent basis. All representatives of NGOs may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole:

*16. Given availability of time and bearing in mind General Assembly decision 51/467 of 18 April 1997, a limited number of non-governmental organizations may also make statements in the debate in the plenary, subject to the approval of the special session. The President of the Assembly is requested to ensure such participation on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the diversity of non-governmental organizations.*

*18. Representatives of non-governmental organizations may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. (A/S-21/2, chapter V, section A, draft decision II)*

According to the decision, the Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly should apply at the special session. Statements in the plenary of the special session should be limited to seven minutes, except by the representatives of NGOs to five minutes.

### 14.3 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings

1st session 24 Mar.-1 Apr.1999, New York: A/S-21/2 (32nd session of the Commission on Population and Development) Resumed 1st session 24-29 June 1999, New York: A/S-21/2/Add.1-2

Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly

Organizational arrangements: A/S-21/2, chapter V, section A, draft decision II

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**15. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR THE REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION FOR THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES**  
27 - 28 September 1999, New York

**Summary**



Accreditation:

The General Assembly invited ([A/RES/53/189](#)) the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for the participation of NGOs. At its first session, the Preparatory Committee decided to invite NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council to the special session, without further screening. Invitation was extended also to those NGOs, which had been accredited to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. These NGOs could express their interest to participate to the secretariat.

Modalities:

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on organizational arrangements in the special session. According to the decision, a limited number of NGOs could speak in the plenary of the special session, at the approval of the President of the General Assembly. All NGOs were able to speak in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

At the special session, NGOs made three statements through spokespersons during the plenary debate.

Preparatory Committee: Commission on Sustainable Development

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: Commission on Sustainable Development

## 15.1 Introduction

At its nineteenth special session, the General Assembly decided (S-/19/2, annex, para 71) to convene a special session to review and appraise the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. The GA later reaffirmed this decision ([A/RES/51/183](#); [A/RES/52/202](#); [A/RES/53/189](#)). The Commission on Sustainable Development was to serve as a preparatory body for the special session.

## 15.2 Accreditation for civil society

The General Assembly stressed (A/RES/53/189), in December 1998 the need for effective participation of civil society, particularly NGOs in the preparatory process and the special session itself. The President of the General Assembly was invited, in consultation with Member States to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for their involvement:

*5. Welcomes the actions taken by Governments, regional commissions and organizations, organizations of the United Nations system, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in support of activities relating to the outcome of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States;*

*8. Stresses the need for the effective participation of actors of civil society, particularly non-governmental organizations, in preparation for the special session, as well as the need to ensure*

*appropriate arrangements, taking into account the practice and experience gained at the Global Conference, for their substantive contributions to and active involvement in the preparatory meetings and the special session, and in that context invites the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for their effective involvement in the special session. (A/RES/53/189)*

In April 1999, the Commission on Sustainable Development, acting as a preparatory body for the special session considered the informal paper containing arrangements for the accreditation of NGOs at the special session. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as NGOs already once accredited to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States were invited to the special session, without further screening. These NGOs could express their interest to participate to the secretariat:

*Decision 1999/PC/1. Arrangements for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations at the special session of the General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States.*

*The Commission on Sustainable Development acting as preparatory body for the special session of the General Assembly for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, decides to invite to the special session: (a) Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council; (b) Non-governmental organizations already accredited to the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States. (A/S-22/2, chapter V, section B, decision 1999/PC/1)*

At the same meeting, the Commission also took note of the letter of the President of the General Assembly, which was contained in the conference room paper (E/CN.17/1999/PC/CRP.2).

### **15.3 Modalities for participation**

In April 1999, the Commission on Sustainable Development, acting as a preparatory body for the special session considered the organizational arrangements presented in the conference room paper (E/CN.17/1999/PC/CRP.1). After general debate, the Committee adopted a draft proposal. A limited number of NGOs were able to speak in the plenary of the special session, at the approval of the President of the General Assembly. All NGOs were able to speak in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

*11. Observers may make statements in the debate in plenary meeting.*

*15. The President may invite a limited number of intergovernmental organizations not covered under paragraph 11 above to make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.*

*16. Given availability of time, a limited number of non-governmental organizations designated by their constituencies may make statement in the debate in plenary, subject to the approval of the President of the General Assembly.*

*17. Representatives of non-governmental organizations that cannot be accommodated in the*

*plenary may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.*

*18. Representatives of non-governmental organizations designated by their constituencies may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. (A/S-22/2, chapter V, section A, draft decision II)*

According to the same decision, the rules of procedure of the General Assembly were to apply at the special session.

#### **15.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

1st session 23 + 30 Apr. 1999, New York: A/S-22/2

Resumed 1st session 9-10 Sept. 1999, New York: A/S-22/2/Add.1

Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly

Organizational arrangements: A/S-22/2, chapter V, section A, draft decision II

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### **16. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WOMEN 2000; GENDER EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE FOR THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY (Beijing + 5) 5 - 9 June 2000, New York**

#### **Summary**

##### Accreditation:

The General Assembly invited ([A/RES/52/100](#)) the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as a preparatory body to take appropriate action on arrangements for the participation of NGOs in the review process. By the same resolution, the GA also requested the Secretary-General to provide a report on organizational arrangements. In his report, the Secretary-General proposed that the Preparatory Commission should make recommendations to the GA on the participation of NGOs. Accordingly, at its first session, the Committee took a decision, where it emphasized the importance of the participation of NGOs in the preparatory process and the special session itself. The GA endorsed this decision ([A/RES/52/231](#)).

The GA further highlighted ([A/RES/53/120](#)) the role of NGOs and invited the Commission to recommend appropriate arrangements for the participation of NGOs. At its second session, the Commission decided that NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as those accredited to the Fourth Conference on Women in Beijing could participate in the special session. The General Assembly endorsed the decision ([A/RES/54/141](#); [A/RES/54/142](#)).

At its third session, the Commission reconsidered the accreditation for NGOs. The Commission decided that all interested NGOs could apply until 5 of April 2000 through the committee

composing of the secretariat and the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee. Their applications needed to include information on their competence and relevance on the topic of the special session. The committee was requested to provide the list of NGOs for accreditation on 10 of April 2000. The Preparatory Committee had one month, until 10 of May 2000 to decide on the non-objection basis on accreditation. In addition, those NGOs whose application for consultative status with ECOSOC has been rejected or whose consultative status has been withdrawn or suspended could not be accredited.

#### Modalities:

At its third session, in April 2000, the Committee took a decision on the arrangements for NGOs at the special session. According to the decision, NGOs could speak at the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. A limited number of EOCOSOC/NGOs could speak at the plenary of the special session, provided that their application was consultative status was not rejected or their consultative status withdrawn or suspended. NGOs were requested to select spokespersons who would make the plenary statements and provide the list to the President of the General Assembly through the secretariat. The President of the general Assembly was requested to circulate the list to the Member States and ensure that the selection has been made on an equal and transparent manner. At the same session, the Committee also decided upon the organizational arrangements for the special session, where the speaking arrangements for NGOs were confirmed.

Preparatory Committee: Commission on the Status of Women.

Preparatory Committee secretariat: Division for the Advancement of Women.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UN/DESA/DAW

## **16.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/52/100](#)), in December 1997 to convene a high level review to appraise and assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and the Beijing Platform for Action. In the same resolution, the GA also decided that the Commission on the Status of Women should serve as the preparatory committee for the review. The GA invited the Commission to report to the GA, through the Economic and Social Council, on the preparatory process. The Secretary-General was requested to provide a report on organizational arrangements and examine the possibility to convene a review as a special session.

## **16.2 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations**

The General Assembly invited ([A/RES/52/100](#)), in December 1997 the Commission on the Status of Women to take appropriate action on arrangements for the participation of NGOs in the review process:

*46. Decides further that the Commission on the Status of Women shall serve as the preparatory committee for the high-level review and as such will be open to the participation of all States Members of the United Nations, members of the specialized agencies and observers, in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly, and invites the Commission to take appropriate action towards that end, including giving attention to appropriate arrangements for the involvement and participation of non-governmental organizations in the review. (A/RES/52/100)*

In March 1998, the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as the Preparatory Committee, held the first session of the Preparatory Committee. As requested by the GA, the Committee considered arrangements for the special session. As also requested by the GA, the Secretary-General prepared for a meeting a report containing options and organizational arrangements for a high-level plenary review (A/52/789). In his report, the Secretary-General proposed that the Commission should make recommendations to the General Assembly on the participation of NGOs in the review process:

*34. In its resolution 52/100, the General Assembly also invited the Commission to give attention to appropriate arrangements for the involvement and participation of non-governmental organizations in the review. Based on recommendations by the Commission at its forty-second session, the Assembly may wish to consider the question of the participation in the review process of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and of other non-governmental organizations engaged in the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. (A/52/789)*

The secretariat drew attention to the report of the Secretary-General by the note (E/CN.6/1998/10). On the basis of these documents and informal consultations, the Committee adopted a draft text for a resolution (E/CN.6/1998/L.11) entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" (E/1998/27, chapter I, section D, decision 42/101). In June 1998, the General Assembly endorsed the decision taken by the Committee. According to the decision, NGOs needed to participate in the preparatory process and the special session itself:

*18. Emphasizes the important role of non-governmental organizations in implementing the Platform for Action and the need for their active involvement in preparations for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements for their contributions to the special session. (A/RES/52/231)*

The Economic and Social Council decided ([E/RES/1998/2](#)) to recommend to the General Assembly that the high level review should be held as a special session. The General Assembly decided accordingly (A/RES/52/231).

The General Assembly further highlighted ([A/RES/53/120](#)), in December 1998 the role of NGOs and invited the Commission to recommend appropriate arrangements for the participation of NGOs:

*43. Emphasizes the important role of non-governmental organizations in implementing the Platform for Action and the need for their active involvement in the preparations for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements for their contributions to the special session;*

*45. Invites the Commission, meeting as the preparatory committee for the special session, in March 1999, to recommend to the General Assembly appropriate arrangements for the involvement and participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session. (A/RES/53/120)*

In March 1999, the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as the Preparatory Committee, held the second session of the Preparatory Committee and responded to the request of the General Assembly. The Commission adopted a draft resolution and recommended it to the General Assembly. According to the decision, NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as those accredited to the Fourth Conference on Women may participate in the special session (see also the summary of the general debate in E/1999/60):

*15. Emphasizes the important role of non-governmental organizations in implementing the Platform for Action and the need for their active involvement in the preparations for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements for their contributions to the special session;*

*16. Decides that non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as the non-governmental organizations that were accredited to the Fourth World Conference on Women, may participate in the special session without creating a precedent for future sessions of the General Assembly. (E/1999/60)*

In December 1999, the General Assembly endorsed ([A/RES/54/141](#); [A/RES/54/142](#)) the decision to invite NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and those accredited to the Fourth Conference on Women to the special session:

*15. Reiterates the decision that non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as the non-governmental organizations that were accredited to the Fourth World Conference on Women, may participate in the special session without creating a precedent for future sessions of the General Assembly. (A/RES/54/141)*

*15. Emphasizes the important role of non-governmental organizations in implementing the Platform for Action and the need for their active involvement in the preparations for the special session as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements for their contributions to the special session.*

*16. Decides that non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, as well as the non-governmental organizations that were accredited to the Fourth*

*World Conference on Women, may participate in the special session without creating a precedent for future sessions of the General Assembly. (A/RES/54/142)*

In March-April 2000, the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as the Preparatory Committee for the special session held its third session and adopted a decision (E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.4), where the accreditation of NGOs was reconsidered. According to the decision, all interested NGOs could apply until 5 of April 2000 through the committee composing of the secretariat and the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee. Their applications needed to include information on their competence and relevance on the topic of the special session. The committee was requested to provide the list of NGOs for accreditation on 10 of April 2000. The Preparatory Committee had one month, until 10 of May 2000 to decide on the non-objection basis on accreditation. In addition, those NGOs whose application for consultative status with ECOSOC had been rejected, withdrawn or suspended could not be accredited:

*Arrangements regarding accreditation of non-governmental organizations to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (Draft decision II):*

*The General Assembly, recalling its resolution 54/142 of 17 December 1999, Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/50 of 29 July 1999 and the resolution adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" at its second session:*

- (a) Decides to reconsider the question of accreditation of non-governmental organizations to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", which is contained in Assembly resolution 54/142;*
- (b) Also decides that those interested non-governmental organizations that neither are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, nor were accredited to the Fourth World Conference on Women and its preparatory process, may participate in the special session, that these non-governmental organizations should submit their application for accreditation to a committee composed of the Bureau of the preparatory committee and the Secretariat by 5 April 2000, and that the application should contain the following information:*
  - (i) The purpose of the organization;*
  - (ii) Information identifying the programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the subject of the special session and indicating in which country or countries they are carried out;*
  - (iii) Confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international levels;*
  - (iv) Copies of annual or other reports of the organization, with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions;*
  - (v) A list of the members of the governing body of the organization and their countries of nationality;*

*(vi) A description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names of organizations that are members and their geographical distribution;*

*(vii) A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization; and further decides that the Bureau of the preparatory committee should submit by 10 April 2000 to the members of the preparatory committee a list of the non-governmental organizations that submitted their applications, for approval, that the list should contain information on each organization's competence and relevance to the subject of the special session, and that members of the preparatory committee will have until 10 May 2000 to decide on a no-objection basis regarding accreditation of these non-governmental organizations; and further decides that the Bureau of the preparatory committee should submit by 10 April 2000 to the members of the preparatory committee a list of the non-governmental organizations that submitted their applications, for approval, that the list should contain information on each organization's competence and relevance to the subject of the special session, and that members of the preparatory committee will have until 10 May 2000 to decide on a no-objection basis regarding accreditation of these non-governmental organizations;*

*(c) Decides that those non-governmental organizations whose application for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council was rejected or whose consultative status with the Council was withdrawn or suspended shall not be accredited to the special session;*

*(d) Urges, in recognition of the importance of equitable geographical participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session, relevant United Nations bodies to assist those non-governmental organizations that do not have resources, in particular non-governmental organizations from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in participating in the special session;*

*(e) Requests the Secretary-General to disseminate widely to the community of non-governmental organizations all available information on accreditation procedures as well as information on supportive measures for participation in the special session;*

*(f) Decides that the above arrangements concerning accreditation of non-governmental organizations to the special session of the General Assembly will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the Assembly. (A/S-23/2, chapter V, section A)*

### **16.3 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

In March 1999, the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as the Preparatory Committee, held the second session of the Preparatory Committee and responded to the request of the General Assembly to consider arrangements for participation of NGOs. The Committee decided to consider modalities for the participation of NGOs at the next session of the Preparatory Committee:



*17. Decides to defer consideration of all the modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session until the next session of the Preparatory Committee. (E/1999/60)*

The General Assembly endorsed ([A/RES/54/142](#)) the decision in December 1999:

*17. Also decides to defer consideration of all the modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session until the next session of the Preparatory Committee. (A/RES/54/142)*

At its third session, in April 2000, the Committee took a decision on the arrangements for NGOs at the special session. According to the decision, NGOs could speak at the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. A limited number of EOCOSOC/NGOs could speak at the plenary of the special session, provided that their consultative status had not been rejected, withdrawn or suspended. NGOs were requested to select spokespersons, who would make plenary statements and provide the list to the President of the General Assembly through the secretariat. The President of the General Assembly was requested to circulate the list to the Member States and ensure that the selection had been made on an equal and transparent manner:

*Arrangements regarding participation of non-governmental organizations at the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (Draft decision I):*

*The General Assembly:*

*(a) Decides that representatives from non-governmental organizations accredited to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" may make statements in its Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole;*

*(b) Also decides that, given the availability of time, a limited number of non-governmental organizations that are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may also make statements in the debate in the plenary of the special session provided neither that their application for consultative status with the Council has been rejected nor that their consultative status with the Council has been withdrawn or suspended, and that non-governmental organizations should be requested to select spokespersons among themselves and provide the list thereof to the President of the General Assembly through the Secretariat; and further decides to request the President of the Assembly to present the list of selected non-governmental organizations to Member States in a timely manner for approval and to ensure that such selection is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the geographical representation and diversity of non-governmental organizations;*

*(c) Decides that the above arrangements concerning participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session of the General Assembly will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the Assembly. Assembly will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the Assembly. (A/S-23/2, Chapter V, Draft decision I)*

*Arrangements regarding accreditation of non-governmental organizations to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" (Draft decision II):*

*The General Assembly, recalling its resolution 54/142 of 17 December 1999, Economic and Social Council resolution 1999/50 of 29 July 1999 and the resolution adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women acting as the preparatory committee for the special session of the General Assembly entitled id Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century at its second session:*

*(a) Decides to reconsider the question of accreditation of non-governmental organizations to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", which is contained in Assembly resolution 54/142;*

*(b) Also decides that those interested non- governmental organizations that neither are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, nor were accredited to the Fourth World Conference on Women and its preparatory process, may participate in the special session, that these non- governmental organizations should submit their application for accreditation to a committee composed of the Bureau of the preparatory committee and the Secretariat by 5 April 2000, and that the application should contain the following information:*

*(i) The purpose of the organization;*

*(ii) Information identifying the programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the subject of the special session and indicating in which country or countries they are carried out;*

*(iii) Confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international levels;*

*(iv) Copies of annual or other reports of the organization, with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions;*

*(v) A list of the members of the governing body of the organization and their countries of nationality;*

*(vi) A description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names of organizations that are members and their geographical distribution;*

*(vii) A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization; and further decides that the Bureau of the preparatory committee should submit by 10 April 2000 to the members of the preparatory committee a list of the non-governmental organizations that submitted their applications, for approval, that the list should contain information on each organization's competence and relevance to the subject of the special session, and that members of the preparatory committee will have until 10 May 2000 to decide on a no-objection basis regarding accreditation of these non-governmental organizations;*

*(c) Decides that those non-governmental organizations whose application for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council was rejected or whose consultative status with the Council was withdrawn or suspended shall not be accredited to the special session;*

*(d) Urges, in recognition of the importance of equitable geographical participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session, relevant United Nations bodies to assist those non-governmental organizations that do not have resources, in particular non-governmental organizations from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, in participating in the special session;*

*(e) Requests the Secretary-General to disseminate widely to the community of non-governmental organizations all available information on accreditation procedures as well as information on supportive measures for participation in the special session;*

*(f) Decides that the above arrangements concerning accreditation of non-governmental organizations to the special session of the General Assembly will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the Assembly. (A/S-23/2, Chapter V, Draft decision II)*

At the same session, the Committee also decided upon the organizational arrangements for the special session, where the speaking arrangements for NGOs were confirmed. According to the same decision, the rules of procedure of the General Assembly will apply at the special session:

*16. In accordance with General Assembly decision 54/466 of 15 March 2000, given the availability of time, a limited number of non-governmental organizations that are in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may also make statements in the debate in plenary. Representatives of non-governmental organizations may also make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. These arrangements will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the Assembly. (A/S-23/2, chapter V, section B, draft decision II)*

#### **16.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/51/183](#); [A/RES/52/100](#); [A/RES/52/231](#); [A/RES/53/120](#); [A/RES/54/141](#); [A/RES/54/142](#)

1st session 4, 6, 11-13 Mar. 1998, New York: E/1998/27-E/CN.6/1998/12 (42nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women)

2nd session 15-19 Mar. 1999, New York: E/1999/60 (43rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women)

Resumed 2nd session 30 June 1999: E/1999/60/Add.1

3rd session 3-17 Mar., 20 Apr. 2000: [A/S-23/2 + Add.1 + Add.2 + IV/Corr.1](#)

Resumed 3rd session June 2000: E/CN.6/2000/PC/L.9 (draft)

Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly Organizational arrangements [A/S-23/2](#), chapter V, section B

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**17. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY WORLD SUMMIT  
FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND BEYOND:  
ACHIEVING SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT FOR ALL IN A GLOBALIZING WORLD**

26 - 30 June 2000, New York

**Summary**

Accreditation:

At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee adopted guidelines for accreditation of NGOs for the preparatory process. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or on the Roster were invited to participate without further screening, by expressing their interest to the secretariat. Those NGOs, which had been accredited to the World Summit for Social Development or other major United Nations conferences and summits could apply through the secretariat. The Secretary-General was requested to provide lists of those NGOs for review. On the basis of these lists, the Preparatory Committee accredited all together 95 NGOs by consensus.

At its resumed first session, the Preparatory Committee adopted a draft decision concerning the participation of NGOs in the special session itself. According to the decision, all NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, all NGOs accredited to the World Summit for Social Development, and all NGOs accredited to the Preparatory Committee would be automatically accredited to the special session without further screening. Other interested NGOs could apply following the same procedure as for the preparatory process. The special session took a formal decision on the draft decision of the Committee.

Modalities:

There were no specific modalities for participation of NGOs in the Preparatory Committee, as the Committee followed the guidelines of the resolution 1996/31. NGOs were given an opportunity to speak and address the Preparatory Committee at any time possible.

At its resumed first session, the Preparatory Committee adopted the guidelines on modalities for participation of NGOs in the special session. A limited number of ECOSOC/NGOs could speak in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to provide a list of selected NGOs for the approval of the Committee, ensuring an equal, transparent and geographical representation of the selection of NGOs. All representatives of NGOs could speak in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

The decision was endorsed by the General Assembly resolution (A/RES/54/407). At its second session, the Preparatory Committee adopted organizational arrangements for the special session, where the same speaking arrangements for NGOs in the special session were once again adopted.

At the plenary of the special session, 9 NGOs made statements. Among these 9 NGOs, five were selected on the geographical basis and four others were major international NGOs, active in the

field of social development. In addition, at the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole, 28 NGOs made a statement.

There was a Forum organized by Switzerland for various actors, including NGOs. The Forum was not part of the official meeting.

Preparatory Committee: Open-ended Preparatory Committee with the secretariat at the Commission on Social Development

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UN/DESA

### **17.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/50/161](#)), in December 1995 to convene a special session for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the Social Summit in Copenhagen.

### **17.2 Accreditation for civil society**

The General Assembly emphasized ([A/RES/51/202](#)), in December 1996 the need for effective social partnership and cooperation between governments and the relevant actors of civil society, the social partners, the major groups, including NGOs and the private sector. The GA encouraged NGOs to participate in the work of the Commission for Social Development and in the implementation of the outcome of the Social Summit:

*Involvement of civil society and other actors:*

*28. Reaffirms the need for effective partnership and cooperation between Governments and the relevant actors of civil society, the social partners, the major groups as defined in Agenda 21, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, in the implementation of and follow-up to the Declaration and Programme of Action, and for ensuring their involvement in the planning, elaboration, implementation and evaluation of social policies at the national level;*

*29. Encourages non-governmental organizations to participate in the work of the Commission for Social Development, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 and decision 1996/315 of 14 November 1996, and in the implementation process related to the Summit to the maximum extent possible. A/RES/51/202)*

At its organizational session, in May 1998 the Preparatory Committee adopted guidelines for accreditation of NGOs at the preparatory process. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or on the Roster were invited to participate without further screening, by expressing their interest to the secretariat. Those NGOs, which were accredited to the World Summit for Social Development or other major United Nations conferences and summits could apply through the secretariat. The Secretary-General was requested to provide a list of those NGOs for review:

*Participation of non-governmental organizations (Decision 7):*

*The Preparatory Committee, reaffirming the importance of the participation of non-governmental organizations and the involvement of civil society in the implementation of and follow-up to the Copenhagen Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development:*

*(a) Decides that the work of the Preparatory Committee should be open to the participation of non-governmental organizations, which are accredited in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 and decisions 1996/208 of 9 February 1996 and 1996/315 of 14 November 1996, in which the Council invited those non-governmental organizations that were accredited to major United Nations conferences and summits to attend sessions of the Commission for Social Development, provided that they had started the process of application for consultative status;*

*(b) Also decides that participation by non-governmental organizations at the special session will be guided by relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and will take into account the experience gained at the mid-decade review of the outcome of major United Nations conferences;*

*(c) Further decides that non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and on the Roster will be invited to participate in the meetings of the Preparatory Committee; in addition, other non-governmental organizations that were accredited to the World Summit for Social Development or other major United Nations conferences and summits will be invited to apply for accreditation to the Preparatory Committee; the Secretary-General is requested to provide to Member States, in a timely fashion, a list of the latter non-governmental organizations for review;*

*(d) Encourages Governments to include representatives of civil society in their national preparatory process, as well as in their delegations to the Preparatory Committee and the special session;*

*(e) Decides to defer consideration of the modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session until its next meeting. (A/53/45, chapter VI, section B, decision 7)*

On the basis of the lists provided, the Preparatory Committee accredited all together 95 NGOs by consensus:

1st session, 17-29 May and 15 July 1999: Accreditation for 67 NGOs (A/AC.253/10) and accreditation for another 10 NGOs (A/AC.253/10 and Add.1) were approved by consensus with two exceptions (A/54/45, chapter I, section E). Resumed 1st session, 21 Sept. 1999: No accreditations.

2nd session, 3-14 Apr. 2000: Accreditation for 6 NGOs (A/AC.253/26) was approved by consensus (A/S-24/2, chapter II, section E).

Resumed 2nd session, 20 -22 June 2000: Accreditation for 22 NGOs was approved by consensus (A/AC.253/29; A/S-24/2/Add.1, chapter III, decision 7).

At its first session, in May and July 1999 the Preparatory Committee decided to consider the participation of NGOs in the special session itself during the resumed session in August - September, the same year:

*Accreditation and modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session (Decision 3):*

*The Preparatory Committee decides to defer consideration of the accreditation and modalities of participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session to the inter-sessional open-ended informal consultations to be held from 30 August to 3 September 1999, subject to a decision by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, with a view to adopting a decision in a one-day resumed session of the Preparatory Committee before the end of 1999. (A54/45, chapter VI, section B, decision 3)*

At its resumed first session, in September 1999 the Preparatory Committee adopted the draft decision (A/AC.253/L.12) on the basis of informal consultations, concerning the participation of NGOs in the special session itself. According to the draft decision, all NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, all NGOs accredited to the World Summit for Social Development, and all NGOs accredited to the Preparatory Committee would be automatically accredited to the special session without further screening. Other interested NGOs could apply following the same procedure as for the preparatory process:

*Accreditation of non-governmental organizations at the special session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and Further Initiatives (Decision 5):*

*The Preparatory Committee:*

*(a) Decides that accreditation of non-governmental organizations to the special session should be open to:*

*(i) All non-governmental organizations enjoying consultative status with the Economic and Social Council;*

*(ii) All non-governmental organizations that were accredited to the World Summit for Social Development, unless their application for consultative status was rejected by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations;*

*(iii) All non-governmental organizations that have been accredited to the Preparatory Committee, with no further examination of their credentials, unless their application for consultative status was rejected by the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations;*

*(b) Decides that the accreditation of other interested non-governmental organizations that have not participated in any of the above forums should be examined by a Committee composed of the Bureau of the preparatory body for the special session and the Secretariat by 7 April 2000, which would make the appropriate recommendations to the Preparatory Committee at its second*

*session for review and decision, provided that requests for accreditation are accompanied by information on the organization's competence and relevance to the subject of the special session, including the following information, to be submitted by March 2000:*

- (i) The purpose of the organization;*
- (ii) Information identifying the programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the subject of the special session and indicating in which country or countries they are carried out;*
- (iii) Confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international levels;*
- (iv) Copies of annual or other reports of the organization, with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions;*
- (v) A list of the members of the governing body of the organization and their countries of nationality;*
- (vi) A description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names of member organizations and their geographical distribution;*
- (vii) A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization.*

*(c) Requests the Secretary-General to widely inform the community of non-governmental organizations about all available accreditation procedures. (A/54/45/Add.1, chapter II, section B)*

### **17.3 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

At its first session, in May-July 1999 the Preparatory Committee decided to consider modalities for the participation of NGOs in the special session during the resumed session in August-September, the same year:

*Accreditation and modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session (Decision 3):*

*The Preparatory Committee decides to defer consideration of the accreditation and modalities of participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session to the inter-sessional open-ended informal consultations to be held from 30 August to 3 September 1999, subject to a decision by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session, with a view to adopting a decision in a one-day resumed session of the Preparatory Committee before the end of 1999. (A54/45, chapter VI, section B, decision 3)*

At its resumed first session, in September 1999 the Preparatory Committee adopted the draft decision (A/AC.253/L.13) on the basis of informal consultations. According to the decision, all representatives of NGOs may speak in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. A limited number of ECOSOC/NGOs may speak in the plenary meetings of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to provide a list of selected NGOs for the approval of the Committee, ensuring an equal, transparent and geographical representation of the selection of NGOs:



*Arrangements regarding participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and Further Initiatives (Draft decision IV):*

*The General Assembly:*

- (a) Decides that representatives from non-governmental organizations may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the special session;*
- (b) Decides that given the availability of time, a limited number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may also make statements in the debate in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly is requested to present the list of selected non-governmental organizations to the Member States in a timely manner for approval. The President of the General Assembly is also requested to ensure that such selection is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the geographical representation and diversity of non-governmental organizations;*
- (c) Decides that arrangements concerning the accreditation and participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the General Assembly. (A/54/45/Add.1, chapter II, section A)*

The decision was endorsed by the General Assembly resolution (A/RES/54/407). At its second session, the Preparatory Committee adopted a draft decision (A/AC.253/L.15) on organizational arrangements for the special session, where the same speaking arrangements for NGOs in the special session were once again adopted:

*18. In accordance with General Assembly decision 54/407 of 8 October 1999, representatives of non-governmental organizations may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.*

*19. In accordance with General Assembly decision 54/407, given the availability of time, a limited number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council may also make statements in the debate in the plenary of the twenty-fourth special session. (A/S-24/2, chapter V, draft decision I)*

At the plenary of the special session, 9 NGOs made statements. Among these 9 NGOs, five were selected on the geographical basis and four others were major international NGOs, active in the field of social development. In addition, at the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole, 28 NGOs made a statement.

#### **17.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/50/161](#); [A/RES/51/202](#)

Org. session 19-22 May 1998, New York: A/53/45

1st session 17-29 May & 15 July 1999, New York: A/54/45 + Corr.1

Resumed 1st session 21 Sept. 1999, New York: A/54/45/Add.1

2nd session 3-14 Apr. 2000, New York: A/S-24/2

Resumed 2nd session 20 - 22 June: A/S-24/2/Add.1

Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly

Organizational arrangements: A/S-24/2, chapter V, draft decision I

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**18. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR AN OVERALL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OUTCOME OF THE UNITED NATIONS CONFERENCE ON HUMAN SETTLEMENTS**  
(ISTANBUL + 5) 6-8 June 2001, New York

**Summary**

Accreditation:

The General Assembly recognized ([A/RES/51/177](#)) the partnerships with various groups at the Habitat II Conference and invited Governments to further develop partnerships with civil society, including the private sector. The General Assembly, in December 1998 considered the report of the Secretary-General, which had been prepared to assist the formulation of arrangements for the special session. In his report, the Secretary-General made proposals on the substantive and organizational aspects of the event, including participation of civil society partners. The General Assembly took note of the report and emphasized ([A/RES/53/180](#)) the participation of local authorities, Habitat partners, NGOs and the private sector in the preparatory process and the special session itself. The arrangements for their participation were to follow the experience and practice of the Habitat II Conference. The President of the General Assembly was invited, in consultation with Member States to make proposals on the participation of civil society. The General Assembly made several recommendations ([A/RES/54/209](#)), in December 1999 on the involvement of local authorities and civil society partners in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the national level. All Member States were invited to provide financial resources for the preparatory process to assist the participation of least developed countries and their national civil society partners.

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on the participation of youth. The Committee stressed the participation of mayors and presidents of global and regional associations of local authorities in its decision on local authorities. At its first session, the Committee also invited the President of the General Assembly to take into account the recommendation of the Committee that the rules of procedure of the Habitat II should apply at the special session. The Committee affirmed that the accreditation for the Preparatory Committee and the special session should follow the practice of the Habitat II Conference.

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/194](#)), in December 2000 upon the accreditation of Habitat Agenda partners. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

were invited to participation without further screening, unless their consultative status has been rejected, withdrawn or suspended. The invitation was extended to all Habitat partners that were accredited to the Habitat II, in Istanbul in 1996. Other interested and relevant Habitat Agenda partners, which had not been accredited before, were able to apply through the committee composed of the Bureau and the secretariat. Their applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence in the field of human settlements. The applications were requested to be submitted by 19 February 2001 to allow the Preparatory Committee to take a decision on accreditation on the non-objection basis at its second session.

Modalities:

At its organizational meeting, in May 1999, the Preparatory Committee adopted the rules of procedure of the Commission on Human Settlements for the preparatory process with some changes. One of the changes was to follow the GA resolution 53/180, where the Assembly stressed the participation of local authorities and other Habitat partners. The current rule 61 of the Commission was replaced, mutatis mutandis, by rule 61 and rule 62 of the rules of procedure of the Habitat II Conference, held in Istanbul in 1996. According to these rules, representatives of local authorities could participate in the deliberations of the official meeting and its bodies. Representatives of NGOs could participate as observes and could speak upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. NGOs could also be requested to speak through spokespersons.

At its first session, in May 2000, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on the structure of the special session, where the presentations by the Habitat partners were emphasized. The Committee requested the secretariat to propose modalities for participation of the Habitat partners, using the examples of other forums.

The General Assembly decided (A/RES/55/194), in December 2000 on the modalities at the special session. Representatives of local authorities, NGOs and other Habitat Agenda partners were to make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. A limited number of them could make statements in the debate in plenary meeting. The President of the General Assembly was requested to submit the list of selected Habitat Agenda partners to the Member States in a timely manner for approval. He was requested to ensure that the selection of speakers is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the geographical representation and diversity of Habitat Agenda partners. The General Assembly also called upon ([A/RES/55/195](#)) all Member States in a position to do so to make voluntary financial contributions to the Secretariat to assist developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and their civil society partners to facilitate their participation.

Preparatory Committee: Commission on Human Settlements

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: Commission on Human Settlements

**18.1 Introduction**

In the Habitat Agenda, paragraph 218 the Habitat II Conference recommended that the General Assembly would consider holding a special session in the year 2001 to review and appraise the implementation of the outcome of the Conference. The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/52/190](#)) to hold a special session in 2001. The Commission on Human Settlements was invited ([A/RES/53/180](#)) to serve as a preparatory body for the event.

The General Assembly recognized ([A/RES/51/177](#)) the partnerships with various groups at the Habitat II Conference and invited Governments to further develop partnerships with civil society, including the private sector:

*4. Recognizes with satisfaction the active involvement in the Conference of all States and other relevant actors and the innovative arrangements introduced at the Conference to forge partnerships among various actors;*

*8. Invites all Governments to further encourage and support all relevant actors of civil society, including the private sector, in the implementation of and follow-up to the Habitat Agenda by establishing effective partnerships and by creating an appropriate framework, in accordance with their respective national conditions, to further facilitate and expedite such actors in addressing human settlements issues, particularly servicing, finance mobilization, the provision of adequate shelter and related areas, and in that process to emphasize the need to integrate the gender perspective;*

*10. Calls upon all Governments to establish or strengthen, as appropriate, participatory mechanisms for the implementation, assessment and review of and follow-up to the Habitat Agenda and national plans of action. (A/RES/51/177)*

The General Assembly, in December 1998 considered the report of the Secretary-General, which had been prepared to assist the formulation of arrangements for the special session. In his report, the Secretary-General made proposals on the substantive and organizational aspects of the event, including participation of civil society partners. The General Assembly took note of the report and emphasized ([A/RES/53/180](#)) the participation of local authorities, Habitat partners, NGOs and the private sector in the preparatory process and the special session itself. The arrangements for their participation were to follow the experience and practice of the Habitat II Conference. The President of the General Assembly was invited, in consultation with Member States to make proposals on the participation of civil society:

*7. Stresses the need for the effective participation of local authorities, other Habitat Agenda partners and relevant actors of civil society, in particular the private sector and non-governmental organizations, in the preparations for the special session, as well as the need to ensure appropriate arrangements, taking into account the practice and experience gained at the Habitat II Conference, for their substantive contributions to and active involvement in the preparatory meetings and the special session, and invites the President of the General Assembly, in consultation with Member States, to propose to Member States appropriate modalities for their effective involvement in the special session. (A/RES/53/180)*

## 18.2 Accreditation for civil society

The General Assembly made several recommendations ([A/RES/54/209](#)), in December 1999 on the involvement of local authorities and civil society partners in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the national level. All Member States were invited to provide financial resources for the preparatory process to assist the participation of least developed countries and their national civil society partners:

*5. Invites all Member States in a position to do so to provide financial resources for the preparatory process for the special session, in particular to enable least developed countries and their national civil-society partners to prepare adequately for, and be fully involved in, the preparatory process and the special session itself. (A/RES/54/209)*

At its first session, in May 2000 the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on the participation of youth (see decision 1/6). The Committee stressed the participation of mayors and presidents of global and regional associations of local authorities in its decision on local authorities:

*1/2. The role of local authorities in the preparatory process and at the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda*

*The Preparatory Committee:*

*Acknowledging the important role of local authorities in implementing the Habitat Agenda, Welcoming the establishment of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities, as requested by the Commission on Human Settlements in its resolution 17/18 of 14 May 1999, Taking note with satisfaction of the Venice Declaration, adopted by the Committee at the conclusion of its constituent meeting, held in Venice from 23 and to 24 January 2000, Recognizing the valuable contribution that the Committee can make to the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, General Assembly including its preparatory process and follow-up,*

*1. Expresses, in particular, its appreciation to the mayors of cities and towns and presidents of global and regional associations of local authorities serving on the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities for the valuable contribution made to the work of the first session of the Preparatory Committee, and encourages the Advisory Committee and its members to continue contributing to the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;*

*2. Invites all member States in a position to do so to support the functioning and the activities of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities;*

*3. Requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to report on the activities of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities at the second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee;*

*4. Encourages member States to include local authority representatives in their national delegations to the second session of the Preparatory Committee and the special session of the General Assembly.*

At its first session, the Preparatory Committee also invited the President of the General Assembly to take into account the recommendation of the Committee that the rules of procedure of the Habitat II should apply at the special session. The Committee affirmed that the accreditation for the Preparatory Committee and the special session should follow the practice of the Habitat II Conference:

*1/3. Scope to be covered by the review and appraisal process I (a) Participation and accreditation*

*2. Invites the President of the General Assembly, in his consultations requested in paragraph 7 of General Assembly resolution 53/180 of 15 December 1998, to take into account the recommendations of the Preparatory Committee that the rules of procedure of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements of the (Habitat II) should apply to the special session of the General Assembly, and that the rules concerning the participation of local authorities and non-governmental organizations in the special session should not create a precedent for other special sessions of the General Assembly;*

*3. Decides that the accreditation to the special session and its preparatory process should follow the rules of procedure for participation adopted by the Habitat II conference;*

*4. Requests the Secretary-general to disseminate widely all available information on accreditation procedures as well as information on supportive measures for participation in the special session;*

*5. Decides that the arrangements set out above concerning accreditation of local authorities and non-governmental organizations to the special session will in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the Assembly.*

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/194](#)), in December 2000 upon the accreditation of Habitat Agenda partners. NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council were invited to participation without further screening, unless their consultative status has been rejected, withdrawn or suspended. The invitation was extended to all Habitat partners that were accredited to the Habitat II, in Istanbul in 1996. Other interested and relevant Habitat Agenda partners, which had not been accredited before, were able to apply through the committee composed of the Bureau and the secretariat. Their applications needed to include information on their relevance and competence in the field of human settlements. The applications were

requested to be submitted by 19 February 2001 to allow the Preparatory Committee to take a decision on accreditation on the non-objection basis at its second session:

*Arrangements regarding accreditation of Habitat Agenda partners to the special session*

*1. Decides that accreditation to the special session shall be open to:*

*(a) Habitat Agenda partners that were accredited to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II);*

*(b) Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, with the exception of those whose application for consultative status with the Council has been rejected or whose consultative status has been withdrawn or suspended;*

*2. Also decides that accreditation of other interested and relevant Habitat Agenda partners that were not accredited to the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) should be considered by the Preparatory Committee, provided that those partners submit to the Committee composed of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee and the Secretariat by 9 February 2001 an application for accreditation containing the following information:*

*(a) The purpose of the organization;*

*(b) Information identifying the programmes and activities of the organization in areas relevant to the subject of the special session and indicating in which country or countries they are carried out;*

*(c) Confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international levels;*

*(d) Copies of annual or other reports of the organization, with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions;*

*(e) A list of the members of the governing body of the organization and their country of nationality;*

*(f) A description of the membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names or organizations that are members and their geographical distribution;*

*(g) A copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization; and further decides that the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee should submit by 19 February 2001 to the Preparatory Committee at its second session a list of partners that have submitted their application containing information on each partner's competence and relevance to the subject of the special session, and that the Preparatory Committee at its second session shall decide on a no-objection basis regarding the accreditation of those partners;*

*3. Requests the Secretary-General to disseminate widely all available information on accreditation procedures for the special session;*

*4. Decides that the arrangements set out above concerning accreditation to the special session shall in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the General Assembly.*

*(A/RES/55/194)*

### 18.3 Modalities for the participation of civil society

The General Assembly requested ([A/53/RES/180](#)), in December 1998 the Commission on Human Settlements to consider as the preparatory body for the special session the rules of procedure and organization of work for the first session of the Preparatory Committee. The GA requested the Preparatory Committee to consider at its first session the modalities and further details of the event.

At its organizational meeting, in May 1999, the Preparatory Committee adopted the rules of procedure of the Commission on Human Settlements for the preparatory process with some changes. One of the changes was to follow the GA resolution 53/180, where the Assembly stressed the participation of local authorities and other Habitat partners. The current rule 61 of the Commission was replaced, mutatis mutandis, by rule 61 and rule 62 of the rules of procedure of the Habitat II Conference, held in Istanbul in 1996. According to these rules, representatives of local authorities could participate in the deliberations of the official meeting and its bodies. Representatives of NGOs could participate as observers and could speak upon the invitation of the presiding officer and at the approval of the body concerned. NGOs could also be requested to speak through spokespersons:

*Representatives of local authorities (Rule 61):*

*"Representatives of local authorities, designated by accredited international associations of local authorities in consultation with national associations of local authorities, invited to the Conference may participate, without the right to vote, in the deliberations of the Conference, its Main Committees and, as appropriate, any other committee or working group, on questions within the scope of their activities. Every effort shall be made to make the representation of local authorities balanced in terms of region, size and type of local authorities.*

*Representatives of non-governmental organizations (Rule 62):*

- 1. Non-governmental organizations accredited to participate in the Conference may designate representatives to sit as observers at public meetings of the Conference and the Main Committees.*
- 2. Upon the invitation of the presiding officer of the body concerned and subject to the approval of that body, such observers may make oral statements on questions in which they have special competence. If the number of requests to speak is too large, the non-governmental organizations shall be requested to form themselves into constituencies, such constituencies to speak through spokespersons.*

The General Assembly made several recommendations ([A/RES/54/209](#)), in December 1999 on the involvement of local authorities and civil society partners in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda at the national level. All Member States were invited to provide financial resources for the preparatory process to assist the participation of least developed countries and their national civil society partners:



*5. Invites all Member States in a position to do so to provide financial resources for the preparatory process for the special session, in particular to enable least developed countries and their national civil-society partners to prepare adequately for, and be fully involved in, the preparatory process and the special session itself. (A/RES/54/209)*

At its first session, in May 2000 the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on the participation of youth (see decision 1/6), as well as a decision on the role of local authorities. The Committee stressed the participation of mayors and presidents of global and regional associations of local authorities:

*1/2. The role of local authorities in the preparatory process and at the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda*

*The Preparatory Committee,  
Acknowledging the important role of local authorities in implementing the Habitat Agenda,  
Welcoming the establishment of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities, as requested by the Commission on Human Settlements in its resolution 17/18 of 14 May 1999,  
Taking note with satisfaction of the Venice Declaration, adopted by the Committee at the conclusion of its constituent meeting, held in Venice from 23 and to 24 January 2000,  
Recognizing the valuable contribution that the Committee can make to the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda, General Assembly including its preparatory process and follow-up,*

*1. Expresses, in particular, its appreciation to the mayors of cities and towns and presidents of global and regional associations of local authorities serving on the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities for the valuable contribution made to the work of the first session of the Preparatory Committee, and encourages the Advisory Committee and its members to continue contributing to the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda;*

*2. Invites all member States in a position to do so to support the functioning and the activities of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities;*

*3. Requests the Executive Director of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) to report on the activities of the Advisory Committee of Local Authorities at the second substantive session of the Preparatory Committee;*

*4. Encourages member States to include local authority representatives in their national delegations to the second session of the Preparatory Committee and the special session of the General Assembly.*

At its first session, in May 2000, the Preparatory Committee adopted a decision on the structure of the special session, where the presentations by the Habitat partners were emphasized. The

Committee requested the secretariat to propose modalities for participation of the Habitat partners, using the examples of other forums:

*II. Structure of the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda*

*7. Agrees that the special session should concentrate, among other matters, on presentations, including thematic presentations, on the implementation of the Habitat Agenda by a range of Habitat partners, including representatives of local authorities, civil society, the private sector as well as the United Nations, the Bretton Woods organizations and other multilateral organizations, focusing on experiences and lessons learned since Istanbul;*

*8. Requests the secretariat to prepare a proposal for structuring the discussions among the various Habitat Agenda partners using innovative and successful approaches from other forums to be discussed and agreed upon during the second session of the Preparatory Committee;*

*9. Confirms the need, as stated in General Assembly resolution 53/180, to ensure substantive contributions to and active involvement in the special session by local authorities, other Habitat Agenda partners and relevant actors of civil society, in particular the private sector and non-governmental organizations;*

*10. Recommends that the Commission on Human Settlements should include a consultation on the effective decentralization and strengthening of local authorities and their associations and networks on the agenda of its eighteenth session, in relation with the item on local implementation of the Habitat Agenda, including the role of local authorities. (A/55/212)*

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/194](#)), in December 2000 on the modalities at the special session. Representatives of local authorities, NGOs and other Habitat Agenda partners were to make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. A limited number of them could make statements in the debate in plenary meeting. The President of the General Assembly was requested to submit the list of selected Habitat Agenda partners to the Member States in a timely manner for approval. He was requested to ensure that the selection of speakers is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the geographical representation and diversity of Habitat Agenda partners. The General Assembly also called upon ([A/RES/55/195](#)) all Member States in a position to do so to make voluntary financial contributions to the Secretariat to assist developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and their civil society partners to facilitate their participation:

*Arrangements regarding participation of Habitat Agenda partners and observers in the special session*

*1. Decides that representatives of local authorities, non-governmental organizations and other Habitat Agenda partners may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole and in the thematic committee of the special session for an overall review and appraisal of the*

*implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II);*

*2. Also decides that, given the time available, a limited number of representatives of local authorities, non-governmental organizations and other Habitat Agenda partners may also make statements in the debate in plenary meeting, and requests the President of the General Assembly to submit the list of selected Habitat Agenda partners to the Member States in a timely manner for approval and to ensure that the selection of speakers is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the geographical representation and diversity of Habitat Agenda partners;*

*3. Further decides that observers may make statements during the debate in plenary meeting in accordance with the rules and procedures of the General Assembly;*

*4. Decides that arrangements concerning the accreditation and participation of Habitat Agenda partners in the special session shall in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the General Assembly. (A/RES/55/194)*

*11. Calls upon all States in a position to do so to make voluntary financial contributions to the Secretariat to assist developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, and their civil society partners to prepare adequately for, and be fully involved in, the preparatory process and the special session itself. (A/RES/55/195)*

#### **18.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/51/177](#); [A/RES/52/190](#); [A/RES/52/192](#); [A/RES/53/180](#); [A/RES/54/207](#); [A/RES/54/209](#); [A/RES/55/194](#); [A/RES/55/195](#)

Org. session 13-14 May 1999, Nairobi: [HS/C/PC.OS/4](#)

1st session 8-12 May 2000, Nairobi: HS/C/PC.1/6 (submitted to the GA as [A/55/121](#))

2nd session 19-23 February 2001, Nairobi: HS/C/PC.2/8

Rules of Procedure of the Preparatory Committee: HS/C/PC.OS/2

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### **19. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON REVIEW OF THE PROBLEM OF HIV/AIDS IN ALL ITS ASPECTS**

25-27 June 2001, New York

#### **Summary**

#### Accreditation:

The General Assembly recognized ([A/RES/55/13](#)) the importance of the participation of civil society actors. Apart from informal consultations of the General Assembly, NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and NGOs which are members of the Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS were invited to participate in the preparatory process and the special session itself. The Executive Director of the Joint Programme was requested to prepare on a non-objection basis a list of other relevant NGOs, associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, and the business sector for the consideration of Member States. The list of other relevant civil society actors was requested to include relevant background information. The President of the General Assembly was invited to make recommendations on the involvement of civil society actors for consideration by Member States during the preparatory process, for final decision by the Assembly. In his conference room paper, the President of the General Assembly recommended that the selection of civil society actors applying to the process was to be based on the criteria outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31. In addition, evidence of recognized work in the area of HIV/AIDS, including at the community level, and previous experience in regional and/or global events was to be taken into account. Preference was to be given to those groups which are already affiliated with the UNAIDS secretariat or its co-sponsoring organizations. An appropriate level and balance of representation from each geographic region was to be ensured.

The President of the General Assembly recommended that the civil society list for accreditation should be submitted to Member States not later than 15 February 2001. The decision on accreditation and modalities of participation was to be taken in the end of February 2001, to expedite the preparatory process and to allow more time for a substantive discussion during the first session of the open-ended informal consultations of the plenary in February/March 2001.

The deadline for applications for civil society accreditation was postponed once.

On 26 February 2001, the General Assembly approved the first list of 112 civil society actors. On 19 April 2001, another list of 227 civil society actors was submitted to Member States for approval on non-objection basis (see the list [HIV/AIDS/CRP.2/Add.1](#)). From this list, a Member State objected accreditation of three NGOs from its country by sending a Note Verbale. The President of the General Assembly informed all Member States on the matter by a letter.

#### Modalities:

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/13](#)), in November 2000 on a variety of modalities for civil society participation. The GA invited a limited number of civil society representatives with specific expertise in the matter to participate in the plenary debate of the special session. The GA also decided upon organizing round tables with an open-ended format with participation of accredited civil society actors. During the open-ended consultations of the plenary, there was to be interactive panel discussions with civil society. In addition, the GA decided to use existing electronic networks, including those of regional NGO networks to obtain inputs from civil society actors.

The General Assembly invited by the same resolution the President of the General Assembly to make recommendations on modalities of civil society participation in the preparatory process and the special session. These recommendations were to be considered by Member States and finally approved by the General Assembly.

As requested, the President of the General Assembly elaborated the modalities and made recommendations on the civil society involvement in his conference room paper published on 8 of December 2000 ([HIV/AIDS/CRP.1](#)). Based on the decisions already taken in 55/13, the President of the General Assembly recommended that a limited number of civil society actors would be invited to participate in the debate of the special session. Civil society actors should be able to attend the plenary informals, where the report of the Secretary-General is discussed. The President also recommended that the round tables of the special session should follow an open-ended format and include representatives of civil society.

The President of the General Assembly further recommended that there should be interactive panel discussions with civil society during the preparatory process. The inputs from civil society should be collected through electronic networks and outcomes of relevant civil society events. Young people should be encouraged to participate.

In February 2001, the General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/242](#)) upon the organizational arrangements for the special session. A limited number of accredited civil society actors could make statements in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to consult Member States and present a list of those civil society actors, which could speak to the consideration of Member States on non/objection basis. The final decision was made by the General Assembly. The President was requested to ensure that the selection was made on an equal and transparent manner and taking into account a variety of perspective, expertise and geographical representation.

In February 2001, the General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/242](#)) upon the organizational arrangements for the special session. A limited number of accredited civil society actors could make statements in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to consult Member States and present a list of those civil society actors, which could speak to the consideration of Member States on non-objection basis. The final decision was made by the General Assembly. The President was requested to ensure that the selection was made on an equal and transparent manner and taking into account a variety of perspective, expertise and geographical representation.

According to the decision concerning organizational arrangements, accredited civil society actors could participate the round tables. The President of the General Assembly was requested to consult Member States and present a list of selected accredited civil society actors for consideration of Member States. The final decision was to be made by the General Assembly. A limited number of accredited civil society actors were also invited to speak during the discussion on the report of the Secretary-General.

The President of the General Assembly sent a letter to all Member States on 13 June 2001 in order to propose the selected accredited civil society actors, which would participate in the debate of the plenary of the special session. Among the eight spokespersons, who made a statement in the plenary, were representatives of women's NGO, a religious NGO, a research institute, and some international NGOs.

In the same letter, the President of the General Assembly also proposed selected accredited civil society actors with specific expertise to participate in the round tables. The President reminded that the resolution 55/242 had requested these participants to be selected on the basis of geographical representation and gender. Their selection was also requested to ensure a variety of perspectives and an adequate mix of national, regional and international civil society actors. According to the resolution, the decision was to take place on a non-objection basis, for the final approval of the General Assembly. There were eight civil society participants proposed for each round table. The deadline for an objection was 18 June 2001.

On 21 June 2001, the President of the General Assembly informed Member States through a letter on eleven objections on one proposed NGO. The issue was raised for a discussion during the informal consultations. Some Member States stated their support for the participation of the NGO, which had been objected. The final decision was referred to the plenary of the General Assembly, in order to follow the decision of the resolution 55/242.

The plenary of the General Assembly was held 22 June 2001. After debate, the consideration was postponed to the next plenary meeting on 25 June 2001, the first day of the special session. After debate, Member States voted on participation of the objected NGO. As a result of the vote, all originally proposed civil society actors were approved to speak at the round tables.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UNAIDS

## **19.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/54/283](#)), in September 2000 to convene a special session of the GA to review and address the problem of HIV/AIDS in all its aspects and to coordinate and intensify international efforts to combat it.

## **19.2 Accreditation for civil society**

Two months later, the General Assembly ([A/RES/55/13](#)) recognized the importance of the participation of civil society actors in the response to the epidemic at all levels. Apart from informal consultations of the General Assembly, NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and those NGOs which are members of the Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS were invited to participate in the preparatory process and the special session itself. The Executive Director of the Joint Programme was requested to prepare on a non-objection basis a list of other relevant NGOs, associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, and the business sector for the consideration of Member States.

The list of other relevant civil society actors was requested to include relevant background information. The list and background information was to be prepared not later than 15 February 2001. The President of the General Assembly was invited to make recommendations on the involvement of civil society actors for consideration by Member States during the preparatory process, for final decision by the Assembly:

*12. Recognizes the importance of the contribution of civil society actors in the response to the epidemic at all levels, and in this regard underlines the need for the active involvement of civil society representatives in the preparatory process and the special session;*

*13. Invites to the special session and to the preparatory process activities, apart from the informal consultations of the General Assembly to which only Member States and observers are invited, in accordance with paragraph 14 below, non-governmental organizations which enjoy consultative status in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, or are members of the Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, requests the Executive Director of the Joint Programme to prepare, not later than 15 February 2001, for consideration by Member States, on a non-objection basis during the preparatory process, for final decision by the Assembly, a list of other relevant civil society actors, in particular associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, non-governmental organizations and the business sector, including pharmaceutical companies, along with relevant background information to be made available to Member States, and invites those civil society actors to the special session and to the preparatory process activities for the special session, according to the modalities defined above;*

*14. Invites, in this context, the President of the General Assembly to make recommendations, for consideration by Member States during the preparatory process, for final decision by the Assembly as soon as possible, but not later than 2 March 2001, as to the form of the involvement of such civil society actors, in particular associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, non-governmental organizations and the business sector, including pharmaceutical companies, in the special session and, to the extent possible, in the preparatory process. (A/RES/55/13)*

In response to the request of the General Assembly, the President of the General Assembly further elaborated organizational matters of the special session and made recommendations on the civil society involvement in his conference room paper published on 8 of December 2000 ([HIV/AIDS/CRP.1](#)). The paper confirmed and further explained some of the decisions of the General Assembly resolution 55/13. The required background information concerning the civil society actors for accreditation was requested to be based on the criteria outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31. In addition, evidence of recognized work in the area of HIV/AIDS, including at the community level, and previous experience in regional and/or global events was to be taken into account. Preference was to be given to those groups which are already affiliated with the UNAIDS secretariat or its co-sponsoring organizations. An appropriate level and balance of representation from each geographic region shall be ensured:

*44. As recognized in resolution 55/13, the contribution of civil society actors in the response to the epidemic of HIV/AIDS at all levels is significant. In this regard, the resolution underlines the need for the active involvement of civil society actors in the preparatory process and the special session.*

*45. Resolution 55/13 defines three categories of civil society actors:*

- (a) Those which enjoy consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, in accordance with Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996;*
- (b) Those which are members of the Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS;* *(c) Those which are approved from the list, prepared by the Executive Director of UNAIDS, for consideration by Member States, on a non-objection basis during the preparatory process, for final decision by the General Assembly. This list will essentially include associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, non-governmental organizations and the business sector, including pharmaceutical companies, along with relevant background information on those entities. The required background information will be based on the criteria outlined in Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31. In addition, evidence of recognized work in the area of HIV/AIDS, including at the community level, and previous experience in regional and/or global events will be taken into account. Preference will be given to those groups which are already affiliated with the UNAIDS secretariat or its co-sponsoring organizations. An appropriate level and balance of representation from each geographic region shall be ensured.*

The President of the General Assembly recommended that the civil society list for accreditation should be submitted to Member States not later than 15 February 2001. The decision on accreditation and modalities of participation was to be taken in the end of February 2001, to expedite the preparatory process and to allow more time for a substantive discussion during the first session of the open-ended informal consultations of the plenary in February/March 2001:

*46. The list shall be submitted to Member States not later than 15 February 2001. The decision on category (c) and on the form of the involvement of these civil society actors shall be taken by the end of February 2001, to expedite the preparatory process and to allow more time for a substantive discussion during the first session of the open-ended informal consultations of the plenary in February/March 2001.*

During informal consultations of the plenary, in February 2001, the General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/242](#)) to postpone the deadline for accreditation. The Executive Director of UNAIDS was requested to provide a list of civil society actors for accreditation along with relevant background information. The list was requested to be made available to Member States for consideration on a non-objection basis for decision by the General Assembly no later than 1 April 2001:

*8. Pursuant to paragraph 13 of resolution 55/13, accreditation of civil society actors to the preparatory activities and the special session shall be open to:*

- (a) Non-governmental organizations which enjoy consultative status in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996;*



*(b) Non-governmental organizations which are members of the Programme Coordination Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS);*

*(c) Those which are approved from the list as defined in resolution 55/13 of associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, non-governmental organizations and members of the business sector, including pharmaceutical companies, prepared by the Executive Director of UNAIDS, along with relevant background information, made available to Member States for consideration on a non-objection basis for decision by the General Assembly in a timely manner. A complementary list, prepared by the Executive Director of UNAIDS, along with relevant background information, made available to Member States, shall be submitted to Member States no later than 1 April 2001 for consideration by Member States, on a non-objection basis for decision by the Assembly in a timely manner.*

*Relevant background information includes the following: purpose of the organization; information identifying the programmes and activities of the organization in HIV/AIDS-relevant issues, indicating in which country or countries they are carried out; confirmation of the activities of the organization at the national, regional or international levels; copies of annual or other reports of the organization, with financial statements and a list of financial sources and contributions, including governmental contributions; a list of members of the governing body of the organization and the countries of nationality; a description of membership of the organization, indicating the total number of members, the names of the organizations that are members and their geographical distribution; and a copy of the constitution and/or by-laws of the organization.*

On 26 February 2001, the General Assembly approved the first list of 112 civil society actors (see the list [HIV/AIDS/CRP.2 and Corr.1](#)).

On 19 April 2001, another list of 227 civil society actors was submitted to Member States for approval on non-objection basis (see the list [HIV/AIDS/CRP.2/Add.1](#)). From this list, a Member State objected accreditation of three NGOs by sending a Note Verbale. The President of the General Assembly informed all Member States on the matter by a letter.

### **19.3 Modalities for civil society participation**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/13](#)), in November 2000 on a variety of modalities for civil society participation. The GA invited a limited number of civil society representatives with specific expertise in the matter to participate in the plenary debate of the special session. The GA also decided upon organizing round tables with an open-ended format with participation of accredited civil society actors. During the open-ended consultations of the plenary, there was to be interactive panel discussions with civil society. In addition, the GA decided to use existing electronic networks, including those of regional NGO networks to obtain inputs from civil society actors.

The General Assembly invited by the same resolution the President of the General Assembly to make recommendations on modalities of civil society participation in the preparatory process and

the special session. These recommendations were to be considered by Member States and finally approved by the General Assembly:

*14. Invites, in this context, the President of the General Assembly to make recommendations, for consideration by Member States during the preparatory process, for final decision by the Assembly as soon as possible, but not later than 2 March 2001, as to the form of the involvement of such civil society actors, in particular associations of people living with HIV/AIDS, non-governmental organizations and the business sector, including pharmaceutical companies, in the special session and, to the extent possible, in the preparatory process. (A/RES/55/13)*

As requested, the President of the General Assembly elaborated the modalities and made recommendations on the civil society involvement in his conference room paper published on 8 of December 2000 ([HIV/AIDS/CRP.1](#)). Based on the decisions already taken in 55/13, the President of the General Assembly recommended that a limited number of civil society actors would be invited to participate in the debate of the special session. Civil society actors should be able to attend the plenary informals, where the report of the Secretary-General is discussed. The President also recommended that the round tables of the special session should follow an open-ended format and include representatives of civil society:

*18. A limited number of representatives of civil society actors with specific expertise in the subject matter of the special session shall be invited to participate in the debate in plenary.*

*23. The round tables shall be organized in an open-ended format, open to Member States and observers, and those entities of the United Nations system, including programmes, funds, the specialized agencies and regional commissions, which have specific expertise in the subject matter of the special session and which are represented at the highest level, as well as those civil society actors, including organizations of people living with HIV/AIDS, non-governmental organizations and private sector representatives, which are accredited to participate in the special session and its preparatory process.*

*47. Civil society actors in categories (a) to (c) shall be allowed to attend those meetings of the February/ March 2001 session of the open-ended informal consultations of the plenary, at which the Secretary-General's report is being discussed.*

*48. As suggested in paragraph 18 above, representatives of categories (a) to (c) representing civil society actors with particular relevance to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, people living with HIV/AIDS and the private sector shall be invited to participate in the debate in the plenary of the special session.*

The President of the General Assembly further recommended that there should be interactive panel discussions with civil society during the preparatory process. The inputs from civil society should be collected through electronic networks and outcomes of relevant civil society events. Young people should be encouraged to participate:

*34. During the two sessions of the open-ended consultations of the plenary, interactive panel discussions with civil society actors may be organized.*

*40. To ensure an effective process, existing electronic networks, including those of regional NGO networks, shall be used to obtain inputs from civil society actors.*

*50. In order to allow a maximum possible input by civil society actors and a wide geographic coverage, efforts should be undertaken by the UNAIDS secretariat and the Department of Public Information to establish an interactive electronic discussion forum. Summaries of inputs from those discussions would be made available to the preparatory process as informal inputs.*

*51. Outcomes of relevant events of civil society shall be used as platforms for input to the preparatory process and the special session, as well as to the outcome document. A list of such events is already being updated and will be included in the web site of the special session.*

*52. Special efforts shall be made to engage young people's organizations in the preparatory process. Dissemination of information on HIV/AIDS should be targeted to young people, who are at the greatest risk of contracting HIV.*

*53. Outside the period of the two sessions of the open-ended consultations of the plenary, additional interactive panel discussions with civil society actors may be organized.*

In February 2001, the General Assembly decided ([A/RES/55/242](#)) upon the organizational arrangements for the special session. A limited number of accredited civil society actors could make statements in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to consult Member States and present a list of those civil society actors, which could speak to the consideration of Member States on non/objection basis. The final decision was made by the General Assembly. The President was requested to ensure that the selection was made on an equal and transparent manner and taking into account a variety of perspective, expertise and geographical representation:

*16. Given the availability of time, a limited number of accredited civil society actors may make statements in the debate in plenary. The President of the General Assembly is requested, following the appropriate consultation with Member States, to present a list of selected accredited civil society actors to Member States for consideration on the non-objection basis for the final decision by the Assembly. The President is also requested that such selection is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the equitable geographical representation, relevant expertise and wide variety of perspectives.*

According to the decision concerning organizational arrangements, accredited civil society actors could participate the round tables. The President of the General Assembly was requested to consult Member States and present a list of selected accredited civil society actors for consideration of Member States. The final decision was to be made by the General Assembly. A

limited number of accredited civil society actors were also invited to speak during the discussion on the report of the Secretary-General:

*20. The round tables shall be open to Member States, observers, as well as entities of the United Nations system and accredited civil society actors.*

*21. In order to ensure interactive and substantive discussions of high quality, participation in each round table shall be limited to a maximum of 65 participants, of which at least 48 will be representatives of Member States. In addition, each round table shall include a maximum of 17 participants, representing observers, entities of the United Nations system and accredited civil society actors.*

*30. Accredited civil society actors with specific expertise in areas related to the themes of the round tables will also be invited to the round tables. The President of the General Assembly is requested to conduct appropriate consultations with Member States, and also with accredited civil society actors, before representing a list of selected accredited civil society actors that may participate in each round table to Member States, in the last week of May 2001, for consideration on the non-objection basis for the final decision by General Assembly. When selecting civil society actors, due consideration shall be given to the principles of equitable geographical representation and gender, as well as an adequate mix of national, regional and international civil society actors, and to the need to ensure that a variety of perspectives are represented.*

*35. A limited number of accredited civil society actors may make statements during the discussion devoted to the report of the Secretary-General, given the availability of time, and ensuring that equitable geographical representation and a wide variety of perspective are represented.*

The President of the General Assembly sent a letter to all Member States on 13 June 2001 in order to propose the selected accredited civil society actors, which would participate in the debate of the plenary of the special session. Among the eight spokespersons, who made a statement in the plenary, were representatives of women's NGO, a religious NGO, a research institute, and some international NGOs.

In the same letter, the President of the General Assembly also proposed selected accredited civil society actors with specific expertise to participate in the round tables. The President reminded that the resolution 55/242 had requested these participants to be selected on the basis of geographical representation and gender. Their selection was also requested to ensure a variety of perspectives and an adequate mix of national, regional and international civil society actors. According to the resolution, the decision was to take place on a non-objection basis, for the final approval of the General Assembly. There were eight civil society participants proposed for each round table. The deadline for an objection was 18 June 2001.

On 21 June 2001, the President of the General Assembly informed Member States through a

letter on eleven objections on one proposed NGO. The issue was raised for a discussion during the informal consultations. Some Member States stated their support for the participation of the NGO, which had been objected. The final decision was referred to the plenary of the General Assembly, in order to follow the decision of the resolution 55/242.

The plenary of the General Assembly was held 22 June 2001. After debate, the consideration was postponed to the next plenary meeting on 25 June 2001, the first day of the special session. After debate, Member States voted on participation of the objected NGO. As a result of the vote, all originally proposed civil society actors were approved to speak at the round tables.

#### **19.4 Documentation and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/54/283](#); [A/RES/55/13](#); [A/RES/55/242](#)

No Preparatory Committee, as preparations took place within informal consultations of the General Assembly during the 55th session.

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## **20. SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON CHILDREN**

19-21 September 2001, New York

### **Summary**

#### Accreditation:

At its organizational session, the Preparatory Committee decided to invite NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or with the UNICEF to participate in the Preparatory Committee. The invitation was extended to other NGOs, which had a collaborative relationship and partnership with the UNICEF. The secretariat was to provide the lists of NGOs to the Preparatory Committee two months before the first substantive session. The Committee had one month to approve the list on the non-objection basis.

In compliance with this decision, the Committee approved in April 2000, on a no-objection basis, a list of over 1300 NGOs submitted by UNICEF. One NGO was not approved for accreditation, as there was an objection from one Member State.

At its first substantive session, the Preparatory Committee decided to extend the deadline for the applications of NGOs to participate in the preparatory process until the end of September 2000. The Committee was to approve on the non-objection basis the lists of NGOs prepared by the secretariat by the end of October 2000, where after the accreditation process for NGOs was closed. All together 1683 NGOs were approved for accreditation. all together 3683 NGO's, including the ones in consultative status with the ECOSOC, were approved for accreditation.

At its first substantive session, the Committee also decided on arrangements for accreditation of NGOs in the special session. The NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and NGOs accredited to the UNICEF were invited to participate in the special session. In addition, the NGOs accredited to the Preparatory Committee were also invited to participate in the special session itself.

Modalities:

At its second substantive session, the Committee took a decision on the modalities for the participation of NGOs in the special session. All representatives of accredited NGOs were allowed to speak in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. A limited number of representatives of NGOs were allowed to speak in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to present a list of those selected NGOs for the approval of the Member States. The lists were requested to be prepared on an equal and transparent manner and to take into account the geographical representation and diversity of NGOs.

At the same meeting, the Committee decided upon the organizational arrangements for the special session. The rules of procedure of the General Assembly were to be applied at the special session. The last two speaking slots at each plenary meeting, with the exception of the first and last ones, were reserved for participants other than Member States, the Holy See, Switzerland and Palestine, provided that they are represented at the highest level.

At its third substantive session, the Preparatory Committee considered the draft resolution on organizational arrangements for the round tables for the special session. There were no civil society participants for round tables, but the President of the General Assembly was requested to choose, in consultation with the co-chairpersons of each roundtable, two child delegates. These child delegates were to be chosen on the basis of equitable gender and geographic representation. They were to present an introductory statement on the theme of the round table in a language of their choice. This draft resolution was adopted by the General Assembly later in the same month as A/RES/55/276. (A/S-27/2/Add.1, Part I, chapter VII, section A)

At the third substantive session, the Committee also considered the draft decision on presentation of the children's forum to the plenary of the special session. According to the draft decision, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly that at least two national child delegates of the children's forum will present the outcome of the forum in the plenary of the special session. These child delegates were to be identified by the children's forum, in consultation with the President of the General Assembly and Member States. (A/S-27/2/Add.1, Part I, chapter VII, section B)

Preparatory Committee: Open-ended Preparatory Committee.

Secretariat for NGO arrangements: UNICEF

## **20.1 Introduction**

The General Assembly decided ([A/RES/51/186](#)) in December 1996 to convene a special session to review the achievement of the goals of the World Summit for Children. The GA encouraged the civil society and private sector to support implementation of the goals of the World Summit for children. The GA also stressed the need for effective partnerships between Governments, the United Nations system and other international organizations, donor agencies, and civil society, including NGOs, the private sector and the media.

The General Assembly recognized again ([A/RES/54/93](#)), in December 1998 the importance of partnerships between a broad range of actors and the need for participation of NGOs, as well as children and youth in the preparatory process and the special session:

*5. Recognizes the importance of a participatory process at the national, regional and international levels with a view, inter alia, to establishing partnerships between a broad range of actors, including children and youth, in order to raise momentum for children's rights and needs;*

*14. Recognizes the important role of all relevant actors, including non-governmental organizations, in implementing the Plan of Action, and stresses the need for their active involvement in the preparatory process, including in the preparatory committee, and at the special session, modalities for which will be addressed by the preparatory committee. (A/RES/54/93)*

The GA requested by the same resolution the Secretary-General, with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), to provide substantive inputs to the preparatory process and at the special session. The Secretary-General submitted a report entitled "Proposals on the preparatory process for the special session of the General Assembly for follow-up to the World Summit for Children in 2001" (A/AC.256/2) for the organizational session, in February 2000. The recommendations of the report emphasized the role of civil society:

#### IV. Role of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and other actors

*27. In his report to the fifty-first session of the General Assembly on progress at mid-decade on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/217 on the World Summit for Children (A/51/256), the Secretary-General noted that the extraordinary level of social mobilization, advocacy and concrete action on behalf of children precipitated both by the passage of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the World Summit for Children would not have gathered such momentum or achieved such results were it not for the contribution of non-governmental organizations.*

*28. In resolution 51/186, the General Assembly encouraged civil society and the private sector to continue to generously support the implementation of the goals of the World Summit for Children and in resolution 54/93, the Assembly recognized the important role of all relevant actors, including non-governmental organizations, in implementing the Plan of Action and stressed the need for their active involvement in the preparatory process, including the preparatory committee, and at the special session.*

29. A number of non-governmental organizations, including members of the Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on UNICEF, have already expressed their eagerness to fulfil the role thus envisaged for them. The modalities for their involvement will be addressed by the preparatory committee. (A/AC.256/2)

## 20.2 Accreditation for non-governmental organizations

At its organizational session, in February 2000 the Preparatory Committee decided to invite NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council or with the UNICEF to participate in the Preparatory Committee. The invitation was extended to other NGOs, which had a collaborative relationship and partnership with the UNICEF. The secretariat was to provide the lists of NGOs to the Preparatory Committee two months before the first substantive session. The Committee had one month to approve the list on the non-objection basis. A decision on modalities for participation were deferred to the future sessions:

*Participation of non-governmental organizations (Decision 2):*

*The Preparatory Committee, recalling General Assembly resolution 54/93, paragraph 14 in which the Assembly recognized the important role of all relevant actors, including non-governmental organizations, in the preparatory process, including in the preparatory committee:*

*(a) Decides that the work of the Preparatory Committee should be open to the participation of non-governmental organizations that are accredited in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 or are accredited with UNICEF;*

*(b) Also decides that, in addition, other non-governmental organizations that are not accredited either to the Economic and Social Council or to UNICEF but that have a collaborative relationship and partnership with UNICEF pursuant to its mandate to obtain from non-governmental organizations having a special interest in child and family welfare the advice and technical assistance which it may require for the implementation of its programmes, will also be invited to participate in the meetings of the Preparatory Committee. A list of those non-governmental organizations should be provided to the Preparatory Committee by 31 March 2000. The non-governmental organizations on the list will be approved by the Preparatory Committee on a no-objection basis by 30 April 2000;*

*(c) Encourages Governments to include representatives of civil society in their national and regional preparatory processes;*

*(d) Decides to defer any decision on accreditation and modalities for the participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session of the General Assembly to future sessions of the Preparatory Committee. (A/55/43, Part I)*

In compliance with this decision, the Committee approved in April 2000, on a no-objection basis, a list of over 1300 NGOs submitted by UNICEF. One NGO was not approved for accreditation, as there was an objection from one Member State.



At its first substantive session, in May-June 2000 the Preparatory Committee considered the note from the secretariat on arrangements for accreditation and participation of NGOs (A/AC.256/CRP.2). Against this background, the Committee decided to extend the deadline for the applications of NGOs to participate in the preparatory process until the end of September 2000. The Committee was to approve on the non-objection basis the lists of NGOs prepared by the secretariat:

*Participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process (Decision 4)*  
*The Preparatory Committee, recalling paragraph (b) of its decision 2 of 8 February 2000, by which other non-governmental organizations that were not accredited either to the Economic and Social Council or to UNICEF but that had a collaborative relationship and partnership with UNICEF pursuant to its mandate to obtain from non-governmental organizations having a special interest in child and family welfare the advice and technical assistance which it may require for the implementation of its programmes would also be invited to participate in the meetings of the Preparatory Committee. A list of those non-governmental organizations was to be provided to the Preparatory Committee by 31 March 2000. The non-governmental organizations on the list were to be approved by the Preparatory Committee on a no-objection basis by 30 April 2000, and acknowledging that several suggestions for the participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process of the special session were received after the deadline established by the above-mentioned decision, namely, 31 March 2000, decides to extend the deadline for the approval on a no-objection basis of participation of non-governmental organizations in the preparatory process of the special session as follows:*

- (a) A list of additional non-governmental organizations proposed for participation should be provided to the Preparatory Committee by 30 September 2000;*
- (b) The non-governmental organizations on that list will be approved by the Preparatory Committee on a no-objection basis by 31 October 2000.*

All together 3683 NGOs, including the ones in consultative status with the ECOSOC, were approved for accreditation.

### **20.3 Modalities for participation of non-governmental organizations**

At its first substantive session, in May-June 2000 the Preparatory Committee decided to defer to its next session the modalities for participation of NGOs in the special session:

*Arrangements regarding participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session of the General Assembly on children (Decision 8):*  
*The Preparatory Committee decides to defer to its second substantive session its decision on arrangements regarding the participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session of the General Assembly on children.*

At its second substantive session, in January 2001 the Committee took a decision on the modalities for the participation of NGOs in the special session. All representatives of accredited NGOs were allowed to speak in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole. A limited number of

representatives of NGOs were allowed to speak in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly was requested to present a list of those selected NGOs for the approval of the Member States. The lists were requested to be prepared on an equal and transparent manner and to take into account the geographical representation and diversity of NGOs:

*Arrangements for the participation of non-governmental organizations in the special session of the General Assembly on children:*

*The General Assembly decides that:*

- (a) Representatives of non-governmental organizations accredited to the special session may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the special session;*
- (b) Given availability of time, a limited number of representatives of non-governmental organizations accredited to the special session may also make statements in the debate in the plenary of the special session;*
- (c) The President of the General Assembly is requested to present the list of selected non-governmental organizations to the Member States in a timely manner for approval. The President of the General Assembly is also requested to ensure that such selection is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the geographical representation and diversity of non-governmental organizations;*
- (d) These arrangements shall in no way create a precedent for the other special session of the General Assembly. (A/S-27/2, chapter VI, section A)*

At the same meeting, the Committee decided upon the organizational arrangements for the special session. The rules of procedure of the General Assembly were to be applied at the special session. The last two speaking slots at each plenary meeting, with the exception of the first and last ones, were reserved for participants other than Member States, the Holy See, Switzerland and Palestine, provided that they are represented at the highest level:

*20. Representatives of non-governmental organizations accredited to the special session\* may make statements in the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the special session. Given availability of time, a limited number of representatives of non-governmental organizations accredited to the special session may also make statements in the debate in the plenary of the special session. The President of the General Assembly is requested to present the list of selected non-governmental organizations to the Member States in a timely manner for approval. The President of the General Assembly is also requested to ensure that such selection is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the geographical representation and diversity of non-governmental organizations.*

*\* Non-governmental organizations accredited to the special session in accordance with the relevant decisions of the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children either enjoy consultative status in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 or are accredited to UNICEF or have a collaborative relationship and partnership with UNICEF*

*21. The last two speaking slots at each plenary meeting, with the exception of the first and last plenary meetings, may be reserved for participants other than Member States, the Holy See, Switzerland and Palestine provided that they are represented at the highest level.*

*22. The arrangements outlined in paragraphs 19 to 21 above shall in no way create a precedent for other special sessions of the General Assembly. (A/S-27/2, chapter VI, section B, draft decision II)*

At its first substantive session, in May-June 2000 the Preparatory Committee decided on arrangements for accreditation of NGOs in the special session. The NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and NGOs accredited to the UNICEF were invited to participate in the special session. In addition, those NGOs which had been accredited to the Preparatory Committee were also invited to participate in the special session itself:

*Arrangements for accreditation of non-governmental organizations in the special session (Decision 7):*

*The Preparatory Committee, recalling paragraph 14 of General Assembly resolution 54/93 of 7 December 1999, decides that the arrangements for accreditation of non-governmental organizations in the special session will be as follows:*

*(a) The following non-governmental organizations will be invited to participate in the special session:*

*(i) The non-governmental organizations which enjoy consultative status in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31 of 25 July 1996 or are accredited to UNICEF;*

*(ii) Other non-governmental organizations accredited to the preparatory process of the special session in accordance with relevant decisions of the Preparatory Committee;*

*(b) These arrangements shall in no way create a precedent for other special sessions.*

The General Assembly reaffirmed ([A/RES/55/26](#)), in December 2000 the important role of all relevant actors, including NGOs, as well as children and young people:

*9. Reaffirms the important role of all relevant actors, including non-governmental organizations, in implementing the Plan of Action, and stresses the need for their active involvement in the preparatory process, including the Preparatory Committee, and at the special session, the modalities for which are being addressed by the Preparatory Committee;*

*10. Reiterates the importance of a participatory process at the national, regional and international levels with a view, inter alia, to establishing partnerships among a broad range of actors, including children and young people, in order to raise momentum for children's rights and needs;*

*11. Highlights the important role of children and young people in this process and, in this regard, encourages States to facilitate and promote their active contribution to the preparatory process, including the Preparatory Committee, and the special session. (A/RES/55/26)*

At its second substantive session, in January 2001 the Preparatory Committee considered the note by the Chairperson of the Committee on participation of children and adolescents in the special session (A/AC.256/8) and additional organizational arrangements for the special session (A/AC.256/9/Add.1). The Committee decided to take action on these matters at later stage.

At its third substantive session, in June 2001, the Preparatory Committee considered the draft resolution on organizational arrangements for the round tables for the special session. There were no civil society participants for round tables, but the President of the General Assembly was requested to choose, in consultation with the co-chairpersons of each roundtable, two child delegates. These child delegates were to be chosen on the basis of equitable gender and geographic representation. They were to present an introductory statement on the theme of the round table in a language of their choice. This draft resolution was adopted by the General Assembly later in the same month as A/RES/55/276. (A/S-27/2/Add.1, Part I, chapter VII, section A)

At the same session, the Committee also considered the draft decision on presentation of the children's forum to the plenary of the special session. According to the draft decision, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly that at least two national child delegates of the children's forum will present the outcome of the forum in the plenary of the special session. These child delegates were to be identified by the children's forum, in consultation with the President of the General Assembly and Member States. (A/S-27/2/Add.1, Part I, chapter VII, section B)

#### **20.4 Documents and Preparatory Committee meetings**

[A/RES/51/186](#); [A/RES/53/193](#); [A/RES/54/93](#); [A/RES/55/26](#) , [A/RES/55/276](#)

Org. session 7-8 Feb. 2000, New York: A/55/43 (Part I)

1st substantive session 30 May-2 June 2000, New York: A/55/43 (Part II)

2nd substantive session 29 Jan.-2 Feb. 2001, New York: A/S-27/2

Rules of Procedure of the General Assembly Organizational arrangements A/S-27/2, chapter VI, section A

2 August 2001

**Letter from Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
to All Permanent Missions and Permanent Observer Missions to the  
United Nations, New York**

Excellency,

I am writing to you in connection with civil society outreach, a subject which has been discussed in the United Nations for a number of years.

In my acceptance speech last September, I stressed that the United Nations outreach towards civil society is closely related to the overall relevance of the Organisation. The development of this relationship is both a challenge and an opportunity. The work of civil society actors is indispensable and complements the role of the United Nations in many fields.

It is in this spirit I am pleased to enclose a copy of a reference document on the participation of civil society during the 1990s at the United Nations conferences and Special Sessions of the General Assembly prepared by my Office.

I am also enclosing a copy of a report of the UN Civil Society Outreach Symposium held under my patronage from 30 May to 2 June 2001 sponsored by the Stanley Foundation and the World Federation of United Nations Associations.

Both documents are also available on my web site (<http://www.un.org/ga/president>).

At the Millennium Summit, Member States resolved to give greater opportunities to civil society to contribute to the realization of the Organisation's goals and programmes. In this context, I hope that you will find these two documents useful and of interest when you continue your discussions on this issue.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Harri Holkeri

2 August 2001

**Office of the President of the Millennium Assembly  
55th session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Informal meeting between the President of the General Assembly and  
civil society organizations**

**Purpose of the Meeting**

1. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss
  - a) possible ways of enhancing the interaction between the General Assembly (particularly the President of the General Assembly) and civil society organizations and
  - b) to exchange views on the report of the Secretary-General on Prevention of Armed Conflict (A/55/985-S/2001/574/Corr.1).

**Agenda item 1: Enhancing interaction between the GA and civil society organizations**

2. The President of the General Assembly reminded participants of the UN Civil Society Outreach Symposium held from 30 May-1 June 2001 which was convened to better understand the scope of strengthening the partnership between the UN and civil society as called for in the Millennium Declaration. He stressed that increased interaction between the UN and civil society was a sine qua non for fulfilling the goals set out in the Declaration.

3. With regard to increased interaction between the General Assembly and civil society, participants offered the following main observations and suggestions:

- In order to sustain the momentum created by the current President of the General Assembly on this issue, it is important to ensure that the institutional memory of his office is carried over to future Presidents of the General Assembly. The Secretariat has an important role to play in this regard.
- With a view to ensuring a smooth transition between Presidents and to enhancing consistency of the work of the General Assembly, the idea of "troika-meetings" between the previous, current and following Presidents of the General Assembly should be explored further.
- There is a need to discuss innovative options for reforming the working relationship between civil society organizations and the General Assembly both in terms of their official status as well as meeting formulas (semi-formal or formal). One approach would be to learn from the experience of other UN organs such as the Security Council. One question in this regard is whether a mechanism similar to the Arria formula could be used by the General Assembly.

- The President of the General Assembly could convene regular meetings with civil society organizations on thematic issues. One of the key questions in this regard is what criteria should guide the representation of such organizations.
- There is no established UN mechanism for receiving information and analysis produced by civil society organizations. It should be explored whether such a mechanism should be established.

## **Agenda item 2: Report of the Secretary-General on Prevention of Armed Conflict**

4. The President of the General Assembly informed the meeting that the General Assembly had adopted a procedural resolution (A/55/L.91) on the report of the Secretary-General on Prevention of Armed Conflict without a vote on Wednesday, 1 August. The resolution calls on Governments, regional and subregional organizations, relevant organs, organizations and bodies of the UN system to consider the report and inform the General Assembly, preferably during the fifty-sixth session, of their views in this regard. It also invites relevant civil society actors to consider the report and the recommendations addressed to them therein. The President emphasised that this resolution gave civil society organizations a good opportunity to consider their role in conflict prevention as well as their interaction with the United Nations in this field.

5. It was suggested that the follow-up to the report should focus on a) applying the Secretary-General's recommendations to specific conflict situations; b) increasing the dialogue between South and North on conflict prevention; and c) enhancing the interaction within the UN system on the intersecting structural issues relating to conflict prevention (e.g. peacebuilding, development, human rights, disarmament).

6. It was also suggested that the next President of the General Assembly should consider convening an open forum with relevant civil society organizations on conflict prevention. In preparation for such a meeting, NGOs and other civil society actors could send reports to the President of the General Assembly on their activities in this field.

7. Another participant pointed out that the International Criminal Court once established would serve as a powerful deterrent for potential violators of human rights and the prohibition of aggression and thus as an important conflict prevention mechanism. He suggested that if the Security Council was either unwilling or unable to act in the face of a crime of aggression, the General Assembly should consider requesting an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice to determine whether a crime of aggression has occurred. In the same context, the President of the General Assembly should also consider organizing hearings with relevant NGOs to listen to their views on such situations.

United Nations  Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

**Report  
of the  
UN Civil Society Outreach Symposium**

Sponsored by  
The Stanley Foundation

Cosponsored by the  
World Federation of United Nations Associations

Under the Patronage of the  
President of the General Assembly,  
H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri

May 30-June 1, 2001  
Arden Conference Center  
Harriman, New York

**Mission Statement:**

If the UN's global agenda is to be properly addressed,  
a partnership with civil society at large is not an option: it is a necessity.  
—H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, UN Secretary-General

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### **Introduction**

The Millennium Summit, the largest gathering ever of heads of state and government at UN Headquarters, adopted a declaration on September 8, 2000, that set out the leaders' vision for the role of the United Nations in the 21st century and their commitments to promote peace, development, and social justice.

The Declaration emphasized that the United Nations needs to work in partnership with civil society to fulfill its purpose and programs. To better understand what the scope of this partnership could be, H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri, president of the Millennium General Assembly, sought an opportunity to bring together leading civil society actors, permanent representatives to the United Nations, and senior officials of the UN system. In response to a request from President Holkeri, the Stanley Foundation convened the Symposium at Arden House in Harriman, New York in co-sponsorship with the World Federation of United Nations Associations, which received valuable support from The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade of

Canada. The list of participants is attached (Annex A).

Participants brought a variety of perspectives, values, and expectations to the symposium. This diversity was actively nourished by limiting the agenda to two broad questions and by a process of facilitation that was open to all points of view. President Holkeri made some opening remarks (which are available elsewhere on this site). Dr. Michael Edwards, director of governance and civil society at the Ford Foundation, gave the keynote address at the opening dinner (Annex B). Representatives of UNDP and ILO presented case studies on partnerships with civil society. In the context of the symposium, the Office of the President of the Millennium Assembly prepared a reference document on the participation of civil society in United Nations' conferences and special sessions of the General Assembly during the 1990s.

The symposium was not expected to formulate decisions or policy positions. However, several proposals were developed concerning NGO consultative arrangements with the UN General Assembly, accreditation procedures to UN meetings, briefing programs on civil society for UN officials and delegates, strategies for NGO capacity-building and collaborative partnerships, and the possibility of finding a way to enable the president of the General Assembly to hear the voice and advice of NGOs.

## **1. Further development of the existing UN mechanisms for relating to civil society**

The Millennium Summit Declaration of September 2000 set the global agenda for the United Nations at the highest level. It brought together security, political, economic, social, and cultural issues into one document and provided an enhanced mandate for civil society participation in the work of the United Nations.

Participants agreed that H.E. Mr. Kofi Annan, secretary-general of the United Nations, has been very welcoming and supportive of civil society participation in the United Nations' work. They valued, too, the leadership role of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri, president of the Millennium General Assembly, in strengthening the United Nations' outreach to civil society.

### **1.1 Why develop UN mechanisms for relating to civil society?**

Civil society can be both the challenger and protector of the universality of the value-based and rule-based systems of the United Nations. The future stability of the United Nations depends on collaboration with civil society.

Participants considered how the UN global conferences of the 1990s have shaped the United Nations' role as a global policymaker and served as a catalyst for the rapid growth of new NGO networks and coalitions to advance policy agendas, notably on eradication of poverty, environment and sustainable development, peace and disarmament, human rights, and gender issues.

These conferences raised expectations for changes in global governance, greater economic and

social progress, and increased levels of civil society participation. However, by the end of the 1990s, there were many concerns that these expectations were not being met. The resulting frustrations were often seen to be linked to the role of international financial institutions. They have been expressed in visible protests against the World Trade Organization, World Bank, IMF, and World Economic Forum. During this period, many NGOs working on finance, trade, and economic issues have become alienated from the UN. However, it was recognized by participants that the recent preparatory process for the International Conference on Financing for Development might be creating a new way forward.

Over the decade of the 1990s, the number of NGOs enjoying consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) has doubled. It is now over 2000. This rapid increase has imposed strains on UN facilities and given rise to heightened concerns about NGOs' credentials. The ease of NGO access to the United Nations has been eroding.

At the same time, there have been changes in the role of NGO caucuses. They were initially developed by like-minded NGOs to define policy positions and strategies to influence decision makers. Now, NGO caucus meetings have become a kind of open forum for all NGOs, involving large numbers of people and issues. These meetings do not always provide an orientation for new NGOs. Sometimes they are held at the same time as intergovernmental deliberations, as a parallel forum where alternative positions are developed. It was agreed that improved facilitation techniques could help caucus meetings become more productive.

Participants agreed that a fundamental reason for improving the United Nations' outreach to civil society is to strengthen the links between the United Nations and NGOs in developing countries and countries in transition. The need for NGO capacity-building and operational effectiveness should not be divorced from the issues of access to decision making at the global policy level. The relevance of UN global policymaking is enhanced by the openness of the United Nations' consultative process to "bottom-up" insights and ideas from NGOs working at the local level. It was acknowledged that a majority of NGO representatives at the United Nations in New York and Geneva come from countries of the North and that issues of access to the United Nations are not a high priority for many NGOs in the South working on development. The suggestion that Northern NGOs had created many Southern NGOs was questioned and this prompted discussion of the relationships among NGOs, and between NGOs and their governments in various parts of the world. Many NGOs in the South are disadvantaged by lack of funds and distribution of information, as well as other necessary support, and there is a value in the funding provided by Northern governments to facilitate their participation in the United Nations' decision-making processes.

## **1.2 Many existing consultative mechanisms could be extended or copied**

Convinced that it was worth extending and creating new UN mechanisms for relating to civil society, participants shared information about the following existing mechanisms:

- The Arria formula—by which invitations are extended to NGOs to testify to Security Council

members outside of their official meetings; e.g., on issues relating to women and children in conflict situations.

- The consultative process for the International Conference on Financing for Development, which offers a possible new model for civil society involvement.
- The standard practice in UN treaty bodies of considering alternate reports from NGOs, alongside the country reports submitted by governments.
- The Web broadcasting of meetings of the UN Commission on Human Rights.
- UNDP's Civil Society Advisory Committee.
- The UN Optical Disk System, which will be newly available for NGOs in August.
- The ILO tripartite system of decision making—involving government, business, and labor representatives on an equal level.
- The potential relevance of the Global Compact for the way the United Nations and its agencies relate to and develop partnerships with business.<sup>6</sup>

Participants put forward the following proposals for improving existing or creating new mechanisms:

*Collaboration and partnerships*

One of the most effective ways of developing closer collaboration between civil society and the UN system is through partnerships, which can take many shapes and forms and serve many different purposes.

Many NGO participants are becoming very skilled at operating in loose coalitions and networks. It was agreed that NGOs have a role to play in promoting effective cooperation between all the various parts of the UN system. NGOs make a particularly valuable impact as practitioners of development and should be promoted as partners in the United Nations' work at the national level. The capacity of civil society actors to contribute to sustainable development could be extended to many other aspects of people-centered development.

With respect to UN peacekeeping and humanitarian intervention, it is never possible to see the “full picture” in advance. For this reason, it is valuable for the policy process to draw on all available sources of information, including civil society. Because each specific situation is unique, care is needed in defining the terms of each UN peacekeeping mandate and how it is translated into partnerships between the UN and civil society actors on the ground.

*Role of the Office of the President of the General Assembly*

Participants considered how the Office of the President of the General Assembly could be a key actor in reinforcing relations with civil society.

It was suggested that the president meet periodically with representatives of NGOs in order to create a regular contact point between the Office of the President and NGOs. These informal meetings could develop into an “advisory channel” to hear the voices and advice of NGOs representing different sectors and different concerns.

*Streamline accreditation procedures for civil society participation*

Participants shared their sense of frustration at the protracted negotiations over the role of NGOs in each and every UN conference. There was strong support to further harmonize NGO accreditation practices and procedures. Because each conference has its own particular dynamics, it is inappropriate to assume that “one size fits all.” Nevertheless, it should be possible to define the minimum standards and to streamline the basic procedures. There are compelling and practical reasons to do so:

- A compilation of the accreditation procedures for UN conferences and special sessions of the General Assembly during the 1990s has been developed and posted on the Web site of the president of the General Assembly
- The UN Secretariat needs to exchange information on guidelines for accreditation during drafting processes and negotiations.
- If all the basic information concerning NGO registration could be included in the first announcement of a decision to hold a major UN conference or special session, NGOs would have a better chance and the necessary time to prepare for their participation. This could facilitate participation of NGOs from developing countries, for instance, by giving them more time to seek financing and apply for visas.

*Security as an issue of access*

Some participants stressed the importance of having a formal assurance from the secretary-general that NGOs will be consulted before any new security rules are applied to them.

*Establish NGO consultative status to the UN General Assembly*

Participants were briefed on strategies being used to win support for the draft resolution to establish NGO consultative arrangements with the General Assembly, its meetings, conferences, and special sessions. The strategies include a campaign to educate all NGOs about the draft and to create a group of like-minded governments from diverse countries to endorse and promote it through informal meetings with other governments.

*Make better use of NGO consultative status with ECOSOC*

The NGO Section of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) has taken various initiatives to equip NGOs with consultative status at ECOSOC to become more knowledgeable about the United Nations and effective in their advocacy activities. As well, there is an outreach program to facilitate NGO exchanges within and between regions. There will be a meeting in Tunisia from January 9-11, 2002, to develop African NGO subregional networks.

It was suggested that the United Nations could be more proactive in identifying and encouraging youth groups to qualify for affiliate NGO consultative status. The involvement of young people in the United Nations’ decision-making process should be more actively supported.

*Communication capacity-building of NGOs in the South*

Several participants indicated that they are giving priority to building the capacity of NGOs in developing countries and economies in transition. They welcomed the increasing priority being

given by the United Nations to optimizing the use of information and communication technologies and efforts being made to ensure that civil society benefited from these technologies, including from the Optical Disk System, video-conferencing, and the UN system's Web sites. It was suggested that it is now possible to conceive the UN house as a global network rather than as a series of buildings.

The UN secretary-general was in Silicon Valley recently and met many industry leaders from the high-tech sector who were keen to help the United Nations. Participants welcomed this information and the role of civil society in bridging the digital divide. The role of UN Information Centers and the Non-Governmental Liaison Service (NGLS) in distributing material to NGOs should be strengthened, as the Internet and Web sites are not yet within the range of all Southern NGOs.<sup>8</sup>

*Promote wider awareness of the role of civil society at the United Nations*

It was widely agreed that NGOs should take the initiative to:

- Teach people working in the UN system about the role of civil society—brief new staff, diplomats, and security personnel.
- Organize pilot projects between governments, UN agencies, and NGOs to build a base of experience with partnerships.
- Improve the capacity of NGOs to interact and consult with governments.
- Develop teaching material related to the United Nations for schools and ordinary citizens.

**2. Innovative ways to enable civil society to contribute more effectively and to build a broader constituency to support the United Nations**

We are living through a period of profound global change. New forms of wealth-creation (including for the United Nations), new forces agitating for political change, and new information and communication technologies are influencing the ways we look at the world. Should the relationship between the United Nations and civil society therefore be changing? Yes.

Participants agreed with the comment:

To develop the relationship between civil society and the UN, we have to think more about how NGOs can support the UN's role in global policy making.

**2.1 Successful NGO efforts that helped to shape the United Nations' global agenda**

Participants discussed how the recent campaigns on landmines, the ICC, and child soldiers had succeeded in making an impact. Each had set clear goals and a simple agenda on which most could agree. People worked jointly or separately with minimal bureaucracy. There was no attempt to exert control over their access to decision makers, and alliances were formed with many governments. In all these cases, there was a strong correlation between effective NGO advocacy and widening the United Nations' constituency.

Following effective campaigns, NGOs have developed partnerships with the United Nations and in the process enabled their own networking activities to strengthen and diversify over time. A good example of this was the 1999 Hague Appeal for Peace Conference. The Hague Appeal was the result of people collaborating together from all over the world. Its latest initiative, a global peace education program, is being carried out jointly with the UN Department of Disarmament Affairs.

The Department of Public Information (DPI), the NGO Section of DESA, the NGLS, as well as the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CONGO), and other relevant NGO coordinating mechanisms are providing orientation and training programs for new NGOs to prepare them for their participation in UN activities. These have been very worthwhile.

## **2.2 NGOs and the question of accountability**

It was suggested that of the four major global actors—governments, intergovernmental agencies, businesses, and NGOs—only NGOs are not accountable for their activities. Governments sometimes lose power when they fail to meet the expectations of voters. Some businesses are now being tied into the UN Global Compact. However, the Global Compact is not regarded as an accountability instrument and it includes NGOs (e.g., Amnesty International, ICFTU, and WWF). NGOs with consultative status are approved by member states and have to report regularly so, in this sense, they are accountable to the United Nations.

It was agreed that the questions of NGO codes of conduct, self-regulation, and peer review are complex and merited separate consideration.

Concern was expressed that some NGOs at the United Nations may be vulnerable to outside manipulation. An example was given of a wealthy “spiritual” movement that had been pursuing a political agenda through NGOs, sometimes with government sponsorship, which was at odds with the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

## **2.3 Searching for innovative ways to interact with the United Nations**

The facilitator asked whether there is a need to create opportunities for more spontaneous interaction between NGOs and the United Nations. New behaviors create new patterns of relationships. The United Nations is continually being drawn into new kinds of activities and situations, and there is great potential to create synergies between disparate groups and interests. The following practical examples of new ways for civil society to relate to the UN system were offered:

- *Fund-raising*

Given that the UN Foundation has been set up to support partnerships between the United Nations and civil society, NGOs could work to promote support for further funding of partnerships between the United Nations and civil society. Participants encouraged that donor

funds be given with as few strings as possible.

· *Women in Africa*

In Africa, a coalition of high-level women from NGOs and governments has formed a group called African Women in Peace and Development, which now has links with the Organization of African Unity and the Economic Commission for Africa. They are working on strategies to integrate gender issues into the African Human Rights Charter and the World Conference Against Racism.

· *Bridges between the United Nations and business*

Companies that practice corporate social responsibility could become bridges between NGOs, the private sector, and the United Nations.

· *A forum for parliamentarians*

Participants had an inconclusive discussion about whether setting up a UN forum for members of Parliaments would be an advance for civil society.

· *Include NGOs in government delegations*

About 20 governments routinely include NGOs in their delegations to the General Assembly, and more do so for UN conferences and special sessions; some include NGOs as paid consultants. Noting the potential risks of NGOs being co-opted and controlled, it was nevertheless suggested that the secretary-general's letters of invitation to governments, to the General Assembly meetings, and to special sessions could highlight this possibility.

· *Building renovations*

Civil society should be consulted on the proposed renovation of the Visitor Center for the UN Headquarters and on the building plans for the development of the site near the United Nations, between 42 nd and 36 th Streets.

· *Information-sharing on UN operational activities*

There are many good examples of ways in which UNDP and other UN programs and agencies are helping to build the capacity of NGOs in developing countries. These could be more widely shared, possibly through a Web site.

## **2.4 Implementation of the Millennium Summit Declaration**

Participants were advised that the UN Secretariat is developing a "Road Map" to follow up the Millennium Summit Declaration. A draft will be ready for the 56 th session of the General Assembly. It is expected that the secretary-general will report each year on a particular thematic set of issues in the Declaration. This will give a focus to the discussions that year, to which civil society could make a contribution. Some participants felt that NGOs have no sense of ownership of the Declaration because they were not included in the drafting process. In considering how this could be changed, the following proposals were suggested:



· *Consult NGOs*

Encourage the UN Secretariat staff in preparing the “Road Map” for the implementation of the Millennium Summit Declaration to brief and consult NGOs.

· *Engage the support of NGOs locally*

WFUNA has written to the heads of state and government at the Summit offering to cooperate in implementing the Declaration and proposed to convene a meeting in September 2001 for United Nations Associations to share ideas about their implementation strategies.

· *Role of ECOSOC*

The high-level segment of the July 2002 meeting of ECOSOC in New York would provide an opportunity for NGOs to report on the steps that they had taken to help implement the Millennium Summit Declaration.

· *DPI/NGO Annual Conference*

Future annual DPI/NGO conferences could serve as an occasion for civil society to formulate ideas and proposals relating to the secretary-general’s annual theme, which could then be fed into the General Assembly deliberations.

· *Upcoming events*

The relevance of the Declaration could be highlighted in conjunction with major events and conferences, such as the World Summit on Sustainable Development, which mobilize large numbers of NGO participants.

**3. 2000 Millennium Forum and strengthening cooperation and coordination among the civil society at large**

Participants entered into a lively debate about whether or not the Millennium Forum for NGOs, held at the United Nations in May 2000, had been a success or a failure as an exercise in civil society cooperation.

Those who considered it a success highlighted the participation of a large number of national NGOs from developing countries, the adoption of the Millennium Forum Declaration, and the many good links that were made from the local to the global. The outcomes were more promising than expected. They saw much convergence between the Millennium Forum and Millennium Summit Declarations.

Those who saw the forum as a failure noted the absence of major NGO networks and groups at the forum. Some participants were pessimistic about the capacity of NGOs to put together anything really representative, and they argued that each NGO values its independence and the right to decide when to use its influence to push on a given issue. Some considered that the United Nations welcomed the idea to hold the forum, but did not provide the necessary funds. They saw it either as an under-resourced event or a waste of resources because it lacked a clear purpose.

Views were also divided on the question of whether there is a need to create some kind of new, more formal collaborative mechanism for global civil society to interact with the United Nations. Those in support noted that if there were to be a separate forum for parliamentarians, one would be needed for NGOs. Any NGO forum would need to be formed from the “grassroots level,” so an important question would be how this could be facilitated.

Those who did not give high priority to creating a separate NGO forum emphasized the need for better understanding of the ways NGOs are already acting jointly and achieving results. Some recently established NGO networks could have more effective links with the UN system, such as the NGOs that conducted the World Social Forum in Brazil in 2001. There is a need to find new ways of connecting the people protesting globalization with the UN system and its decision-making processes.

In conclusion, the following observations were made with respect to strengthening the cooperation and coordination of civil society:

- NGOs should have a voice, not a vote.
- The voices of Northern NGOs dominate in UN circles; more should be done to give voice to Southern NGOs.<sup>12</sup>
- Given that action happens at the local, national, regional, and international levels, it is essential that civil society, particularly NGO involvement with the United Nations, be multilevel and well integrated.

Reported prepared by Ms. Pera Wells  
 Assistant Secretary-General  
 World Federation of United Nations Associations

This report contains the rapporteur’s interpretation of the symposium proceedings and is not a descriptive chronological account. Participants neither reviewed nor approved the report. Therefore, it should not be assumed that every participant subscribes to particular recommendations, observations, and conclusions.

**Annex A**  
**List of Participants and Guests**

Harri Holkeri, President, General Assembly, United Nations  
 Sirpa Pietikäinen, Chairperson, Executive Committee, World Federation of United Nations Associations  
 Susan L. Podziba, Principal and Mediator, Susan Podziba & Associates; Conference Facilitator  
 Richard H. Stanley, President, The Stanley Foundation

**Participant List**

Barbara Adams, Deputy to the Coordinator, United Nations Non-governmental Liaison Service  
 Mia Adjali, UN NGO Representative, General Board of Global Ministries, United Methodist Church; Director, United Methodist Church for the United Nations  
 Donald Blinken, Secretary-General, World Federation of United Nations Associations  
 Renate Bloem, President, Conference of Nongovernmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations, Switzerland  
 John W. Foster, Principal Researcher, Civil Society, North-South Institute, Canada  
 Paul Heinbecker, Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations  
 Mats Lennart Karlsson, Vice President, External Affairs and United Nations Affairs, The World Bank  
 Sinikka Koski, Research Assistant, Office of the President of the General Assembly, United Nations  
 Raili Lahnalampi, Minister Counsellor, Member of the Cabinet of the President of the General Assembly, United Nations  
 Hanifa D. Mezoui, Chief of NGO Section, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, United Nations  
 Betty Kaari Murungi, Advocate and Member, Federation of Women Lawyers, Kenya  
 Kumi Shunmugam Naidoo, Secretary General and Chief Executive Officer, CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation  
 William R. Pace, Executive Director, World Federalist Movement and Institute for Global Policy  
 James A. Paul, Executive Director, Global Policy Forum  
 Marjatta Rasi, Permanent Representative of Finland to the United Nations  
 Kamallesh Sharma, Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations  
 David Shorr, Program Officer, The Stanley Foundation  
 Gillian Martin Sorensen, Assistant Secretary-General for External Relations, United Nations  
 Abdoul Dema Tall, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of the Republic of Senegal to the United Nations  
 Yvonne Terlingen, Representative to the United Nations, Legal and Intergovernmental Organizations Office, Amnesty International  
 Cora Weiss, President, Hague Appeal for Peace  
 Pera Wells, Assistant Secretary-General and Director, World Federation of United Nations Associations  
 Joanna Weschler, United Nations Representative, Human Rights Watch  
 Aye Aye Win, Coordinator, Dignity International, North-South Centre of the Council of Europe, Portugal  
 June Zeitlin, Executive Director, Women's Environment and Development Organization Guest Presenters  
 Michael Edwards, Director, Global Governance and Civil Society Program, The Ford Foundation  
 Gareth Howell, Director, International Labor Organization, New York Office  
 Sirkka Korpela, Director, Business Partnerships, United Nations Development Programme  
 Ravi Rajan, Senior Adviser and Director, Strategic Initiatives, United Nations Development Programme  
 The Stanley Foundation Staff  
 Susan R. Moore, Conference Management Associate

## **Annex B**

### **Address by Dr. Michael Edwards, Director of Governance and Civil Society, The Ford Foundation**

Thank you, Sirpa. I'm delighted to have been invited to address this important gathering tonight.

At the start of a new century, changes of huge importance are taking place in the shape and character of governance—the exercise of democratic authority over matters of public concern. Two processes are occurring simultaneously, driven by globalization, market integration, information technology, and rising questions about the legitimacy and effectiveness of conventional politics in addressing problems of collective action across national borders. The first is a shift in the locus of authority, down the political system to subnational units and up to new global institutions. The second is a shift in the focus of authority, away from state monopolies to nonstate actors, both for-profit and not-for-profit. These changes are likely to have both positive and negative consequences: positive in providing greater opportunities for citizen participation and efficiency gains in the provision of public goods, negative in threatening the ability of the state to protect universal rights and entitlements and hold global institutions accountable for their actions. But at the global level, it is undeniable that these changes are opening more spaces for civil society participation. This is “our” space—the space in which ordinary citizens can exert more influence over the decisions that affect their lives.

However, will civil society organizations fill this space, and if so, which civil society will it be?

What is civil society? You don't have to agree with any definition I might give you, but you do have to be clear with each other about which definition you are using in order to have a sensible conversation. Definitions of civil society have both an analytic and a normative dimension. Analytic or structural definitions stress the importance of forms: social organizations and networks (the third sector), or more broadly [stated], the arena in which citizens come together to advance the interests they hold in common, containing all organizations and associations between the family and the state except firms. Firms are excluded (unlike other, informal areas of economic activity) because they are organized for a fundamentally different purpose—profit. Cognitive definitions stress the importance of norms: social values and attributes such as trust, tolerance, and cooperation that are assumed to bring about a society defined as “civil,” a way of being and living in the world that is different from the rationality of either state or market. In the former case, civil society is a noun, while in the latter, it is used as an adjective. For some there is a natural connection between these two definitions (since civil society organizations promote civic values), while for others there is no connection at all, since there are “uncivil” associations and “civic values” in the public and private sectors too.

The key question is as follows: how do forms and norms relate to each other at the global level? How does a strong civil society lead to a society that is strong and civil in all that it does? That question provides a useful framework for considering questions of roles and functions, structure and characteristics, values, and relationships in global civil society.

Although it lacks a coherent alternative vision, the current wave of global citizen action is, I think, comparable with earlier waves in the 1960s and earlier periods in history. Over 30,000 international NGOs are already active on the world stage, joined by approximately 20,000 transnational civil society networks of various kinds—90 percent of which have been formed during the last 30 years. At the heart of these efforts lie two simple, common, but very powerful, messages:

- That life is about more than economics.
- And that democracy governs markets, not the other way around.

Below this level of generality there is much less consensus on what needs to be done, at any level of detail. This is entirely natural: all social movements begin to fragment when they lack a common enemy, or when they have achieved their initial goals—as global civil society certainly has in raising critical questions about globalization and global governance. Tensions and differences are beginning to emerge within NGO networks such as Jubilee 2000, the environmental movement, and the activities of different transnational religious constituencies. Let me provide three brief examples....

What do these vignettes tell us? They reveal a now-familiar story about representation (NGOs who claim to speak on behalf of others, but lack any accountability mechanisms to their constituents), structure (too many voices from the North, not enough from the South), expertise (are NGO positions tested and substantiated with any real rigor?), and the weakness of linkages between citizen action at the local, national, and global levels (the tendency to leapfrog over national debates and go direct to Washington or Geneva).

In a period when divisions look set to increase within global civil society, we need more rules, standards, and protocols, not less—because such structures are the only way to guard against the arbitrary selection or exclusion of some groups at the expense of others and the domination of global networks by NGO or other elites. If global citizen action is to be institutionalized, these issues must be addressed. How? Let me offer three general principles:

- Leveling the playing field (promoting equal voice, capacity, and opportunity for different civil society organizations in the global arena).
- Self-regulation or self-discipline within global civil society networks—not imposed accountability from governments or intergovernmental bodies.
- Integration instead of displacement—marrying together different levels of citizen action from the local to the global, and building from the bottom up.

How might these principles be operationalized inside the United Nations? I see at least three general models:

- Representative bodies, such as a “Global Peoples’ Assembly.” In my view these ideas are premature and have little chance of gaining sufficient political support, because we lack

convincing answers to questions of representation and how to establish the right to vote.

- Nonrepresentative bodies structured according to issue areas and expertise, such as a “World Financial Forum” for the IMF (or the recent World Social Forum in Brazil). These ideas enjoy more political support, partly because they focus attention on the right to a voice among NGOs, not a vote.
- Different models for different purposes, regimes, institutions, issues, and levels of governance: formal and informal, standing and spontaneous, representative and not, and so on.

In my view, this third model is the best way forward, since it becomes much easier to deal with questions about structure and legitimacy when the universe under discussion is circumscribed in some way. Why don’t we challenge ourselves to come up with five such models by the end of this meeting—actual, concrete situations in which resources can be applied and lessons learned about success and failure? This is much more useful than talking in general terms about what should be done. Look for existing sources of energy out there, and build on them.

What, in all of this, is the role of the United Nations? In my view, this is a debate about changing the rules of global governance in order to achieve better and more sustainable outcomes through wider stakeholder participation. Who better to lead this debate than the UN, as the world’s custodian of the “rules of the game,” the ultimate standard-setting body, and the institution that can bestow some sense of legitimacy on public participation? I would like to see the UN put more resources and political pressure behind concrete innovations of the kind I have called for, to raise the level and profile of this debate, and to commit to specific benchmarks. This is a debate that the United Nations should be leading. It is not.

These questions are demanding, and their answers are as yet unclear. However, a century ago we could not have imagined the extent to which citizens across the world have since succeeded in their struggles for more complete and inclusive democracies in their localities and national polities. In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the globalization of power demands a new form of global citizen action that extends the theory and practice of democracy still further. I wish you well in your deliberations.

Thank you.

Michael Edwards

30 May – 1 June 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the UN Civil Society Outreach Symposium**

When I was elected as President of the Millennium Assembly I set only a few priorities for myself knowing that my time in office was limited to one year. One of these priorities was to work for a more open United Nations and to reach out to civil society as a whole to fully benefit from its expertise and to make the United Nations more relevant to the outside world. Therefore, it gives me great pleasure to be here with you tonight to open this Symposium on UN Civil Society Outreach.

This Symposium is an excellent example of how connecting with people and NGOs outside the UN can help us within the Organisation to reach and accomplish our goals.

In taking up my office I had the idea that we should explore innovative ways and new avenues to enable civil society to contribute better and more effectively to the work of the United Nations system. But this initiative could be made real only with the help of two important civil society actors: the Stanley Foundation and the World Federation of United Nations Associations. I am truly grateful to you Mr. Stanley and Ms. Pietikäinen and the two organisations you represent for having taken up the challenge and the responsibility to organise this event - and I thank you for that. This Symposium demonstrates in a concrete manner that by working together with civil society we can accomplish our tasks. It also goes to show that we do not necessarily need to start with a 'Big Bang'. It is with small, but concrete steps that we can improve the working relationship between the UN and civil society.

One of the clear outcomes of the Summit was that the UN needs to work and co-operate with civil society to achieve the goals set in the Summit Declaration. Hence, building partnerships with civil society is not a choice, but a necessity. As President of the Assembly it is both my duty as well as a privilege to promote the implementation of the Declaration in this regard. I believe that both the UN and civil society as a whole can do better in terms of internal coherence and co-ordination.

During this Symposium our task should be to try to find new and better ways to work as partners in a team with the aim of fulfilling the agenda set for the UN. Working as partners is also in keeping with the letter of the UN Charter of being an Organisation of the peoples. We have a shared interest and I believe also a shared responsibility, to make things happen. We should try to make headway at all levels of cooperation: international, regional and national. In a globalized world we need to recognise that different civil society actors have different roles to play, and that they are all valuable and ultimately contribute to the same goals.

Time is limited. We only have two days. We cannot solve all the problems, but we must aim high and use all the experience and capacity present and available here in order to come up with concrete and innovative strategies on which we can build our forward-looking agenda within the UN system.

Finally, I should like to thank all participants for having taken the time from their busy schedules to participate in this event. As Patron of this event I am indeed impressed by the diversity and expertise amongst the participants. I encourage you to be creative and courageous and take advantage of this occasion in order to move our common agenda forward.

Let me propose a toast to a successful and productive UN - civil society relationship in the new Millennium!



14 May 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Special Event at the Third United Nations Conference on  
the Least Developed Countries - "The Challenge of Eradicating  
Poverty for Sustainable Development: International Community  
Response" How can we reach the 2015 International  
Development Goals?**

Why is it that we have so often failed in promoting sustainable development in the LDCs? One of the main reasons is that we have focused primarily on narrow and short-term goals. National rivalry, protectionism and the legacy of the Cold War, as well as coping with the sheer speed of change have overshadowed longer-term objectives.

The post-Cold War world is a globalized and interdependent one. Yet, one of the key dimensions of globalization has been overlooked: global responsibility. This shared responsibility was recognized in the Millennium Declaration, which reflected an unprecedented global consensus on international development targets. It gave clear direction for the international community.

Globalization can also give reason for optimism. Our technological know-how and financial resources are greater than ever. The international community is more or less in agreement on the root causes of poverty and development problems, as well as on their solutions. Several LDCs have experienced democratization and increased levels of civic participation in their societies. Many of them have launched ambitious - and often painful - macroeconomic reforms to increase openness and tear down trade barriers. There has also been a growing realization that development requires a stable domestic environment. As recognized by the national level preparations in LDCs, good governance and respect for human rights are prerequisites for all development efforts.

Now it is time for the international community to live up to global responsibility and to recognize the steps taken by the LDCs. In practice, this calls for a multidimensional and integrated approach, where different policies reinforce one another. We need to remove trade barriers and provide debt relief, as much as we need to build local health care and education systems. Finding the right balance varies from one society to another, but the main strength in development are the people of the LDCs themselves. Their efforts would undoubtedly benefit from better coherence and coordination within national and international policy making bodies.

The Millennium Declaration recognizes the importance of duty- and quota-free market access for the exports of LDCs. Achieving this could exceed the benefits of development aid. Improving trade relations paves the way to self-reliance and creates conditions for sustainable development.

Recently, the European Union agreed on tariff- and quota-free access for LDC products. I hope that especially other industrialized countries will follow this example.

Equal access to markets is a necessary but not sufficient condition for development. Supply constraints and declining terms of trade for LDCs may prevent them from taking full advantage of the open global trade system. Their productive capacities need to be strengthened and trade sectors diversified.

Furthermore, development cannot be left to the markets alone. This is because the market cannot guarantee public goods, especially in the poor countries. These public goods include social development, protection of the environment, equal access to education, knowledge and health care, as well as greater gender equality. Development co-operation and aid are necessary to build human resources and institutional capacity.

As for education, it is the fundamental right of every child. The education of girls cannot be overemphasized, as it is one of the keys to development. If left to the marketplace alone, education will not reach every child. The international community must also ensure that modern technology, especially information and communication technology are put at the service of development. This is yet another issue, which has special urgency in the poorest countries of the world.

LDCs have also suffered -more than other recipients - from aid fatigue. Some LDCs have not been able to receive and use aid effectively due to capacity constraints, others due to internal or external conflicts. If aid is mainly humanitarian and targeted to those at the margin of survival, its results may lack visibility. Faith in the effectiveness and rationale of aid declines.

In particular, external support is required during political and socioeconomic transition periods. I strongly urge the industrialized countries to raise the levels of ODA to meet the agreed targets of the international community. It is also important to continue efforts to make aid more effective and meaningful for local needs, because this is one of the best ways to overcome aid fatigue.

To reach our targets we need new kind of partnerships at all levels. National governments and intergovernmental organizations can no longer carry their tasks alone, but need the co-operation of their civil society partners. Today, non-governmental organizations are full-fledged members of the international community. Many NGOs have already started to assist to implement the goals of the Millennium Declaration. In addition, partnerships with the private sector and its enormous resources are needed if we are to solve the challenges of global development. The values and targets of the Millennium Declaration should be added to the ethical principles of private sector organizations.

International organizations should themselves constantly adapt to global change and define their tasks accordingly. In this context, a stronger partnership is needed between the United Nations and the international trade and financial institutions. Also, I warmly welcome the positive

initiatives and examples experienced at the regional level between LDCs and all their development partners.

Some have already rushed to claim that halving poverty by 2015 would require growth rates, which are unrealistic and beyond our range. This is, however, no time for defeatism, but for action in order to reach the required growth rates, especially in the LDCs. I am convinced that Governments and the international community can reach the set targets. They must show the same kind of enthusiasm and commitment in the follow-up to the Millennium Summit as was experienced when the commitments were made last September.

This LDC Conference is an integral part of the follow-up to the Millennium Summit. It provides an opportunity to turn our ambitious goals and global consensus into concrete action. For the peoples in the Least Developed Countries, therein lies an opportunity. It is our task to give them this opportunity.

9 April 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the All China Women's Federation's luncheon**

I am honoured to have the opportunity to participate in this luncheon. While in Beijing and having this honour to be the guest of the All China Women's Federation I cannot think of any more appropriate subject to start than the Fourth World Conference on Women. A conference commonly known in the UN and around the world as 'the Beijing Conference'. Altogether 47,000 women and men, attended the Beijing Conference and the parallel Huairou NGO Forum. It was the largest-ever gathering of government and NGO representatives at a United Nations Conference. At the Conference 189 countries unanimously adopted the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. The people and the government of People's Republic of China deserve full praise for having hosted this conference.

Many consider the Conference as a turning point in the advancement of the status of women and gender equality. Having gone over the Platform of Action to prepare my remarks for this occasion I tend to agree with them. It is indeed a very important document containing commitments that should be implemented very carefully by every government.

The basic goal of the Platform was the empowerment of all women in order to achieve sustainable, just and developed societies. It stated that the full realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of all women is essential for achieving this goal. It further emphasized that it is the duty of states, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote and protect all human rights.

The special session of the General Assembly on Beijing +5 of last June aimed at identifying practical ways to implement the commitments made. It emphasized areas which have gained importance since the Beijing Conference, such as access to decision-making particularly in peace keeping processes, gender-sensitive approaches to HIV/AIDS and the realization of women's full enjoyment of economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights. In this connection I should like to welcome the recent decision by the Chinese government to ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and I hope that considerations will continue to enable full implementation of the Convention.

There are several other important commitments in the Platform, but I would like to take up one, which I consider very important. It is the situation of the girl child, a concern I have stressed throughout my tenure. The girl child of today is the woman of tomorrow. Over five years ago governments agreed in Beijing that 'for the girl child to develop her full potential she needs to be nurtured in an enabling environment, where her spiritual, intellectual and material needs for

survival, protection and development are met and her equal rights safeguarded'. Yet the reality today in many parts of the world is that girls do not have equal access to nutrition, physical and mental health care and education or enjoy the same rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys. In addition girls are often subjected to various forms of sexual and economic exploitation.

At the Millennium Summit last September the heads of state and government resolved to ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education. If governments with the assistance of the UN system would make sure that this commitment is in fact implemented, it would make a huge difference for so many girls and boys and ultimately for the whole societies.

Although some notable gains have been made since the Beijing Conference, women worldwide continue to bear a disproportionate burden of poverty, illiteracy, dislocation, violence, poor nutrition, and ill health. Governments need to do more. NGOs and women's groups and associations such as yours have a key role to play to follow up that commitments made are implemented.

I should like to congratulate the women of this country and its government for having been very active in enhancing the status of women. China is a party to the Convention of All Forms of Discrimination against Women since 1980 and has made achievements in many areas of gender equality. In particular I should like to congratulate you on the high number of women in the China National People's Congress, which was over 20% in the last elections. This same trend is to be seen also in number of Chinese women working in the UN, where almost 50% of the staff members from China are women. I encourage the government and the women in China to continue to enhance the equal status and human rights of women in all aspects.

Before I conclude, let me touch briefly the issue of opening the UN to the outside world, an appropriate topic to take up when addressing women's movements such as All China Women's Federation. I have repeatedly said that better governance requires better and wider participation. In the era of globalization, the UN and national governments cannot do their work alone. Therefore, one of my priorities as President of the Assembly has been to reach out to civil society in order to fully benefit from its expertise and to ensure its involvement in our work. In the case of women's organization we know that their contribution and participation has been vital for the advancement of women.

At the Summit Declaration a call was made for enhanced partnership and co-operation with civil society, including the private sector. To fulfill this commitment, I have emphasized that we need to explore innovative ways to enable civil society to contribute to the work of the UN system. I will continue to keep this issue on my agenda and support all efforts to implement this commitment.

It has been a great pleasure to share some of my views on gender equality and advancement of women and I thank you for your attention.

9 April 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
on the Role of the United Nations in the 21st Century  
at the United Nations Association of China**

I should like thank you for this opportunity to share my views as President of the UN General Assembly on the Role of United Nations in this Century. As you may be aware it is the first time that Finland holds the Presidency of the Assembly, an honour that occurs about once in 200 hundred years for any Member of the United Nations. As President I endeavour to do my best to advance the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as enshrined in the Charter, in order to promote peace and security, greater social equality, democracy and human rights, sustainable human development, the alleviation of poverty and combating global environmental threats.

It gives me a great pleasure to start my official visit in China with a seminar at the United Nations Association of China and it fits very well with my priorities as President. Throughout my Presidency, I have stressed the important role civil society and organizations such as the UN Associations play in making the UN more relevant to the world outside. I was impressed when I learned before coming here about the variety of activities, that the UNA China has been involved during the past year, including disseminating information about UN and making international contacts. I was also glad to note that you have had the opportunity to visit my own country Finland. I encourage you to continue your efforts.

The topic given to me is not easy, and I will not even attempt to answer it in full. But I will try to outline some observations that I have made during my time in office.

But let me add that while difficult the topic is indeed very timely in light of the follow-up to the historic Millennium Summit that took place last September. In fact the Summit presented us with the role for the UN in the 21st Century: the Declaration adopted at the end of the Summit lays down the global agenda for the United Nations for the years to come. I could simply refer you to the Declaration and end my address here. But as you might guess, based on the mere amount of paper I have with me, and remembering that I am a former politician I am tempted to expand a little more on this issue. And if you allow me, I will continue another bit.

The Summit was the largest gathering ever of Heads of State and Government and it agreed on a set of values, principles and goals for the entire international community in the 21st century. Member States reaffirmed that the Organization is not meant to serve only Member States, but also the peoples of the world, in particular the most vulnerable. It laid down the fundamental values that guide our work: freedom, equality, solidarity, tolerance, respect for nature and shared responsibility. The Summit stressed the inter-linkages between development, peace and security as well as the need to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for everyone.

Furthermore, the Summit provided a momentum which will reinforce the implementation of the global agenda and its development targets, as defined in the global conferences of the 1990's .

One of the issues where the Summit stressed the importance of the UN is globalization. The Organisation can play a critical role in making sure that globalisation becomes a positive force for all and offers benefits in a more equal manner. I should add that a key issue in globalization is how information and knowledge could be made available to all. This is of course a relevant question also in China. The United Nations has been active in this field for sometime through its specialized agencies and funds and programmes and the Economic and Social Council. The focus has been on the issue of bridging the so-called "digital divide", and making knowledge available and accessible to all.

The Summit also reaffirmed the key role that the UN plays in maintaining peace and security. The nature of conflicts has made this task even more complex and the question of improving the UN's capacity to respond more effectively to crises was one of the Summit's themes. The so-called Brahimi report contained specific recommendations to enhance the UN's capacity to conduct peace operations more effectively. In short it proposed that the UN be given the resources and tools it needs to carry out peace operations. The proposed reform is a comprehensive package, including additional resources, organizational and management changes as well as changes in the way the Security Council works. As President of the Assembly I urged Member States to consider the recommendations urgently. Member States saw this as an opportunity for the UN and its Member States to show that they were serious about enabling the Organisation to do the job it has been mandated by the Charter, namely that of maintaining international peace and security. The first emergency package of reforms was adopted last fall which was encouraging, but the work needs to continue.

Development and poverty eradication will have to remain high on the agenda of the UN for years to come. Many of the forthcoming conferences and Special Sessions, such as the Conference on Least Developed Countries and Special Session on HIV/AIDS, will address these issues and I am hopeful that governments will adhere to their commitments made at the Summit and that we will see concrete results emerging from these and other events.

In light of the above the challenge, I believe, is to identify and develop the core strengths of the UN. This means also that the Organization needs to adapt constantly in order to respond to the new priorities established by its Membership.

Moreover, I believe that strengthening and revitalizing the Organization is in fact a prerequisite to achieving the priorities agreed in the Summit Declaration and to enabling the UN to carry out the tasks entrusted to it. Consequently, the pledge by Member States to spare no effort to make the UN a more effective instrument and to strengthen, it becomes very important and urgent.

In this connection I should like to take up briefly some of the relevant issues in strengthening the UN.



One particular area of reform where Member States resolved at the Summit to intensify their efforts is Security Council reform. The point that is repeatedly stressed in reform discussions is the need for the Council's composition to reflect the realities of today, compared to those of 55 years ago, to make it more representative and more legitimate.

Discussions on Security Council reform have been going on now for over 7 years. This reflects the fact that the issues at stake are at the very core of the United Nation's structure and functioning. Some improvements in the working methods of the Security Council have been accomplished, but the main issues still remain open. The need for reform is still very much a current matter.

The Millennium Summit outcome indicated that there is a renewed willingness by the membership to move forward on reform. But concrete results regarding expansion of the membership of the Council, decision making, including the veto, working methods and transparency are still awaited. The aim is a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects.

On the more general question of strengthening the UN I have as President tried to lead and keep the process of reform moving forward. To achieve concrete results on the reform and revitalization of the UN, it is of utmost importance to have the whole Membership on board.

Many important decisions were already taken last fall to strengthen the UN. The Assembly was able to agree on new scales of assessments both for the regular budget and for UN peacekeeping. This was a longstanding and complex issue, but in the end the Assembly reached consensus.

I already mentioned the decision adopting emergency measures to reinforce the Department of Peacekeeping Operations thus strengthening one of the core functions of the Organization. Decisions were also taken to improve the security and safety of UN personnel, to move towards results-based budgeting and on other issues that will contribute to strengthening the UN.

As President of the Assembly I have made an effort to guide its work in a more effective manner. But there is an overwhelming consensus that a concerted effort needs to be made in improving the working methods of the Assembly. Many decisions have been taken over the years to improve the work of the Assembly. But it is striking to note how few have been implemented. So I have put this issue now to Member States and they have responded positively to my call. Consultations have started to find common ground to move forward in a concrete manner in implementing decisions made towards improving the working methods of the Assembly.

Any reform requires compromises by all parties at a very practical level. Unless governments at the highest political level acknowledge and agree that to achieve the common good they need to let go some of their own individual priorities, nothing will move.

To conclude I should like go back to where I started: the role of civil society. In the Summit Declaration a call was made for enhanced partnership and co-operation with civil society, including the private sector. I have emphasized that we need to explore innovative ways to enable civil society to contribute to the work of the UN system. I will continue to keep this issue on my agenda and support all efforts to implement this commitment.

I thank you for your attention.

19 March 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
“Towards a Stronger United Nations” at the American Scandinavian  
Society**

It is a great pleasure for me to address the American Scandinavia Society. I should like to thank you for this opportunity to share my views as President of the UN General Assembly on strengthening the United Nations. It is the first time that Finland holds the Presidency of the Assembly, an honour that occurs about once in 200 hundred years for any Member of the United Nations.

The topic for this evening could not be more timely - nor the audience for it more appropriate. The Nordics have a long history in the UN and a reputation as forerunners for reform. I believe that we are also regarded as 'runners' in the real sense relative to the slow pace of the UN. The Nordic proposals for the reform of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies in the early 90's were instrumental in bringing that process forward. So it should have come as no surprise that as President I have taken reform as one of my priorities.

The topic is also especially timely in the light of the ongoing follow-up to the historic Millennium Summit that took place last September.

At the Summit, the largest gathering ever of Heads of State and Government, a set of values, principles and goals for the entire international community in the early 21st century was agreed. The Summit provided a momentum which will reinforce the implementation of the global agenda and its development targets, as defined in the global conferences of the 1990's .

At the Summit Member States also reaffirmed their commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. They reaffirmed that the Organization is not meant to serve only Member States, but also the peoples of the world, in particular the most vulnerable. The Summit stressed the inter-linkages between development, peace and security as well as the need to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for everyone.

Furthermore, Member States pledged to strengthen the UN, the only truly global organization today. I believe that strengthening and revitalizing the organization is a prerequisite to achieving all the priorities agreed in the Summit Declaration and to enable the UN to carry out the tasks entrusted to it.

One particular area of reform where Member States resolved to intensify their efforts at the Summit is Security Council reform. The point that is repeatedly stressed in reform discussions is the need for the Council's composition to reflect the realities of today, compared to those of 55 years ago, to make it more representative and more legitimate.

Just last week I was chairing the first round of discussions this year on the reform of the Security Council. I am fortunate to have my fellow Nordic, Ambassador Thorsteinn Ingolfsson of Iceland, as one of the Vice-Chairpersons to assist me in this challenging task. This shows that the Nordic co-operation and reform tradition is still very much alive at the UN.

Discussions on Security Council reform have been going on now for over 7 years and this seems like a long time, which it is. But one has to remember that the issues at stake are at the very core of the United Nation's structure and functioning. Some improvements in the working methods of the Security Council have been accomplished, but the main issues still remain open. The need for reform is still very much a current matter.

Our discussions of last week focused on the veto as a voting instrument and the working methods of the Council. There is no doubt that the veto is one of the questions that needs to be addressed in order to reach general agreement on the reform. The papers submitted by the Vice-chairs and me guided the discussions and participation was active and constructive.

The Millennium Summit outcome indicated that there is a renewed willingness by the membership to move forward on reform. But concrete results regarding expansion of the membership of the Council, decision making, including the veto, working methods and transparency are still awaited. The aim is a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. Discussions will continue in May, and as you will understand it would be premature to make any comments now on possible outcomes.

On the more general question of strengthening the UN I have as President tried to lead and keep the process of reform moving forward. To achieve concrete results on the reform and revitalization of the UN, it is of the utmost importance to have the whole Membership on board. I have urged Member States to engage in discussions, to implement decisions taken and make new initiatives to further the reform.

During the fall session of the Assembly I was very pleased to see how promptly Member States responded to the challenge. The implementation of the Summit Declaration was launched in December by consensus.

The Assembly rose to the challenge in other important ways to strengthen the UN. Firstly, it was able to agree on new scales of assessments both for the regular budget and for UN peacekeeping. This was a longstanding and complex issue that had generated a lot of heated discussion. Despite the complexities, the Assembly reached consensus.

The agreement will soon lead to the payment of a substantial portion of arrears owed to the UN by the United States. The goal must be a payment of all remaining arrears by the US. Putting the arrears question behind us will not only strengthen the relationship between the US and the UN but also help advance the American agenda in the UN.

Last fall, the Assembly also adopted a package of emergency measures to reinforce the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, an important step towards strengthening one of the core functions of the Organization. This is necessary in order to close the gap between the peace keeping tasks given to the UN, and the resources Member States make available to it. Decisions were also taken to improve the security and safety of UN personnel, and to move towards results-based budgeting and on other issues that will contribute to strengthening the UN.

Reform has been underway for the past few years under the able leadership of Secretary-General Kofi Annan. But it needs to continue throughout the Organization in order to make the UN stronger and more effective.

As President of the Assembly I have started, if I may put it, in my own 'backyard', that is, the General Assembly. I have made an effort to guide its work in a more effective manner.

Many decisions have been taken over the years to improve the work of the Assembly. But it is striking to note how many of these decisions have not been implemented. So I have put this issue now to Member States and they have responded positively to my call. Consultations have started to find common ground to move forward in a concrete manner in implementing decisions made towards improving the working methods of the Assembly.

My own experience is that it is often the practical and small things that count and ultimately add up to meaningful change.

One of these issues is reviewing the agenda of the Assembly. Despite some successes in the rationalization and streamlining of the agenda, the overall workload has not been reduced. The fact is that the total number of items on the agenda has been increasing over the years. The same goes for the number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. What is needed is an agenda that enables the Assembly to focus its work more on current priorities and not on those of years gone by.

The division of labor between the Plenary session of the Assembly and its six Main Committees has become blurred. Whilst the Plenary should be the place where issues of high importance are debated in the presence of all Member States, it often discusses issues of a more routine character and, I dare say, often with only a half full audience. Some have also suggested that the Assembly's annual general debate could be working sessions and real debates on issues of current and global importance, rather than reading aloud pre-written statements covering the whole agenda.

The lack of continuity in the work of successive Assemblies is an issue that I have personally experienced. To provide some continuity, the model of a 'troika', used in other organizations, has been suggested. The 'GA troika' would include the present, previous and incoming Presidents of the General Assembly or representatives of these States, to be involved in major discussions of reform and of planning the work of the General Assembly. Another suggestion that has been made to the same effect is to strengthen the office of the President by providing on a continuous

basis substantial backup from the secretariat designated to support the office of the President as an institution.

Let me now turn to the issue of opening the UN to the outside world, another means to strengthening the Organization. Better governance requires better and wider participation. In the era of globalization, the UN and national governments cannot do their work alone. Therefore, one of my priorities as President of the Assembly has been to reach out to civil society in order to fully benefit from its expertise and to ensure its involvement in our work.

In the resolution on the implementation of the Summit Declaration, a call was made for enhanced partnership and co-operation with civil society, including the private sector. To fulfill this commitment, I have emphasized that we need to explore innovative ways to enable civil society to contribute to the work of the UN system. I will continue to keep this issue on my agenda and support all efforts to implement this commitment.

In addition, international and multilateral actors, such as the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization and various regional organizations are becoming increasingly important in harnessing the positive powers of globalization. It is my intention to further strengthen the bridges to foster co-operation and coherent policies with the international financial institutions on such important issues as financing for development. This issue will be the topic of an International Conference next year in Mexico. In my view, the participation by the international financial institutions and by the national finance ministries of the donor countries is vital for this event to be a success.

To conclude, I should like to stress that the challenge is to identify and develop the core strengths of the UN. The Organization needs to adapt constantly in order to respond to the new priorities established by its Membership.

This requires compromises by all parties at a very practical level. Unless governments at the highest political level acknowledge and agree that to achieve the common good they need to let go some of their own individual priorities, nothing will move. I thank you for your attention.

22 February 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
"Towards a stronger UN" at New England Center for International  
and Regional Studies Bridgeport University**

It is an honor to join you tonight and to continue the tradition established by the University of Bridgeport to invite the President of the General Assembly of the United Nations to address your academic community. I would like to thank you for giving me this opportunity to share my views on strengthening the United Nations. It is a timely and opportune topic, especially in the light of the ongoing work of the historic Millennium Assembly.

For me personally, tonight's address is of particular importance because I have underlined the need for the UN to open up to the civil society at large. This includes continued and enhanced dialogue with the academic community, with which the UN already has a history of partnership.

Last September's Millennium Summit gave Member States an opportunity to reaffirm their commitment to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations. The Summit reaffirmed that the Organization is not meant to serve only Member States, but also the peoples of the world, in particular the most vulnerable. The Summit stressed the inter-linkages between development, peace and security as well as the need to ensure that globalization becomes a positive force for everyone. At the Summit Member States also pledged to strengthen the Organization, which is essential if we are to achieve the goals outlined in the Summit Declaration.

We all acknowledge that since the establishment of the United Nations, its achievements have been impressive in many areas of development, peace and security. The mandate given to us by the Summit reflects our global agenda for this coming century and as such is very ambitious. In my mind there is no doubt that the United Nations system needs to be strengthened and reformed in order to enable it to carry out the tasks entrusted to it.

One of the main challenges is to identify and develop the core strengths of the Organization. The UN needs to constantly adapt in order to respond to the new priorities established by its Membership. Furthermore, the UN needs to open up to the outside world. This requires political will and compromises by all parties at a very practical level. Unless Member States acknowledge and agree that to achieve the common good they need to let go some of their own individual priorities, nothing will move.

In my discussions with Member States and in listening to their statements, I sense that there is a renewed recognition and emerging consensus that we need to reinforce our efforts and equip the Organization with appropriate tools to achieve the goals we have set.

During the fall session of the Assembly I was very pleased to see how promptly Member States responded to the challenge. The implementation of the Summit Declaration was launched in December by consensus and with co-operation from all sides. Subsequently the Secretary General, for his part, responded by appointing a panel to advise on the world's development financing needs.

The Assembly rose to the challenge in other important ways to strengthen the UN. Firstly, it was able to agree on new scales of assessments both for the regular budget and for UN peacekeeping. This was an unusually complex and difficult issue that had generated a lot of heated discussion. Despite the complexities, the Assembly, just hours before the start of its holiday recess, reached consensus. In my view, this historic agreement has the potential of greatly improving the spirit of our work.

In addition, the agreement will soon lead to the payment of a substantial portion of the arrears owed to the UN by the United States. Ultimately, the goal must be a payment of all remaining arrears by the US. Putting the arrears question behind us will not only strengthen the relationship between the US and the UN but also help advance the American agenda in the UN.

Last fall, the Assembly also adopted a package of emergency measures to reinforce the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, a step towards strengthening one of the core functions of the Organization. This is necessary so as to close the gap between the tasks we ask the UN to carry out, and the resources we make available to it. Decisions were also taken to improve the security and safety of UN personnel, to move towards results-based budgeting and on other issues that will contribute to strengthening the UN.

Reform has been underway for the past couple of years under the able leadership of Secretary-General Kofi Annan. But it needs to continue throughout the Organization in order to make the UN stronger and more effective. In fact, strengthening the Organization is a prerequisite to achieve all the priorities agreed in the Summit Declaration.

For my part, I have tried to lead and keep this process moving forward. To have concrete results on the reform and revitalization of the UN, it is of utmost importance to have the whole Membership on board. I have urged Member States to engage in discussions, to implement decisions taken and make new initiatives to further the reform.

As President of the Assembly I have started with my own 'backyard', if I may put it that way, the Assembly. I have made an effort to guide its work in a more effective manner.

In this regard, it is striking how many decisions Member States have already taken over the years, to improve the work of the Assembly. But it is perhaps even more striking to find out how many of these decisions have not been implemented. So how to move forwards on this issue? My experience is that it is often the practical and small things that count and ultimately add up to change.



One of these issues might be reviewing the agenda of the Assembly. Despite some successes in the rationalization and streamlining of the agenda, the overall workload has not been reduced. The fact is that the total number of items on the agenda has been increasing over the years. The same goes for the number of resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. I believe that we should now make a serious attempt to review the agenda of the General Assembly. This is essential if we are to focus our work more on current priorities and not on those of years gone by.

One possible way to do this might be greater use of clustering, biennializing or triennializing the consideration of agenda items. Agenda items of closely related substance could be merged within a single agenda title or could be incorporated as sub-items.

Moreover, the division of labor between the Plenary and the Main Committees has become blurred. To make the Assembly matter on issues of critical importance to Governments, we need to address this issue. Whilst the Plenary should be the place where issues of high importance are debated in the presence of all Member States, it is in fact, often discussing issues of a routine character and, I dare say, often with only a half full audience.

One concern that has been raised is the lack of continuity in the work of successive Assemblies. To provide some continuity, the model of a 'troika', used in other organizations, has been suggested. The 'GA troika' would include the present, previous and incoming Presidents of the General Assembly or representatives of these States, to be involved in major discussions of reform and of planning the work of the General Assembly. Another suggestion that has been made to the same effect is to make more effective use of the General Committee, the bureau of the General Assembly, which is comprised of the Vice-Presidents of the Assembly and the Chairpersons of its Main Committees.

I should also add that the experience of the round tables at the Summit has inspired some to suggest that maybe the Assembly's annual general debate could be made more interactive and focus on issues of particular importance each year rather than cover the whole of the global agenda.

In addition to enhancing the effectiveness of the General Assembly, work is under way - and has been for more than seven years - to reform the Security Council. The Millennium Summit Declaration called for a comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. There were several calls - both in the Summit and during the last fall's debates - for the Council's composition to reflect the realities of today, in order to make it "more representative and more legitimate". I hope that the statements made indicate a willingness by the membership to move forward on this issue as we continue to consider it in the coming weeks and months.

Let me now turn briefly to the issue of opening the UN to the outside world, a key means to strengthen the Organization. Better governance requires better and wider participation. In the era of globalization, the UN and national governments cannot do their work alone. Therefore, one of

my priorities as President of the Assembly has been to reach out to civil society in order to fully benefit from its expertise and to ensure its involvement in our work.

In the resolution on the implementation of the Summit Declaration, a call was made for enhanced partnership and co-operation with civil society, including the private sector. To fulfill this commitment, we need to explore innovative ways to enable civil society to contribute to the work of the UN system. I will continue to keep this issue on my agenda and support all efforts to implement this commitment.

In addition to civil society, international and multilateral actors, such as the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization and various regional organizations are becoming increasingly important in harnessing the positive powers of globalization. It is my intention to try and build bridges with the international financial institutions - IFI's - on such important issues as financing for development. This issue will be the topic of a high-level meeting next year and in my view, the best way for the event to be a success is through participation by the IFI's and also by the national finance ministries of the donor countries.

In concluding I would like to reiterate my firm belief: Reform and strengthening of the United Nations is not an option, but a necessity.

5 February 2001

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the 2nd Meeting of the Preparatory Committee on the Third  
United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries**

I would like to express my gratitude to the Committee for giving me this opportunity to share some of my views as you proceed with the preparations for the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries.

Your work in this Committee is not a simple technical exercise of agreeing on a common text. Your task goes beyond that. Your collective work must engender a sense of hope for a better future in the minds of seven hundred million people living in LDCs. This preparatory process must culminate in concrete actions at the Conference that will help free these millions of people from poverty and deprivation.

As President of the General Assembly, I have been entrusted by Member States with the responsibility to follow-up the implementation of the Millennium Declaration. The Third Conference on LDCs, which will be the first major conference to take place after the Summit, together with other upcoming conferences, is a major mechanism at the disposal of the General Assembly in implementing the commitments of the Declaration.

The Millennium Declaration successfully articulated actions in three critical areas concerning development in LDCs, namely trade, ODA and debt, where external support could make a major difference. The world leaders agreed upon the target of reducing by half the number of people living in extreme poverty by 2015. The other commitments in the Declaration concerning human rights, democracy, good governance, peace and security and protection of the vulnerable, are equally important in accelerating development and eradicating poverty. I am pleased that the draft Programme of Action that you are considering captures all these dimensions of the Millennium Declaration by following a holistic and multi-stakeholder approach. The comprehensive scope of the Millennium Declaration reinforces the need for an integrated and coordinated approach within the UN in the implementation of its commitments.

There is an urgency to take concrete action in LDCs. The primary responsibility in meeting the Millennium development targets rests on the shoulders of the LDC-governments themselves. They must strengthen a range of national policies, by putting people at the center of these policies, improving good governance involving all stakeholders, and in the process taking charge of their own destiny. On the other hand, the international community, the United Nations system and Member States must be prepared to assist in order to achieve our goals.

To create a meaningful dialogue, reciprocal cooperation, and a more just world we all need to walk an extra mile. We need to go beyond rigid positions, to transcend the status quo. Remember, we are doing this for the poorest of the poor - women, men and children living at the margin of existence.

I would like to echo the strong emphasis made in the draft Programme of Action on the importance of involving all stakeholders, nationally and internationally. Development can no longer be viewed as the business of governments alone. It is the collective business of, in the words of the UN Charter, the peoples of the United Nations. Unless we are able to effectively involve civil society, the private sector, the media, lawmakers and academia in the process, we will deprive ourselves of the enormous potential offered by these entities. Your non-governmental partners are also present during this preparatory meeting, if not in this very room. I urge you to bring them in to your midst throughout the process. A broad based dialogue among all the stakeholders will give the outcome a stronger foundation and a broader ownership.

The international community, in particular the industrialized countries, must make stronger efforts to ensure the success of national policies of least developed countries. The fact that this is the first UN Conference hosted by the European Union signals the willingness of development partners to remain collectively engaged in the development of LDCs.

It is particularly noteworthy that the policies and actions contained in the draft Programme of Action are based on the set of universal values enshrined in the Millennium Declaration, namely: solidarity, shared responsibility, freedom, democracy, equality, common concern for world peace and security, and the well being of next generations.

Many of the recommendations in the draft Programme of Action are derived from the outcomes of major UN Conferences and Summits. All of these linkages provide an opportunity to an integrated approach, where the Millennium Declaration is an overarching theme.

Achieving the targets of the Millennium Declaration will make our world safer, more stable and more prosperous. Translating this hope into reality will require, among other things, efficient mechanisms for implementation and follow-up of the Programme of Action at all levels. The United Nations system will have an important part in this. Playing this role will require us to refuse to accept business as usual, and insist on harnessing the strength of the entire system at global, regional and national levels. As you approach this particular task, let me assure you of my full support.

9 November 2000

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
at a Fundraising Luncheon honoring the twelve female Ambassadors  
organized by the NGO Committee on the Status of Women**

It is a great pleasure for me to join you at this fundraising luncheon. I would like to thank the NGO Committee on the Status of Women for organizing this event honoring the female Ambassadors at the United Nations.

We have recently completed the five-year review and appraisal of the Fourth World Conference on Women. It was an occasion to assess the progress achieved in the context of the Beijing Platform on Action. It was also an opportunity to reaffirm our goals and objectives for gender equality and the economic and political advancement and empowerment of women.

As targets of one global conference cannot be implemented in isolation, we need to remember that a gender perspective must be incorporated into all policies and operations of the United Nations. Gender equality is essential in all areas of our work, such as housing, employment opportunities, social development and human rights. I was very pleased to see that the issue of gender mainstreaming was taken up by the Secretary-General also in the recent report on the implementation of the Brahimi report.

I have repeatedly stated that one of the issues I personally consider particularly important is education of girls. Education is a significant investment in social capital. It helps to build local self-reliance and provides assets for meaningful participation in economic and political life. I welcome the interagency initiative to promote girls' education launched this year at the World Education Forum in Dakar.

At the dawn of the new Millennium, we have an opportunity to strengthen our relationship between the UN and civil society. I strongly believe that the activities of governments and civil society can complement each other. This was well illustrated also during the Beijing conference. Enhanced partnership with civil society at large is necessary to implement the development agenda of the global conferences and the commitments of the Millennium Declaration.

Further action, initiatives, and dialogue are needed to fulfil the targets defined in Beijing. We also need to ensure that women participate equally in all bodies and processes at the United Nations. This requires joint efforts from all of us. Governments have their responsibility to create an enabling environment for gender equality, but NGOs have a valuable role in implementation and collecting information on trends and factors, which are useful for policy-making. Thus, it is important to have the female ambassadors and the NGO-Committee on the Status of Women join

together at this luncheon. I would like to thank and encourage you in your efforts towards a more equal and just world.

# United Nations Nations Unies

THE PRESIDENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LE PRESIDENT DE L'ASSEMBLEE GENERALE

6 November 2000

## **Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri, President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly, at the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the United Nations (CONGO)**

I am honored by this opportunity to address the tri-annual General Assembly of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the United Nations. The theme of your conference this time, "The United Nations/NGO Dynamics in the 21st Century: Together for Social Justice, Equality and Peace", is very fitting at the dawn of the new Millennium. We have an historic moment to build a new relationship between civil society and the United Nations.

I would like to share with you, some thoughts on the future dynamics of the relationship between the United Nations and civil society.

We have recently witnessed two events of major importance to our discussions today. At the Millennium Forum last May, over 1300 civil society organizations, with diverse backgrounds and from all over the world, were able to define and agree on common priorities. The Millennium Forum Declaration is the first official United Nations document produced exclusively by civil society. I congratulate the NGO-community for this achievement. It is a concrete illustration of positive results of co-operation reaching beyond geographical and issue-oriented barriers.

In September, the largest gathering ever of Heads of State and Government at the Millennium Summit agreed on a set of values, principles and goals for the entire international community in the early 21st century. The spirit of the Millennium Summit inspires and leads our work at the United Nations. Member States recognize the urgency and importance of translating these commitments into concrete action. I have taken steps to set in motion the follow-up process of the Summit.

The substantive goals and commitments of the Millennium Forum and the Millennium Summit are very much connected. This signifies that the activities of governments and civil society cannot be separated, but rather they should complement each other. Globalization itself entails that problems are more complex and interrelated and necessitate a comprehensive approach. On the other hand, globalization means that local action can make a difference also at the global level.

However, we should keep in mind that the Millennium Forum and the Millennium Summit were not the first occasions to deal with questions of peace and development. Both events were more like peak moments, where previous commitments and promises were reinforced. Also, the relationship between the United Nations and civil society started when the UN was established.

We have a long common history and now the new Millennium has intensified the need to strengthen this partnership.

One of my priorities as the President of the Millennium Assembly is to reach out to civil society at large in order to fully benefit from its expertise and to make the United Nations more relevant to the outside world. It is impossible to list all the areas where civil society has played a crucial role, but I would like to mention a few key sectors, such as promoting peace and human rights, enhancing development, fighting for democracy and speaking out for gender equality. All are areas of key concern to the United Nations and Member States.

The United Nations was established as an inter-governmental body to serve the peoples it represents. Now, we must broaden our constituency to achieve sustainable results. Only a few days ago, I proposed to Member States that we need to enhance partnerships and cooperation between the United Nations, governments and civil society to ensure effective overall implementation of the Millennium Declaration. I believe that to do this we need to explore innovative ways to enable civil society to contribute to this process at an early stage.

Regarding NGO participation, I recognize that a lot has been accomplished within the United Nations system and in individual conferences. But one has to note that for the moment, the involvement of NGOs in United Nations special sessions and conferences is negotiated case-by-case. It is a time- and resource-consuming exercise. I believe that the diversity of civil society should not stop us from exploring general, system-wide guidelines and harmonizing common practices and models. Various parts of the United Nations, NGO-focal points and Member States should compare and coordinate their experiences to identify best practices. In this context, full use should be made of the recommendations on how to further develop the relationship between NGOs and the United Nations put forward by the Secretary-General in his report two years ago.

To achieve best results it would also be important to hear from NGOs themselves their experiences on what works and what does not. There is a need for a dialogue and an exchange of views and this could take place through informal panels, hearings or the internet.

In order to be successful, partnerships need to be based on shared responsibilities and on mutual respect between all parties. Governments should practice inclusiveness and responsiveness. In return, civil society must interact with the rest of society in a constructive manner. The credibility that thousands of NGOs have created over many years must not be lost because of action by groups whose real aims are not related to enhancing the global agenda, but rather to their own self-promotion.

I encourage the United Nations and governments to organize hearings and start pilot projects with NGOs to find suitable best practices for each society and region to involve civil society. In these projects, representatives of local communities should be invited in at an early stage of planning.

Another issue, which I find particularly important is participation of NGOs from the South. Cooperation between the North and the South, but also between countries of the South, should aim



to strengthen the capacities of civil society and its organizations in developing countries and economies in transition. We should consider how to make these links more institutionalized, but not to an extent which stifles creativity.

The United Nations in the new Millennium needs support from governments, civil society, local communities and individuals. In this regard, the topic of this conference is important and timely. In my capacity as the President of the General Assembly, I pledge my co-operation with and support for initiatives being developed by civil society that are inclusive of all elements: NGOs, academics, religious leaders and the business community, and which are regionally and gender balanced, and cover all levels from the global to the grassroots.

I wish you a successful, forward-looking, and interesting meeting.

23 October 2000

**Office of the President of the Millennium Assembly  
55th session of the United Nations General Assembly**

**Non-Paper by  
H.E. MR. HARRI HÖLKERI  
President of the General Assembly  
on the Implementation of Millennium Declaration**

1. The United Nations Millennium Declaration articulates a set of values, principles and goals for the entire international community in the early decades of the 21st century. It was adopted by acclamation at the highest possible political level, and has been well received by the media and public around the world.
2. A concern that has been widely expressed is that the Declaration not be allowed to drift slowly into collective memory, but that it serve as a platform for concrete actions, stimulating and focusing new as well as existing programs at national and international levels alike.
3. In deciding to add an agenda item on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration the General Assembly has accepted that challenge. The purpose of this "non-paper" is to facilitate a dialogue among Member States about how to move forward. After consultations with and comments by Member States, I will undertake to prepare a draft resolution on the follow up, a 'road map' on how the implementation of the Declaration could take place. It is my intention to schedule the consideration of the new agenda item and the resolution in the plenary towards the end of November.

**Framework for implementation**

4. The aim should be a comprehensive and balanced approach in the follow up, both in substance and procedure.

**I National level**

5. Governments bear the main responsibility for action. Cooperation among international, regional and subregional organizations is needed, as is a new partnership and cooperation with the civil society at large, including the private sector.
6. The United Nations system as a whole should take it upon itself to help implement the outcome; the input of the Secretariat is crucial in this respect.

7. I believe that within the United Nations system we should use existing structures and mechanisms and upcoming events to the maximum extent possible.

8. After a careful consideration of existing modalities and identification of possible gaps, the need for resource implications should be considered.

## **II The work of the main committees and other organs of the GA**

9. The main committees of the General Assembly have already been invited to look into how the outcome of the Summit could be reflected in the work of the committees, and to a certain extent this 'mainstreaming' is already happening.

## **III Upcoming Events**

10. The Member States and the Secretariat could ensure that the commitments undertaken in the Millennium Declaration are fully reflected, as appropriate, in upcoming debates and special sessions of the General Assembly as well as in related conferences and events and in their final documents. Numerous such opportunities exist, as illustrated in Table 1.

11. Indeed, the General Assembly could ask that it be kept informed about how the Millennium Declaration features in each of these deliberations, and how each contributes to the Declaration's implementation.

12. The General Assembly could also request the Regional Commissions to take into account the particular commitments and proposals contained in the Declaration that are relevant to their own work programs.

13. A similar request could be made of the Specialized Agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization.

14. I will also consider convening informal discussions, possibly in a round-table format, on these and other proposals to advance the successful implementation of the Declaration.

## **IV The role of the United Nations system**

15. The entire United Nations system should be prepared to assist Member States in every way possible in the implementation of the Declaration. This might require that some activities, programmes and medium-term strategies, as well as resources for their implementation, may need to be strengthened or adjusted

16. The comprehensive scope of the Millennium Declaration reinforces the need for an integrated and coordinated approach in the implementation of the commitments made.

17. Within the framework of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) one might

identify innovative ways of enhancing co-operation and consultations towards the implementation of the Declaration.

18. In the implementation process it is important to aim for policy coherence, better co-operation and complementarities between the UN, its agencies, the Bretton Woods institutions and other multilateral development institutions

19. The United Nations system would need in particular to review and assess the broad range of its engagement in Africa, with a view to intensifying support to processes of conflict prevention, democratisation and development.

20. The Secretary-General could be asked to coordinate the preparation of a longer-term "road map" on how best to achieve the main targets and commitments of the Millennium Declaration, thereby facilitating the work of individual Member States, the General Assembly and other international bodies.

21. The General Assembly also may wish to give thought to how the implementation of the Millennium Declaration should relate to the biennial budget process and the medium-term plan.

### **V Role of the civil society**

22. The Millennium Declaration calls for strong partnerships with the private sector and civil society organizations in pursuit of development and poverty eradication. The possible involvement and potential contributions of these social actors should be borne in mind in the events and processes referred to above.

23. To ensure effective overall implementation there is a need for enhanced partnership and cooperation between United Nations, governments and the relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector as a whole. Within the United Nations we need to try to find innovative ways to do this in order to ensure that their contribution to the implementation is possible already at an early stage.

### **VI Review and reporting**

24. Paragraph 31 of the Millennium Declaration calls on the General Assembly "to review on a regular basis the progress made in implementing the provisions of this Declaration," and it asks the Secretary-General to issue periodic reports as a basis for further action.

25. The process of reviewing the implementation of the Declaration also gives an opportunity to appraise the reporting system with a view to strengthening its coherence and integration, in particular with regard to crosscutting themes on development and peace and security.

26. There may also be a need to strengthen the United Nations capacity to gather and analyze information and to develop indicators.

27. To be most useful to Member States, the Secretary-General's report should exhibit the following features:

- It should reflect the broad array of goals and commitments enunciated in the Millennium Declaration, though each annual report could look in greater depth at one or two areas covered in the Declaration;
- It should focus on results achieved, help identify "best practices" in achieving them, define the major gaps in implementation and suggest strategies for reducing and eliminating these gaps;
- It should make every effort to explore and highlight relationships across issues and sectors, and not merely report on individual subject areas;
- It should draw on the work of the entire United Nations family of organizations, including the Bretton Woods institutions, as well as the World Trade Organization.

28. The cooperation and active involvement of all Member States will help achieve these aims.

**TABLE 1:**

**POSSIBLE VENUES FOR IMMEDIATE FOLLOW-UP TO MILLENNIUM SUMMIT DECLARATION, INDICATIVE**

<b>DECLARATION THEMES</b>	<b>EVENT / FOLLOW-UP</b>
<b>1. PEACE, SECURITY &amp; DISARMAMENT</b>	
1. Implementation of Brahimi Report	Nov 2000 (1st tranche)
2. Small Arms Conference	Tentatively July/August 2001 (prepcoms 8 -30 Jan, 19 -30 March)

## 2. POVERTY ERADICATION & DEVELOPMENT

1. Financing for Development	Tentatively Aug 2001 (Resumed prepcom 30.10.00, prepcoms 12 -23 Feb and 30 April - 11 May)
2. LDC's Conference	May 2001 Brussels (EU/UN) (prepcoms Jan, Feb, April)
3. HIV/AIDS GASS	25 -27 June 2001
4. IT/ECOSOC	July 2001, World ICT Conference 2003 (ITU)
5. Children GASS	19 -21 Sept 2001 (prepcom 26 Jan - 2 Feb, 11-15 June)
6. Habitat GASS	6 -8 June 2001 (prepcom 19 -23 Feb)
7. High level dialogue on Globalization (56th GA)	17 -18 Sept 2001
8. 2nd World Assembly of Ageing	2002, Spain

## 3. PROTECTING OUR COMMON ENVIRONMENT

1. Conf. of Parties - Conv. on Desertification and drought	COP-4, Bonn, 11 -22 Dec 2000 COP-6, The Hague, 8 -26 April 2002
2. Conference of Parties - Biodiversity	COP-6, The Hague, 13 -24 Nov 2000
3. Conference of Parties - Climate Change	COP-12, Ouagadougou, 11 -14 Dec 2000
4. Conference of Parties - Montreal Ozone Protocol	2002

5. Rio + 10 (Summit on Sustainable Development)

**4. HUMAN RIGHTS, DEMOCRACY & GOOD GOVERNANCE**

1. Conference for the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime

12 -15 Dec 2000, Palermo

2. Conference on Racism & Xenophobia

31 Aug -7 Sept 2000, South Africa (2nd prep com April 2001)

**5. PROTECTING THE VULNERABLE**

1. Cairo Population Conference and the 5-year review

On-going

2. Children's GASS3.

19 -21 Sept 2001 (prepcom 26 Jan - 2 Feb,

3. International Strategy for Disaster Prevention (2000)

11 -15 June)

On-going

**6. AFRICA**

1. Causes of conflict in Africa

General Assembly to debate 1 Nov 2000;

2. Implementation of NADAF / UNSIA

ECOSOC, July 2001, OEWG

**7. STRENGTHENING THE UN**

1. Budget

2. Implementation of Brahimi Report

3. HRM/Staff Security

4. Partnerships/NGOs

5. Security Council  
Reform

6. Revitalizing GA &  
Ecosoc Sector

7. Reform of the  
Environment and  
Human settlement  
sector



28 September 2000

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the Briefing for the NGO-community**

It is a great pleasure to have this opportunity to join you this morning. On behalf of the chairpersons and from my part, I wish to welcome each and everyone to this briefing.

Yesterday the plenary started to consider the Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization. The statements follow the successful Millennium Summit, where the Heads of State and Government expressed their common vision for the new century and affirmed the global development agenda, as set by the global conferences of the 1990s.

In yesterday's statements, there were three themes, which also characterized the Millennium Summit and the General Debate. First of all, the speakers recalled the spirit of the Millennium Summit, saying that we need to build on the momentum and translate the Millennium Declaration into concrete action. To achieve this target, some of the speakers called for civil society to have a role.

Second, globalization was again widely discussed. In this regard, we need to work towards making globalization benefit all through a cross-cutting approach.

The third topic was the link between peace and socio-economic development. Several delegates emphasized the need to prevent conflicts before they erupt, to shift from the culture of reaction to the culture of prevention, because conflicts go hand in hand with poverty and lack of human rights.

This year, we have some 180 items on the agenda of the GA. Most of the items are the same as previously, but among new issues, there are a role of diamonds in fuelling conflict, scale of assessment of peacekeeping operations, as well as reform of the UN peace operations.

The Millennium declaration will guide our work during the current session. This is a challenge, which requires dialogue and co-operation from all of us, both during this session and in upcoming years. The participation of NGOs is important. The UN and governments cannot do the work alone, but need partnerships with the civil society. NGOs do valuable advocacy work among citizens in different parts of the world by disseminating information and assisting with the implementation of targets of global conferences. It is my strong belief, that through co-operation with NGOs the results are more sustainable in all societies, both in the North and in the South.

25 September 2000

**Statement of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President of the 55th Session of the General Assembly,  
at the United Nations Association of the United States  
Board of Directors lunch**

First of all, let me thank the Board of Directors for having invited me as a speaker today. It is an honor to be able to share my thoughts with such a distinguished audience. You represent an internationally minded, bi-partisan and well-respected constituency for the United Nations in the United States. Your efforts in support of the Organization are invaluable. They stem from a belief that not only does the United Nations need the United States but also that the United States needs the United Nations and that multilateral solutions can serve the national interests of countries big and small alike. I share this view and wish to emphasize that for the United Nations, the United States is, truly, indispensable.

Let me dwell a little longer on the issue of multilateralism. I come from a small country whose very existence was at stake some sixty years ago, and whose near-demise came after the collapse of the precarious and weak international order between the two World Wars. The League of Nations never matched the expectations for security guarantees that Finland had pinned upon it. Had the United States joined the League after the First World War, the fate of Europe might have been different.

In a Europe increasingly dominated by predators, and in the absence of collective security, other solutions such as a collective Scandinavian defense arrangement could never materialize either. In the end, we were left to our own devices all but alone. Only with great sacrifice and skillful exploitation of the rivalries in the European military and diplomatic theater were we able to survive as a nation. Finland was one of only three warring nations in Europe, whose capitals were never occupied by a foreign power. The other two were Britain and Russia.

Our historical experience is, therefore, that in order to be a means towards national security, multilateralism must be effective and have the widest possible backing. It also comes with hard-nosed realism about the need for vigilance and resolute action in the face of aggression, as well as with a certain sense of self-sufficiency.

Finland joined the United Nations in 1955 in a “package deal” on expanding the Organization’s membership. This deal was made possible by the thaw in East-West relations after Stalin’s death. From the start, we made every effort to be as active a Member State as possible, one example being our participation in UN peacekeeping virtually since its inception in the 1950’s. Not being able to fully participate in European integration, the United Nations – along with Nordic cooperation – became Finland’s window to the world during the early post-war decades.

Today, the concept of national security is fast changing. Even if the hard core of military security remains, other, more amorphous but no less serious issues and potential threats have emerged. I'm talking about issues such as climate change, mass-scale migration, spread of infectious disease, and, in particular, widening rift between the haves and the have-nots. These are global threats where the size of a country will not shield it from the adverse effects.

As with past threats, there must be a multilateral approach to deal with the new ones and that approach must be effective. There already exists such an approach - the Global Agenda as set by the global conferences of the 1990's. Sometimes unfairly mocked as "globaloney", the Global Agenda simply reflects the need to deal multilaterally with the effects, opportunities and challenges of globalization.

At the Millennium Summit, world leaders committed themselves to an ambitious programme of action, which reaffirms the key goals of the Global Agenda. The Summit Declaration aims at making the already existing multilateral approach more effective. It is an ambitious and historic document, adopted by consensus. It contains most of the key recommendations of the Secretary-General, as contained in his Report. It may be noted that this has the effect of reinforcing the authority of both the Secretary-General and the General Assembly. The Declaration also commits the world leaders to the concept of good governance - for the first time at such high level and in such unambiguous fashion. This is important because - and as noted by the Millennium Report - economic success depends so considerably on the quality of governance that a country pursues.

The main challenge facing this Millennium General Assembly, then, is to put into action the commitments made by the world's leaders in the Declaration. The Assembly must maintain the very positive "millennium spirit" - which I witnessed at first hand and which was very real - and proceed with a sense of urgency, not with business as usual. As called for by the Secretary-General, it is vital to find the means to make the Summit's promise a reality and to turn the UN into a more effective instrument in pursuing the priorities outlined by the Summit. This is a test of the political will of the Member States.

During the past two weeks, I had the privilege of presiding over the General Debate of the General Assembly. One message that came out loud and clear during the debate had to do with improving the Organization's peacekeeping capacity. The debate reaffirmed the mandate given by the Summit to consider without delay the recommendations by the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations - the so-called Brahimi Report. The consideration of the Report is clearly one of my top priorities as the President of the General Assembly. In the context of peacekeeping, we must also close the gap between the tasks we ask the UN to carry out, and the resources we make available to it.

Another important issue that the Summit Declaration called for was the comprehensive reform of the Security Council in all its aspects. There were several calls - both in the Summit and during the General Debate - for the Council's composition to reflect the realities of today, in order to make it "more representative and more legitimate". I hope that the statements made indicate a willingness by the membership to move forward on this issue.

Implementing the Summit Declaration is not a one-year affair, nor can it be done by the United Nations alone. In several respects, the onus is on the Member States themselves. In the end, it is they who must work towards the implementation of the goals every day. To give an example, without a Member State's commitment to reducing poverty there is very little the UN can do. However, if the commitment is there, the UN can help, it can give advice, it can encourage the Member State to improve its governance and fight corruption, and it can monitor.

Even this requires enhanced international co-operation. International and multilateral actors, such as the United Nations, the Bretton Woods Institutions, the World Trade Organization and various regional organizations are becoming increasingly important in harnessing the positive powers of globalization. It is my intention to try and build bridges with the international financial institutions (IFI's) on such important issues as financing for development. This issue should be the topic of a high-level meeting next year and in my view, the best way for the event to be a success is through participation by the IFI's and also by the national finance ministries of the donor countries.

Another topic that will be close to my heart during the next twelve months has to do with information and communication technology. In my view, it has an important role as a vehicle for development. Helping to bridge the digital divide by making information and communication technology a servant of development is one of the challenges ahead. No one should be denied access to knowledge. In an increasingly knowledge-based global economy, those countries, where a maximum amount of knowledge is available to a maximum amount of people at a minimum cost, will experience the fastest growth rates.

Let me now turn to a subject, which I consider extremely important for the United Nations. The issue is about outreach. In recent years, the Secretary-General has called for better participation of civil society – in the broadest sense, including the private sector - in the work of the Organization. Better governance requires better and wider participation. It is my belief that in the era of globalization, the UN and national governments cannot do their work alone.

The UN and its specialized agencies liaise with NGOs and other international organizations on issues of shared interest and potential for joint activities. NGO's provide information, which is crucial for our work in many fields such as human rights. They do advocacy work among the citizens and help implement the Global Agenda. I would also like to note that information technology has an impact on our work with civil society. In this regard, I welcome the UN Information Technology Service – UNITes - where high-tech volunteers train people in developing countries to use information technology.

Another commendable initiative of the Secretary-General is the Global Compact. Businesses are called to observe such core values as human rights, labor standards and environmental standards. Implementing these values is not only good policy – it is also increasingly good business.

Finally, let me touch very briefly on the one thing, which has unfortunately complicated the UN-US relationship for a good many years. United States arrears to the UN continue to compromise the US agenda in the Organization. They obscure the fact that the US remains the largest contributor to the Organization. The conditionality of arrears payment helps anti-reform activists in the UN argue against the reform benchmarks.

It would be an immense boost to US prestige in the UN if this issue were finally laid to rest. It is very hard to envisage any other durable solution but an unconditional payment of all arrears. In the meantime, it remains to be seen whether the Helms-Biden benchmarks, first and foremost a lower maximum assessment rate, will be met. On my part, I consider reaching a negotiated settlement on both the regular budget and peacekeeping scales one of my top priorities during this fall.

5 September 2000

**Acceptance Speech of H.E. Mr. Harri Holkeri,  
President-elect of the 55th Session of the General Assembly**

Mr. Secretary-General, Permanent Representatives, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am deeply grateful for the trust and confidence in my country and myself that this election represents. I will do my best to live up to the honour of having been elected President of the Fifty-fifth General Assembly. Let me assure each and everyone of you that as of today, I am the President of the Membership as a whole.

The fact that this Session of the General Assembly has been designated as the Millennium Assembly of the United Nations makes this privilege of serving the Member States particularly momentous. This week's Millennium Summit will bring together a record number of Heads of State and Government. Co-chaired by Presidents Tarja Halonen of Finland and Sam Nujoma of Namibia, the Summit is a unique symbolic moment. The Summit Declaration will capture the common vision of the Member States at that moment. It will guide our work not only during the Millennium Assembly but for years to come.

I am profoundly grateful to my most esteemed predecessor, Dr. Theo-Ben Gurirab, President of the Fifty-fourth Session of the General Assembly, for his tireless work to pave the way for a successful Millennium Summit and Assembly. I wish him well in all his endeavours as he continues to serve his people as the Foreign Minister of Namibia.

I also wish to salute the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for having once again shown leadership, courage and vision. His report - "We the peoples" - laid an indispensable foundation for the work of the Summit. It has also set for us new standards in clarity of purpose, relevance and readability.

As I thank all Member States for their confidence and trust, I am particularly thankful for the endorsement from the Western European and Other States' Group. For Finland, this Presidency comes after almost forty-five years of Membership in the United Nations. Over the past decades, Finland and Finns have been given the opportunity to serve the UN in a number of ways. Now it is my turn to serve the Organisation and its General Assembly, the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the United Nations.

The Organisation has been – and still is – one of the cornerstones of Finnish foreign policy. Finland is committed to multilateralism in the advancement of the purposes and principles of the United Nations, as enshrined in the Charter.

For my country, multilateralism is therefore a means to promote greater social equality, democracy and human rights, and in particular, rights of women and girls. It is these goals and the overall goals of sustainable human development, alleviation of poverty and combating global environmental threats that are also central to Finnish development co-operation.

In the spirit of multilateralism, Finland has also participated actively in UN peacekeeping from the Suez to South Lebanon to the Balkans. Since the 1950's, thousands of Finnish men and women have served with devotion to support the UN maintain peace and security.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This week's Millennium Summit and its Declaration will provide an enormous momentum which will reinforce the implementation of the global agenda and its development targets, as defined in the global conferences of the 1990's. The Declaration will constitute an authoritative mandate for our work and for my Presidency. On the agenda before us, there is one issue which is close to my heart. It is primary and secondary education, particularly for girls. Education is a key element in the global economy and we should implement our commitments in this regard.

It will be the responsibility of this General Assembly to heed the moment and put into practice the political commitment of our Heads of State and Government. The General Assembly and its main Committees must show leadership to the rest of the UN system and reflect the results of the Summit in their work. We need to avoid a "business-as-usual" mentality.

It is also vital that we start without delay the consideration of the recommendations of the Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations.

We must make every effort to make new technology available to all at a low cost. I believe that information and communication technology is a true opportunity for development, be it for reducing poverty, improving education or combating HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases. It can help us better understand climate change and other environmental challenges, and even plan better neighbourhoods in place of slums. In other words, it facilitates reaching the concrete goals which are part of the upcoming Summit Declaration.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

For the General Assembly, all this is an immense task. Let me now dwell on how we can accomplish it. It involves reaching out to the wider world for co-operation, increasing the transparency of the General Assembly and improving its effectiveness.

As for the Organisation's outreach towards wider civil society, it is closely related to the overall relevance of the United Nations. This is a challenge the UN can either accept and grow with or shy away from and stop growing. The norm should be dialogue and inclusion. The emergence of a strong and viable global network of non-governmental organisations is a fact. We all know that their work is indispensable and complements the role of the United Nations in many fields. This

was evidenced most recently in the Millennium Forum and I hope that Governments take time to reflect on the outcome of the Forum.

The private sector is part of civil society. The UN is currently exploring new ways to co-operate with the private sector, so as to assure that it takes due note of our work and standards for mutual benefit. In this regard, I would like to express my support for the recent initiatives of the Secretary-General.

Furthermore, our goal must be to enhance understanding, collaboration and complementarity of activities between the UN and the international financial institutions.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To be effective, and to get due credit, the General Assembly must work in a transparent and understandable manner. In order not to become a hermit kingdom, understood only by UN experts, the General Assembly must be able to explain why its work is relevant to the outside world. As President, my aim is to work in an open way. That will also be one of my requests to the Chairpersons of the Main Committees and to the Secretariat.

I strongly believe that in order to add value and make a difference, the General Assembly must address, in a focused, meaningful and timely manner, the challenges of rapid change and globalization. In doing so, it must respond to the current priorities of its Member States. This requires courage to look back at the original legislative intent of the General Assembly and how that can be best reflected in the practical work of the Organisation today.

Yet the General Assembly is not only about specific mandates and accomplishments. To engage in a dialogue on an equal basis, the global community needs the General Assembly. Between nations, even the most expensive dialogue is immeasurably cheaper than the cheapest armed conflict. The power of dialogue in the service of development is well demonstrated by the goals agreed upon by the global conferences of the 1990's.

As in any parliament, there is bound to be a certain degree of partisanship and political manoeuvring in the General Assembly. After all, there are genuine differences in Member States' interests and worldviews. However, the General Assembly can lose its effectiveness if this turns into a stifling block mentality and an "us-versus-them" mindset. During this Millennium Assembly, I plead to Member States to work in the spirit of partnership and solidarity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As I see the role of the President of the General Assembly, it is one of a facilitator, conciliator and consensus-builder. He must lead - and I will do so - but without the Membership on board, that leadership will ultimately fail. During this General Assembly, we will have to make hard and at times unpleasant decisions. These decisions require a spirit of dialogue and inclusion from all of us.



I will make every effort to guide the work of the Assembly in an effective manner. I harbour no illusions about quick solutions. I believe it is often the practical and small things which count and ultimately add up to a change. One such step will be to always start the plenary meetings of the Assembly on time. I trust that the Chairpersons of the Main Committees will commit themselves to the same practice at the committee level. This is not only about sensible use of our common resources; it is the least we can do to show respect and courtesy towards one another.

I will also seek close and regular dialogue with the Chairpersons and bureaux of the Main Committees, as well as with the Secretariat. The six Chairpersons that we are about to elect are very much the backbone of the daily work of the General Assembly. I also intend to maintain regular contacts with the Presidents of the Security Council and ECOSOC.

As for the Secretariat, it provides an indispensable partner without which our work would stall. I salute the staff members of the Organisation - at Headquarters as well as in the field - for their dedication, commitment and hard work. I would like to pay special tribute to those staff members who, even at this moment, put their lives in danger in the service of this Organisation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I believe in people and I believe in the United Nations. I am convinced that we can live in peace and harmony, because the power of our common values and goals exceeds our differences. Our strength lies in the diversity of humankind, and in our different backgrounds, skills, and knowledge. As a father and grandfather, I dream of a better world for my children and theirs.

During my tenure, I will do my best to serve the UN and all its Member States. In this task, I need your support and assistance. I would like to invite everyone to work together during this Millennium Assembly. Let us not be afraid of the difficulties and uncertainties ahead. Instead, let us build on co-operation, mutual understanding, and trust.

I thank you for your attention.