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**REPORT OF THE FIFTEENTH MEETING OF THE PRESIDING OFFICERS  
OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN  
INTO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF  
LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

Mexico City, 29-30 October 1992

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## **A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK**

### **Mandate**

1. Pursuant to paragraph 88(2) of the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development, adopted at the eleventh special session of the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference are to serve as a link between member Governments and the ECLAC secretariat in the field of women's integration in development.

### **Place and date**

2. In fulfilment of that mandate, the Presiding Officers elected at the fifth session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean held their fifteenth meeting on 29 and 30 October 1992 in Mexico City.

### **Attendance**

3. Attending the meeting were the Presiding Officers, representing the following countries: Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Mexico, Netherlands Antilles, Saint Kitts and Nevis and Venezuela. Also represented were the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the World Food Programme (WFP). The meeting was chaired by Ms. Bernadette Dougle, Chief of the Women's Office of the Government of the Netherlands Antilles. The delegation of Argentina, headed by Ms. Zelmira Regazzoli, served as rapporteur.

Agenda

4. The Presiding Officers adopted the following agenda for their fifteenth meeting:
  1. Adoption of the agenda
  2. Report of the Meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Organizations of the United Nations System on Future Activities to Promote the Integration of Women into Latin American and Caribbean Development, in preparation for the 1995 World Conference on Women
  3. Report of the First Meeting of the Group of Experts for the Elaboration of a Regional Programme of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001
  4. Review of the new regional programme of action on the basis of agenda items 2 and 3
  5. Adoption of the report of the fourteenth meeting of the Presiding Officers
  6. Evaluation of the work of the Presiding Officers in 1991-1992
  7. Review of future activities relating to the work of the Presiding Officers in preparation for the sixth session of the Regional Conference, including meetings of the Presiding Officers.

**B. SUMMARY OF DEBATES**

5. The Director-General for the United Nations System of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Mexico welcomed the Presiding Officers and the representatives of United Nations bodies. She said that the meeting was important because the participants would be considering the regional preparations for the 1995 World Conference on Women.
6. Latin American women were becoming aware of the need to update, amend and revise the Regional Plan of Action adopted in 1977. The current meeting was taking place at a time of marked change and contradiction in Latin America. Great strides had been made in improving women's status —e.g., in terms of their political participation— but poor women and support programmes for women had suffered setbacks. The new regional programme of action should reflect those contradictions, as well as the dynamic and rapidly changing international situation. For many reasons, the current meeting of the Presiding Officers was particularly significant.
7. The Chairman of the Presiding Officers, after conveying the greetings of the Prime Minister of the Netherlands Antilles to the Mexican Government and the participants at the meeting, welcomed those attending and said she hoped that women's struggle for equality, instead of seeking only changes favourable to women as its sole objective, would be part of a broader effort by all members of society to eliminate all types of discrimination.

8. The Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) thanked the Government of Mexico for its hospitality and greeted the Presiding Officers and representatives of the various participating bodies. He recalled that the meeting constituted the first stage of the preparations for the World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995, and said that ECLAC would fully support that process.

9. The Assistant Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Office at Vienna said that the regional preparations for the 1995 World Conference on Women were very important because that Conference would differ from the previous ones in that the strategies for change had already been determined, and the next step would be to apply them. Since the Conference would be of a tactical nature, regional preparations were a crucial factor, and it was expected that a process of reflection would begin immediately in the participating countries. To that end, the Commission on the Status of Women had proposed the establishment of focal points at the national level, and regional preparatory conferences had already been scheduled, including one to be held in Buenos Aires in 1994 along with the sixth session of the Regional Conference.

10. He enumerated the activities being carried out by the United Nations Office at Vienna in preparation for the World Conference, including the publication of the second edition of The World's Women, whose first edition had already been translated into Spanish; the preparation of a draft revision of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women; and the compilation of statistical indicators and data for use in that revision.

11. The Beijing Conference would receive the same amount of budgetary resources from the United Nations as other international conferences, but most of the additional funds for activities, especially regional and informational, were for the 1994-1995 biennium. That meant that extra-budgetary funds would be needed for preparations in 1993—including meetings of experts—and other activities in 1994-1995; the task of securing them would demand of Governments, *inter alia*, a good deal of imagination.

12. The World Conference would coincide with the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, and was likely to exert a major influence on the new international order taking shape.

13. The Director of ECLAC subregional headquarters in Mexico welcomed the participants on behalf of the Commission, and thanked the Government of Mexico for its cordiality and effectiveness as host of the meeting. Referring to the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, launched in Mexico City in 1975, he recalled that since then ECLAC had organized five sessions of the Regional Conference and 14 meetings of the Presiding Officers of the Conferences. In fact, the topic of women was the only area for which a permanent regional body holding periodic meetings had been created; moreover, since 1977 a regional instrument had existed, which was following up on the recommendations of the Conference. The meeting of experts held from 26 to 28 October 1992 had started an urgent and necessary review and updating of the instruments needed to continue to work for the advancement of women in the region, as part of a comprehensive process leading up to the 1994 Regional Conference in Buenos Aires.

14. ECLAC was fully aware of the problems encountered in that process, in terms of both its integration into larger processes and the concrete difficulties faced by Latin American and Caribbean women in their fight for real equality. Although ECLAC attached the greatest importance and support to the issue of women in Latin America and the Caribbean, it recognized that it had not yet been able to express that concern by allocating all the necessary resources. However, it had made some progress and

had acquired the experience which enabled it to act creatively, even without additional resources; a good example of such action was the Meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System on Future Activities to Promote the Integration of Women into Latin American and Caribbean Development, in preparation for the 1995 World Conference on Women, held in Santiago, Chile, in September 1992. Another important step was its designation of a staff member at ECLAC subregional headquarters in Mexico to work full-time on coordinating all activities relating to women.

15. He thanked the participants for their contributions to the work being done in that area, and emphasized the fundamental importance of regional cooperation and collaboration. The Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference had gone far beyond their original role as a liaison; their meetings had taken on an increasingly technical character and had become working sessions whose fruits were evident.

16. The Chairman paid tribute to the memory of Ms. Genevieve Hill, who had passed away recently, as one of the pillars of the organization for many years. She offered her condolences to the staff of ECLAC, and the participants observed a minute of silence in honour of Ms. Hill.

17. The Chairman congratulated Ms. Zelmira Regazzoli, the representative of Argentina, who had recently been elected President of the Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States.

Report of the Meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Organizations of the United Nations System on Future Activities to Promote the Integration of Women into Latin American and Caribbean Development, in preparation for the 1995 World Conference on Women (agenda item 2)

18. The Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit, after presenting the report of the meeting held in Santiago, Chile, in September, said that the meeting had been very important because it had provided an opportunity to formalize the existing close cooperation among the agencies that carried out activities related to women in the region. The agencies of the United Nations system had stressed that the ultimate goal was to project a coherent joint message; even though their mandates differed in many ways, a common orientation had been established. The agencies had also set the goal of beginning to integrate the topic of women into overall processes and to apply gender-based analysis, and would continue to participate in the meetings of the Presiding Officers to share and strengthen the advances being made in that field.

19. The representative of Venezuela said that one problem observed in government initiatives was the lack of common basic criteria on gender-based approach. It was therefore important for national and multilateral agencies to agree on the adoption of essential theoretical guidelines, identifying areas not limited to their specific mandates to incorporate gender sensitivity more broadly. As a group, they should try to achieve a minimum of continuity in that respect.

20. The representative of Mexico proposed that organizations should concentrate on 1) integrating gender sensitivity into their projects and general activities relating to women, and 2) drafting a joint document, which would constitute an enriching contribution to the formulation of the new regional programme of action. The Presiding Officers should integrate those two spheres of action, so that the programme elaborated by the group of experts could provide guidance to international organizations.

21. In reply to those comments, the Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit said that the activities of specialized agencies and for the formulation of the programme of action would be simultaneous and would provide feedback for each other. The regional meetings of United Nations bodies and other organizations of the system could contribute to the elaboration of a medium-term plan for the region, and could strengthen the position of Latin America and the Caribbean in the inter-agency meetings held annually in Vienna. She agreed with the representative of Mexico that the elaboration of the programme of action should be integrated with coordination among specialized agencies.

22. With respect to the training programme being designed by UNIFEM, she said there was no formal mechanism for reporting to ECLAC on the progress made, but noted that there was a free flow of information between ECLAC and the new regional director of UNIFEM.

Report of the First Meeting of the Group of Experts for the Elaboration of a Regional Programme of Action for the Women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001 (agenda item 3)

23. The representative of Venezuela said she had participated in the meeting of experts because of her commitment to the issue. Since little time remained before the next session of the Regional Conference, the meetings of experts must be carefully planned and a programme of work must be prepared in advance, so that the experts could make more progress. Gender and gender policies had been explored in some excellent Latin American studies, which should be taken into account in the ECLAC document to be presented at the meeting of the Presiding Officers in Caracas; she offered to send some of those studies to the ECLAC secretariat. In addition, international organizations such as UNICEF, UNIFEM and UNFPA had made important contributions in the field of gender. As to the organization of the meeting of experts, the fact that some of the Presiding Officers had participated was very positive. That procedure should continue in the future, so that national realities would be considered in the application of gender analysis.

24. The representative of Mexico, after congratulating the participants in the meeting of experts on the work accomplished, said that the brief educational document presented did not appear to achieve the degree of theoretical depth proposed, especially with respect to the idea of power. In her view, the draft programme outline represented an intellectual basis for proposals for action which had yet to be defined.

25. The representative of the Netherlands Antilles said she regretted that the secretariat had not invited any academics from the Caribbean to such an important meeting of experts, though it had invited at least three from Latin America. She asked for an explanation of that omission.

26. The Chief of the Women and Development Unit said that the secretariat had invited experts with academic and political experience to gather opinions from various sectors. In fact, only two experts had been invited; a third, who lived in Mexico, had agreed to participate. Moreover, it was felt that the Caribbean had been very well represented by the Minister of Health and Women's Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis. The expert from Brazil had been invited because of her broad background in women's organizations.

27. The representative of the Netherlands Antilles said that although the Caribbean had indeed been represented by the Minister of Health and Women's Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis, Latin America had also been represented by some of the Presiding Officers. The economic and social situation of the

Caribbean was different from that of Latin America. No diagnosis or programme proposal could be complete if it failed to reflect clearly the social and economic reality of the Caribbean subregion.

28. The Minister of Health and Women's Affairs of Saint Kitts and Nevis said she agreed that the situation of the Caribbean was distinct in many areas, including religion, and that it had not been sufficiently analysed. A programme that sought to reflect the reality of Latin America and the Caribbean must take that fact into account. While it was true that she had represented the subregion at the meeting of experts, the meeting had consisted of academics and representatives of Governments; in her view, the Caribbean countries should also have been represented in both groups, since they wished to exchange experiences with the Latin American countries. She thought it appropriate for an expert from the Caribbean to participate in future meetings of experts, and said she had no trouble working with representatives of Latin America. Collaboration among all the countries of the region within ECLAC was still insufficient; she hoped it would be strengthened in the future and that Latin American and Caribbean integration would be consolidated.

29. The representative of Cuba pointed out that her country was in the Caribbean and said she agreed with the representatives of the Netherlands Antilles and Saint Kitts and Nevis that the Caribbean should be increasingly represented. The situation and characteristics of the Caribbean differed notably from those of Latin America, since, *inter alia*, they reflected very different cultural roots and experiences. An expert from the Caribbean should participate in the meetings of experts, since Latin Americans were generally unaware of the valuable theoretical contributions of that subregion.

30. The representative of Chile said that the report and the proposal for a regional programme of action reflected a new vision, a new way of planning in the region and a gender-sensitive approach. Those features constituted a notable advance in relation to the topic of women and manifested a qualitative and quantitative change. However, there was still great confusion about the meaning of gender policies; the practical needs of gender were confused with the strategic needs of gender. The goals proposed in the programme must be clearly defined, and the Nairobi Strategies analysed from a gender-based perspective. Criteria should be refined for the purposes of making a gender-sensitive diagnosis that would enable countries to share with one another the instruments with which they were working. Overall strategies should take into account non-formal education, particularly the communications media, which played an important educational role.

31. The topic of the family should be considered in the context of women's situation; the issues of power and violence were crucial in that regard. The former represented an interesting challenge, since it concerned the strategies for eliminating discrimination. However, in speaking of power a distinction must be made between individual and collective power; the attainment of power by some individual women was not the same as the opening of new opportunities for women as a gender. Many women in power refused to espouse the cause of women; in fact, that attitude may have facilitated their access to power.

32. The representative of Venezuela said she agreed with the comments of the representative of Chile, and proposed that the overall strategies of the regional programme of action should be re-examined, in view of the haste with which they had been considered at the meeting. The proposed strategies reflected an interest in analysing reality from a gender perspective, which must be included in all sectoral plans. The gender approach should be taken in all development-related sectors; to that end, it was necessary not only to determine practical needs, which had already been done, but also to begin evaluating strategic needs and to provide for meeting them. Further reflection on the gender approach was important for



future sectoral planning, in not only conceptual but also methodological, programmatic, diagnostic and other terms.

33. With regard to diagnosis, organizations had produced very significant material which, intentionally or not, reflected gender-related elements. Gender diagnosis basically meant identifying the mechanisms and factors that caused and perpetuated subordination. Therefore, it involved at least four phases: identifying all areas of action in which most diagnoses agreed that subordination-generating factors were present; diagnosing the sectors and factors in which women's contributions were ignored, for which purpose the work of researchers in other areas was often very valuable; determining the areas marked by indirect discrimination, which was less open and more difficult to detect; and organizing meetings between ECLAC and members of the academic community to refine instruments for gender analysis. The key to gender diagnosis was the systematic comparison of both sexes' performance in comparable periods and jobs, to determine specific needs, subordination factors, obstacles to personal and civic development and the advantages which the accepted models and behaviour gave men over women, by awarding them more power in the hierarchy. The methodology of gender diagnosis had nearly been consolidated in the region.

34. The representative of UNICEF congratulated the group of experts and the secretariat on the excellence of the document presented, whose focus on power relations was revolutionary. However, the specific strategies enumerated were merely a list of topics. The advances made in the region, *inter alia* in legislation and politics, national mechanisms and women's organizations, could not be ignored. The document should have included a chapter dealing exclusively with the dynamics of intervention and vulnerable groups, which should be approached in new ways. It was necessary to redefine some issues (such as violence) which had been defined as strategies in the programme of action, and to consider them problems which must receive priority attention in the region.

35. The representative of Saint Kitts and Nevis said she agreed with the representative of UNICEF that different concepts were being confused, since the document's chapter on specific strategies referred to the need to design strategies on certain topics. Perhaps that chapter should be retitled, since it contained only a list of issues that characterized the existing situation and that could be targeted by strategies.

36. The representative of IICA said that the regional programme of action represented a substantive change which reflected the many changes taking place in the world. However, the specific strategies seemed to be a confused list of both strategies and fields of action; there was also confusion between fields of action and sectors. Rural women should not be included among the vulnerable groups, since that view of them could imply that their problems called for protection and welfare rather than development. She suggested that the topic "Women in agricultural development" should be included in the list of topics and specific strategies. In addition, the document did not consider the change in the relation between the State and society; it indicated that women must occupy a new place in society and mentioned public policies as a vehicle for carrying out the strategies, but did not reflect the fact that the State was providing fewer and fewer services and delegating more and more functions to society. That important consideration should be included in the section on overall strategies.

37. With respect to diagnosis, she thought the reference to a new paradigm very important because it involved taking women's perspective into account. That approach should be reflected not only in diagnosis, but also in the programme objectives and overall strategies. The new programme of action took up the significant challenges of access to power and leadership capacity in the resolution of problems with wide-ranging, world-wide impact. IICA could make substantive contributions in areas such as gender and

sustainable development; women and communications, for which the Institute was formulating a regional strategy; sectoral policies; and the new relations in the agricultural sector and women's integration therein.

38. The representative of Argentina pointed out that the document presented was not definitive, since the experts would incorporate individual contributions into it in the following months. She recognized that it must be made more pragmatic; however, it was meant only as a framework on which to structure the programme.

39. The Assistant Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Office at Vienna said he was concerned about the programme's references to the issue of power, in that the sharing of power was considered as a means in some cases, and as an end in others. Viewed as an end, it was the result that emerged when equality was achieved in areas such as education and access to resources. In his opinion, the programme was not referring to that, but to power as a means, which represented a more immediate change.

40. The role of the State was an essential factor in all of the strategies. Both the Nairobi Strategies and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women gave the State certain obligations and responsibilities as a vital proponent of change. Since most public decision-makers in Latin America and the Caribbean were men, the idea of sharing power as a means implied changing that situation. It was important to keep that point in mind so as not to forget the real nature of the problem and the possibilities for solving it. Power should be seen not as an end but as a means. That was the great challenge posed by the programme of action.

41. The representative of the Netherlands Antilles said that her country had prepared a contribution for the group of experts, which would be forwarded through the secretariat.

42. The representative of UNICEF said that although the work done by the group of experts was innovative, the ECLAC secretariat might receive input from participants at the meeting in the coming months. The "historical context" should transcend the socio-economic sphere to enter the political sphere; in addition, consideration should be given to the changes taking place in the region at the administrative level as a result of decentralization, and in the legislative field as a result of the modernization of laws and constitutions.

#### Review of the new regional programme of action on the basis of agenda items 2 and 3 (agenda item 4)

43. The representative of IDB reported that the Bank had recently organized a seminar on women's participation in development in the Caribbean; when the final document of the seminar was published, it would be sent to all of the Presiding Officers. Moreover, the Bank had been working on the formulation of sectoral strategies; in 1992 it had concentrated on strategies relating to agriculture and education, and in 1993 it would work on the areas of health and the environment. It was very important for IDB to receive contributions from other organizations for the elaboration of those strategies.

44. Women's organizations in the various countries must be strengthened, given the futility of formulating strategies in the absence of a counterpart to assist in applying them. A separate strategy should therefore be formulated to strengthen national mechanisms in charge of activities relating to women. In 1993, IDB would hold a seminar to analyse the problems of national women's offices and to

determine how those offices could be strengthened to work more effectively at the national level. In addition, women's important role in poverty reduction should be taken into account in overall and sectoral strategies.

45. The representative of Chile said that the specific strategies in the new regional programme of action should also be related to power. She recalled that at their Curaçao meeting, the Presiding Officers had proposed concrete policies that would give women access to power, including the setting of quotas and the adoption of measures to counter women's inequality, while supporting all decentralization efforts and local authorities and strengthening all social organizations and women's groups.

46. The representative of the UNESCO Coordinating Unit for Activities relating to the Status of Women said her organization was interested in cooperating in the application of the new regional programme of action. Activities for the advancement of women were a priority for UNESCO, and reflected a dual purpose: designing and executing projects for women with women's participation, on the one hand, and, on the other, considering the viewpoints of women and their concrete contributions in as many activities as possible. All the activities related to women were described in the UNESCO work programme, in the subsection on women under the heading "Transverse Themes", and corresponded to the seven main dimensions of the UNESCO programme: education and the future; science for progress and the environment; culture: past, present and future; communication in the service of humanity; the social and human sciences in a changing world; prospective studies and strategies with concerned development; and the contribution of UNESCO to peace, human rights and the elimination of all forms of discrimination. She then named the UNESCO publications on those topics and reviewed concrete activities and projects for women being carried out in Latin America and the Caribbean.

47. The representative of Venezuela said that three elements were particularly important for the strategic aspect of the regional programme of action: clear definition of the international and regional context and of existing problems in each country; formulation of strategies that took into account the international obstacles hindering the application of the regional programme; and continued very close collaboration between ECLAC and the various participants in its formulation. She hoped that the group of experts could meet again before the next meeting of the Presiding Officers.

48. The representative of Mexico said that the participation of international organizations in the meetings of the Presiding Officers was very positive, since the exchange of information and viewpoints strengthened and enriched the work of ECLAC and the Presiding Officers. She hesitated to endorse the idea of elaborating a new programme of action for "the integration of women into the development process", since priority should be given to women's participation in all political, economic, social and cultural activities. The report of the meeting of experts simply reflected ideas that should be incorporated in a formal document on the concrete activities that should be carried out in relation to women in Latin America and the Caribbean. She agreed with the proposal of the representative of the Netherlands Antilles on the participation of the Caribbean in the group of experts, and suggested that, if the necessary funds were available, an expert from the Caribbean should be invited to participate in the group of academics.

49. The Chairman said that although she supported the suggestion of the representative of Mexico, efforts should focus on integrating the Caribbean fully, considering the potential contributions of experts from that subregion. She hoped ECLAC could meet that need.

50. The representative of IICA mentioned some points that should be reflected in the new programme of action. First, it was essential to identify possible strategic allies for a programme of that type, because

the qualitative changes which had occurred had been limited to individuals and institutions in the social sector and to groups of female experts on the topic; the support of other sectors was needed. The programme should stress the importance of spreading awareness of the topic of women to groups involved in making macroeconomic policies, and women should try to participate in the formulation of such policies. The programme should define not only the ideal situation being sought, but also various situations in which the proposed strategies could be applied, bearing in mind the influence of changes in factors external to the programme's implementation. The use of non-traditional working methods was a risk worth taking, since it would lead to experimentation in other areas.

51. The representative of Venezuela said that some chapters of the ECLAC document on changing production patterns with social equity should be rewritten to incorporate the gender-based approach. The multi-dimensional reality of Latin America should be reflected, and consideration should be given to topics such as the reproduction of poverty, population policies as opportunities for new reproductive freedom for women, and non-sexist education as a means of promoting the empowerment of women. In reply to the representative of IICA on the question of defining the "micro-" and "macro-" approaches, she said that in general terms they denoted the theoretical framework that had been applied in Latin America and the development of a new economic model based on social equity and sustainability.

52. The Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit thanked the participants for their comments and said that since the programme of action was being formulated within ECLAC, it would be linked to the development model based on changing production patterns with social equity. She felt that the topic of youth of both sexes should also be included, again from the perspective of gender.

53. The representative of UNICEF suggested that fields of action for non-governmental and other organizations should be identified in the programme and that the latter should emphasize the role of society and women in the modern world. With respect to guidelines for the future, efforts should focus not on trying to explain the causes of the current situation, but on making practical use of the knowledge and experience acquired to reach the goals established.

54. The representative of UNEP said it was important for the programme of action to relate the issue of the environment to all sectors, instead of placing it in a separate chapter. She offered to send the secretariat a detailed study of the relationship between women and the environment, so that it could be taken into account in the programme. She discussed in detail the activities under the action plan of the UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, which stressed environmental management for development and included the topic of women. The Regional Office was willing to support and collaborate with Governments in that area.

#### Adoption of the report of the fourteenth meeting of the Presiding Officers (agenda item 5)

55. The representative of the Netherlands Antilles said that since her country had received the report of the preceding meeting of the Presiding Officers late, she wanted more time in which to review it, and would send her comments to the secretariat within 60 days. She recalled that it had been agreed at the fourteenth meeting to include a representative of the Caribbean in the group of experts, and asked why that decision had not been acted upon.

56. The Secretary of ECLAC said that according to the usual procedure employed by the Commission with respect to reports of meetings, the text was considered adopted if comments were not received within

60 days after it was sent, and asked the representative of the Netherlands Antilles to send her comments to the secretariat for inclusion in the current report.

57. The representative of Venezuela said she wished to place on record her appreciation of the interest and contributions of the representative of the Netherlands Antilles, as Chairman and as one of the Presiding Officers. She fully supported the latter's proposal to establish closer relations among the countries represented by the Presiding Officers between meetings, taking into account the actual availability of resources. To that end, she suggested that an information bulletin should be prepared by the Secretary of the Presiding Officers, or the countries themselves, for distribution to the Presiding Officers. Although a year had passed since the fifth session of the Regional Conference, the Presiding Officers were not monitoring all of the resolutions adopted at that time; she therefore proposed that the topic should be included in the agenda of their next meeting.

58. The representative of Argentina said she agreed with the representative of Venezuela that most of the commitments made at the preceding meeting had not been fulfilled, *inter alia* that of each Presiding Officer to contact countries that were not represented by the Presiding Officers.

59. The representative of Cuba recalled, in connection with the comment of the representative of the Netherlands Antilles, that the Presiding Officers had agreed at the preceding meeting that all of Latin America should be integrated. That goal required a special effort to incorporate the Caribbean.

#### Evaluation of the work of the Presiding Officers in 1991-1992 (agenda item 6)

60. The representative of the Netherlands Antilles said that the Presiding Officers should analyse the work they had accomplished in their first year in office before considering future activities. She recalled the resolutions adopted at the fifth session of the Regional Conference, particularly the one on women and human resources. In her view, it was necessary to determine which activities had been carried out and which were still pending, and to reflect on the degree of satisfaction with the achievements made in the current Presiding Officers' first year of work. She also suggested that they should consider how to intensify communication among themselves, with the secretariat and with the organizations invited to participate in their meetings.

61. The Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit said that the secretariat had taken the resolutions of the fifth session of the Regional Conference into account in its work plan. She recalled that at the preceding meeting of the Presiding Officers, the secretariat had presented a document on women and violence —the subject of one of the resolutions— and said it hoped to receive guidelines on the topic from the Presiding Officers. With respect to human resources, bibliographical and statistical information was being compiled, which would also be used in the diagnosis.

62. She agreed that it was important to intensify the dissemination of information, but instead of creating a new bulletin, it might be more effective for the Presiding Officers to become more closely associated with the information systems of the United Nations and networks of women's organizations, such as Isis International. It would also be very useful for them to send information to the secretariat for subsequent dissemination.

63. With regard to the fulfilment of other resolutions adopted at the fifth session of the Regional Conference, the representative of Chile said that important activities concerning domestic violence were

being carried out in her country. Training on the subject had been provided to police officers and authorities of the judicial, educational and health systems throughout the country, and a research project, funded by the Pan American Health Organization, had been conducted on cases of domestic violence among the entire population. That study had concluded that some 80% of battered women had never reported the incidents of abuse, and 30% of them had never mentioned the topic to anyone. In view of the urgent need to compile information on the subject, she offered to make available to the countries of the region the methodological tools used in her country, and to provide technical advisory assistance on the conduct of the study.

64. The representative of Argentina said that her country, like Chile, was conducting research on violence, and offered to make the results thereof available to the Presiding Officers. Moreover, in November 1992 an information and training campaign would be carried out in Argentina to spread awareness of the mechanisms available for reporting acts of violence against women.

65. The representative of Venezuela said that a draft law on domestic violence had been submitted to her country's Congress and drew attention to certain important programmes being carried out, *inter alia* on the prevention of teenage pregnancy and on personal development, both of which were intended to empower women.

66. The Assistant Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Office at Vienna said he agreed that the problem of violence against women was very serious and should be addressed, even though neither the United Nations Office at Vienna nor ECLAC had received specific mandates on the subject. The programme of action should analyse the problem of violence comprehensively, i.e., without circumscribing it within given areas, such as the legal system or social well-being.

Review of future activities relating to the work of the Presiding Officers in preparation for the sixth session of the Regional Conference, including meetings of the Presiding Officers (agenda item 7)

67. The Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit presented a proposed provisional calendar of documents and activities of the Presiding Officers, the inter-agency group of experts and the United Nations Office at Vienna for 1993-1994 (see annex).

68. The Assistant Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women of the United Nations Office at Vienna explained that all regional activities corresponded to the mandate of the Commission on the Status of Women. Therefore, other preparations for the 1995 World Conference should also be considered. In the first week of November, a seminar would be held in Greece on women and poverty and the role of the State. In 1993, a seminar would be held in Vienna on the elimination of violence against women and the application of measures to achieve that end, and another in Tunisia on urban women. In 1994, women's participation in international decision-making would be examined, and a document was expected to be published on women's role in economic decision-making in the private sector. He hoped that education, literacy and science and technology would also be analysed as priority topics.

69. The representative of the Netherlands Antilles said that since it had been agreed to formulate a regional programme of action which faithfully reflected the reality of Latin America and the Caribbean,

a seminar should be organized on the topic in the English-, French- and Dutch-speaking Caribbean, for which ECLAC should try to obtain funding.

70. The representative of Cuba said that although she supported the proposal of the representative of the Netherlands Antilles, the convening of the meeting would depend on the availability of financial resources. She was concerned about the fact that only one meeting of the Presiding Officers was scheduled for 1994, and asked whether a second meeting could be held in May in the Caribbean, in Saint Kitts and Nevis or Cuba, which would be separate from the meeting of experts requested by the representative of the Netherlands Antilles.

71. The Secretary of ECLAC said it must be borne in mind that the allocation of resources for meetings in the United Nations was very specific and that resources could not be carried over from one year to another.

72. In the debate on diagnosis, the Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit said that a diagnosis could be formulated initially in conceptual terms and later in quantitative terms. Since information on measures adopted was needed for that purpose, she invited all the countries to provide examples of innovative proposals to complement the overall diagnosis.

73. In reply to that request, the representative of Argentina said that educational programmes in her country were being reformulated to eliminate sexual stereotypes, with contributions from the World Bank and support from the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW).

74. In her capacity as President of the Inter-American Commission of Women (IACW), she said that she would also participate in future meetings of the Presiding Officers as a representative of IACW. However, she asked ECLAC to send a formal invitation to IACW on each of those occasions to strengthen relations between the two organizations. She then enumerated the items discussed at the recent Assembly of IACW, referring in particular to the plan for women's full participation and equality to the year 2000, which contained strategies and measures for meeting that objective. IACW recognized the need to strengthen national mechanisms, and one of its basic principles was the application of gender analysis to all planning activities. Since IACW and ECLAC shared the same objectives, and since the sixth session of the Regional Conference would be held in 1994 to adopt the programme of action, while the next Assembly of Delegates of IACW would be held in October of that year, it would be a good time for the two organizations to carry out joint activities to take full advantage of their limited resources.

75. Lastly, she proposed that a multidisciplinary meeting should be organized and held in Buenos Aires in 1994 with the participation of women of all ages and sectors.

76. The representative of Mexico recalled the agreement to continue to invite international entities to the meetings of the Presiding Officers, adopted at the fourteenth meeting. She felt that the current number of entities invited was sufficient, and that a formal list of invitations should be drawn up.

## C. RESOLUTION

77. The following resolution was adopted at the fifteenth meeting of the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean:

Deeply committed to the preparations for the 1995 World Conference on Women, which should give new momentum to the mandate of the United Nations to strive for the improvement of the status of women;

Taking note of resolution 36/8 of the Commission on the Status of Women concerning preparations for the World Conference, particularly section A, paragraph 5, which recommends that the Secretary-General appoint a woman as Secretary-General of the Conference, not later than 1992;

Aware that the World Conference on Women, to be held on the threshold of the twenty-first century, is strategically important for qualitative change in the status of women, and that it should therefore enjoy the same status as other world conferences, meaning that it should have a specially designated Secretary-General with primary responsibility for the preparation of the Conference;

Considering that the region of Latin America and the Caribbean has distinguished itself by its compliance with international instruments in force on the status of women, by women's advancement through the adoption of government decisions and by its leadership in the holding of world conferences on women;

Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to appoint a Secretary-General from the region of Latin America and the Caribbean for the 1995 World Conference on Women;

Suggests that Ambassador Olga Pellicer of Mexico be considered for that post, in view of her international stature in relation to the advancement of women and her broad experience in the United Nations system, as called for in resolution 36/8 of the Commission on the Status of Women.



Annex

CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES FOR 1993-1994

1993	Presiding Officers	United Nations (Vienna)	Experts	Documents
JANUARY	Send comments on programme to ECLAC	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), Vienna	Send comments on programme to ECLAC	
FEBRUARY				Second version of programme; consolidation
MARCH		Commission, Vienna Agency meeting		
APRIL				
MAY				Send programme to Presiding Officers, experts, United Nations
JUNE	Sixteenth meeting of Presiding Officers Analysis of programme; regional agency meeting - Caracas*	World Conference on Human Rights, Vienna	Second meeting of experts; programme, Caracas	
JULY	Consultations and inputs	Regional conference, Colombia		Third version of programme
AUGUST	Idem.			
SEPTEMBER	Idem.	Group of experts on violence, Vienna		
OCTOBER				
NOVEMBER	Seventeenth meeting of Presiding Officers, Santiago	Seminar on urban women, Tunisia	Third meeting of experts; programme, Santiago*	
DECEMBER				

\* Depending on the availability of resources.

1994	Presiding Officers	United Nations (Vienna)	Experts	Documents
JANUARY	Consultations, discussion of programme	CEDAW, New York		Final version of programme; diagnosis
FEBRUARY				Dissemination of programme in the region for comment
MARCH		Commission, Vienna; Agency meeting		
APRIL				
MAY	Eighteenth meeting of Presiding Officers	Meeting on population, Cairo		
JUNE		Regional agency meeting***		
JULY				
AUGUST				
SEPTEMBER	Nineteenth meeting of Presiding Officers Sixth session of Regional Conference	Meeting on women & international decision-making, Vienna**	Pre-Conference meeting*	
OCTOBER				
NOVEMBER		Meeting on women & economic decision-making, Vienna		
DECEMBER				

\* Depending on the availability of resources.

\*\* Tentative date.

\*\*\* Date to be determined with the organizations of the United Nations system.