



UNITED NATIONS

ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



GENERAL

E/CEPAL/AC.71/2
18 October 1977

ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH

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C E P A L

Economic Commission for Latin America

Committee of the Whole
Eleventh Extraordinary Session

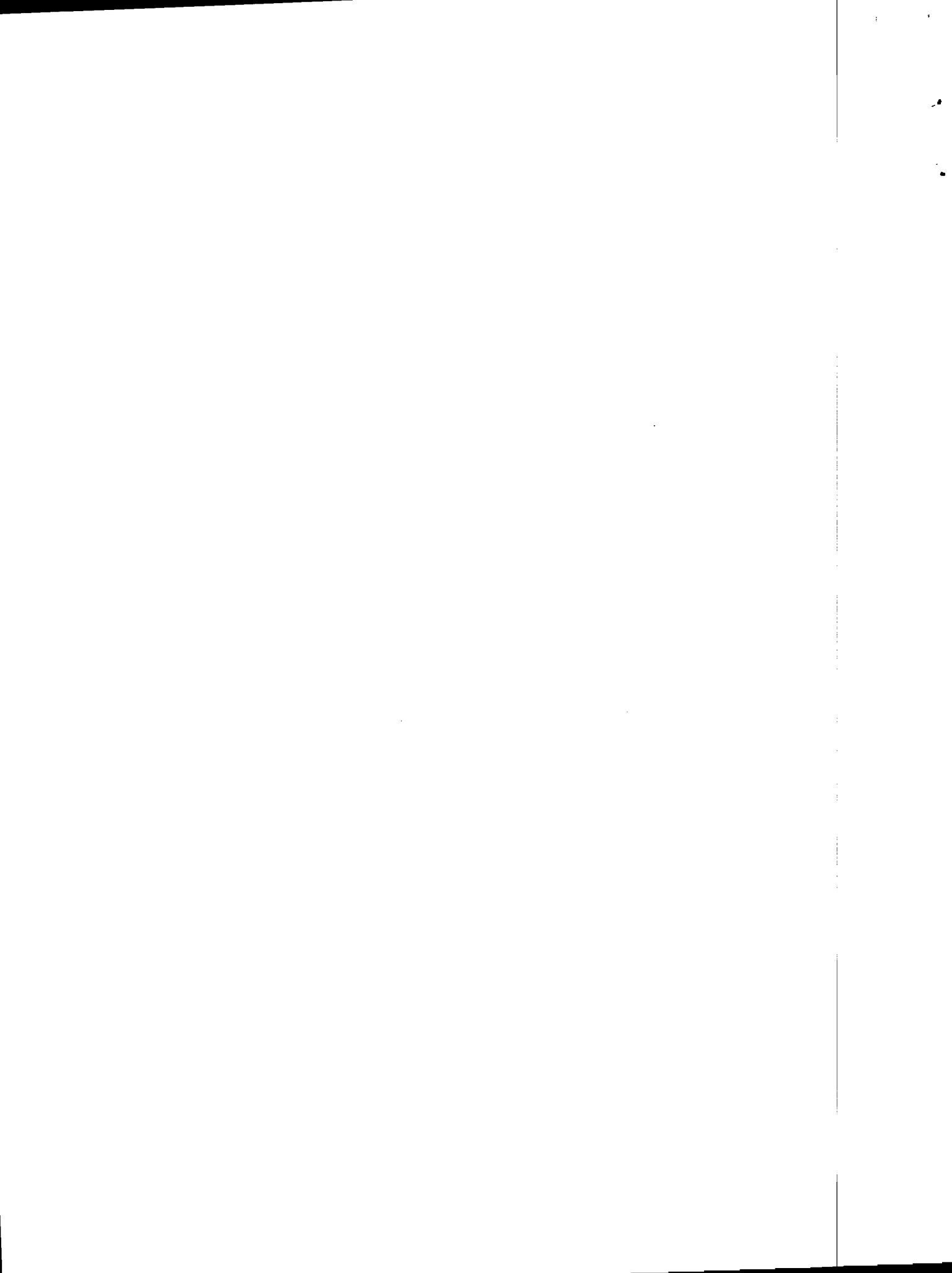
New York, 21 - 22 November 1977

REPLIES OF GOVERNMENTS AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES TO THE CONSULTATIONS
BY THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF CEPAL ON THE REPORT OF THE REGIONAL
CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN THE ECONOMIC AND
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA (E/CEPAL/1042).
OTHER ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT

77-10-2635

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. REPLIES TO THE CONSULTATIONS ON THE REPORT OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA	3
1. Background	3
2. Nature of the consultations	3
3. Observations made by governments	5
4. Observations made by international organizations	6
II. ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT OF CEPAL FOLLOWING THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA	13



I. REPLIES TO THE CONSULTATIONS ON THE REPORT OF THE
REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN
THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF
LATIN AMERICA 1/

1. Background

At the seventeenth session of CEPAL (Guatemala City, 25 April to 5 May 1977), the Commission unanimously adopted decisions to hold a government-level regional conference in Havana at an early date and to carry out a wide range of consultations to provide delegations with the necessary information to decide about the implementation of the programme. In effect, these decisions implemented resolutions already adopted at previous sessions of the Commission.

For its part, the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America, held in Havana from 13 to 17 June 1977, adopted a resolution recommending "That the Executive Secretary of CEPAL should convene an extraordinary session of the Committee of the Whole of the Commission during 1977 to give final approval to the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development and to adopt the necessary measures to guarantee its rapid and effective implementation".2/

2. Nature of the consultations

The consultations on the Report of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America were given the widest possible scope, including the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of all the Member States of the Commission; the centres and divisions belonging to United Nations Headquarters; the specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations system; the Administrator and the chief of Latin American operations of the United Nations Development Programme and all the

1/ E/CEPAL/1042.

2/ Ibid., p. 4.

Resident Representatives in the region; the directors of the divisions and regional offices of CEPAL; the delegations which took part in the Mexico City meeting and in the Regional Conference in Havana; and other intergovernmental organizations.

In the covering letter accompanying the consultations it was requested that any comments on the Plan of Action included in the report should reach the secretariat by 31 August 1977.

The replies have been numerous and positive. This document, however, includes only those which make substantive comments on the Plan of Action.

3. Observations made by governments

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

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ETAT

DR. ENRIQUE V. IGLESIAS

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF THE ECONOMIC COMMISSION

FOR LATIN AMERICA (CEPAL)

UNATIONS

SANTIAGO, CHILE

DSMB-19291 HAVE PLEASURE IN SENDING YOU OBSERVATIONS OF DOMINICAN GOVERNMENT ON REGIONAL PLAN FOR INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA, DOCUMENT E/CEPAL/1042. ON PAGE 43, POINT 8, INSERT NEW PARAGRAPH (i) "REQUESTS THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF CEPAL TO ASSIGN FUNDS FROM HIS REGULAR BUDGET TO MAKE POSSIBLE THE SETTING UP IN HIS ORGANIZATION OF A SPECIALIZED UNIT FOR THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT AND TO SUPERVISE THE CARRYING OUT OF ITS ACTIVITIES" AND PARAGRAPH (ii) "REQUESTS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS TO ASSIGN ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO THE CEPAL SECRETARIAT TO STRENGTHEN ITS ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD OF WOMEN"; AND RENUMBER OTHER PARAGRAPHS AS APPROPRIATE. LISELOTTE MARIE DE BARRIOS, UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

4. Observations made by international organizations 3/

UNITED NATIONS CHILDREN'S FUND - UNICEF

31 August 1977

Dear Enrique,

Thank you for sending me the Final Report of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America, which took place in Havana, Cuba, from 13 to 17 June 1977.

In the opinion of UNICEF this document is the first systematic approach of a regional nature to the problem of the formulation of policies and implementation of programmes for the incorporation of women in Latin American development.

With regard to the action at the national level proposed in this document, UNICEF considers it important to stress the training and employment of women in rural areas, especially in craft activities and the production, processing and marketing of rural products. Also worthy of note is the attention paid in this document - in contrast to the World Plan of Action approved in Mexico - to the reorientation of schools in order to convert them into centres of multiple training and nuclei of social development, through their linking with productive activities. In UNICEF, emphasis is being placed on non-formal education, especially functional literacy and local training.

Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias
Executive Secretary
CEPAL

3/ In Spanish alphabetical order, so as to correspond with the original Spanish text of this document.

Another novel point which this document brings up and which is a matter of primary interest in UNICEF is the need for pre-school education, although the subject is not dealt with in detail. Likewise, the emphasis which is placed on breast-feeding and the nutritional needs of the mother accords with the priorities which UNICEF has fixed, in conjunction with PAHO/WHO, as a guideline for its international co-operation. It is worth pointing out that this is the first time that a document of this type has explicitly stated the conditions necessary for the participation of women, taking into account their domestic role, and has proposed measures in this respect. Within its own programmes, UNICEF promotes such measures as the institutional and non-institutional care of young children, taking a comprehensive approach including the co-operation of the parents; community dining-rooms and public laundries which ease domestic work; the introduction of intermediate technology into agricultural and domestic activities, making use of local experience and materials; etc.

With reference to action at the international level (paragraph 88) I venture to suggest:

1. That the reference to the encouragement of technical co-operation among developing countries which was contained in the preliminary draft (page 39), should be added to action proposed 1(v).
2. In action proposal 5:
 - (a) Sub-paragraphs (iii) and (viii) on technical assistance to governments could be combined in one point, making mention of the need for collaboration and co-ordination with international co-operation agencies.
 - (b) A reference to consultation with international co-operation agencies should be added to sub-paragraph (vi).
 - (c) In sub-paragraph (v) it seems necessary to clarify the mechanisms through which the execution of the recommendations of the regional conferences will be assured and the level at which this action will be undertaken.

/(d) Sub-paragraph

(d) Sub-paragraph (ix) can be added to (i) in order to clarify
the relation between the two.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed) Carlos Martínez Sotomayor
Regional Director

UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND
CULTURAL ORGANIZATION 4/

FOR IGLESIAS, WITH COPY TO FERNANDEZ. THANKS YOUR LETTER OF 28 JULY AND FINAL REPORT IN HAVANA CONFERENCE ON INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA. UNESCO COMMENTS ON ACTION PLAN FOLLOW. FIRST: PLAN CONSIDERED FULLY ADEQUATE, HOWEVER A LIST OF PRIORITY AREAS WITH SCHEDULED IMPLEMENTATION PHASES SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED. ACTIVITIES WHICH DO NOT REQUIRE IMPORTANT ADDITIONAL RESOURCES, SUCH AS ADOPTION OF EDUCATIONAL POLICY TO PROVIDE EQUALITY OPPORTUNITIES FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN AND REVISION AND UPDATING OF EDUCATIONAL LEGISLATION TO ENSURE UNIFORM EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES SHOULD BEGIN SOONEST. SECOND: PLEASE INSERT PAGE 16 POINT 25, AFTER "ILLITERATE POPULATION", WORDS "AND THE NUMBER OF ILLITERATE WOMEN INCREASES FASTER THAN THAT OF MEN". PAGE 18, AFTER POINT 10, INSERT FOLLOWING PARAGRAPH: "TO ADOPT MEASURES TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S DAILY WORKING CONDITIONS, PARTICULARLY IN RURAL ZONES, WITH VIEW TO THE ADOPTION OR ADAPTATION OF TECHNIQUES AND WORKING INSTRUMENTS TO FREE THEIR TIME AND ENERGY FOR EDUCATION AND OTHER ACTIVITIES". THIRD: AWAITING FOUR INFORMATION ON SPECIAL SESSION OF COMMITTEE WHOLE CEPAL. IF NECESSARY SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS WILL FOLLOW. (NAJMAN, UNESCO, PARIS)

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE (ILO) 5/

7 September 1977

Dear Sir,

Thank you for sending the Director-General the final report of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in Development, held in Havana, Cuba, from 13 to 17 June 1977.

This report has been read with great interest by the relevant specialists of ILO, and I have pleasure in transmitting herewith the Office's comments on the subject.

By and large, ILO is entirely in agreement with the Regional Plan of Action, and especially with the contents of paragraphs 2 and 3 of Part IV of the report (I. Introduction).

In action proposals 7 and 8 on page 14, the question arises of whether there is not a danger of going too far and too fast in trying to eliminate protective laws and provisions.

The Office expresses its full agreement with the analyses and suggestions contained in action proposals (b)(4) on page 15.

As regards the suggestions made in action proposal (b)(9) on page 16, it is clearly highly desirable that more women should participate in the work of the trade unions, but it would seem doubtful whether the creation and strengthening of women's trade union sections is beneficial to women in the long run. Most of the "women's problems" concern the question of motherhood. It is, of course, necessary to protect pregnant women and mothers, but the other problems arising in connexion with motherhood should be viewed as problems which concern society as a whole, and not just women. It is not therefore desirable that they should be dealt with by a special "women's section".

Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias
Executive Secretary
CEPAL - United Nations
Santiago, Chile

I should like to add that I am very pleased that co-operation between your Regional Commission and the ILO is being intensified, and I would be grateful if you would send me the text of the final report when it is adopted at the forthcoming session which your state is going to be convened.

Yours sincerely,

(Signed)

Bertil Bolin
Assistant Director-General

PAN-AMERICAN HEALTH ORGANIZATION (PAHO)

29 August 1977

Dear Mr. Iglesias,

I refer to your kind letter of 28 July, enclosing a copy of the Final Report of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America, which took place in Havana, Cuba, from 13 to 17 June 1977.

In this connexion my Central Office informs me that the Division of Family Health has no comments to add to those already made on the draft of the document.

Yours sincerely,

Carlos Dávila
Representative of PAHO/WHO in Chile

Mr. Enrique V. Iglesias
Executive Secretary
Economic Commission for Latin America
Santiago, Chile

II. ACTIVITIES OF THE SECRETARIAT OF CEPAL FOLLOWING THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN IN THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA

In the brief period which has elapsed since the Regional Conference, the CEPAL secretariat has carried out, through its Special Unit for the integration of Women in Development, a series of activities which began with the revision, publication and distribution of the report of the Conference for consultation with the interested parties: the replies received are given in the preceding paragraphs.

The variety of activities which the Regional Commissions have to carry out in pursuance of the mandates received from various sources calls for careful programming in order to make the best use of the resources available. A document has therefore been prepared containing details of the activities which CEPAL proposes to carry out in this field during the period 1977-1980, together with the guidelines which will govern its work, including forecasts concerning technical assistance, research, the dissemination of information, evaluation work and regional co-ordination.

The Special Unit has associated itself with the projects which CEPAL is carrying out on critical poverty and rural social development, taking part in the activities which concern it and endeavouring to ensure the inclusion of aspects relating to women in both projects.

New missions have been carried out in different countries of the region, so that now practically all have been visited. The Unit has thus obtained a first overview of the situation with regard to the integration of women in development in the various countries.

At its second session, the Advisory Committee of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women earmarked 400,000 dollars for CEPAL, to be used according to the priorities laid down by General Assembly resolution 31/133 and by the Advisory Committee itself. At the Committee's request steps were immediately taken to identify national projects. For this purpose cables were sent

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to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the following countries: Barbados, Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, El Salvador, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, the Dominican Republic and Trinidad and Tobago. Cables were also sent to the Resident Representatives of UNDP in those countries, to the CEPAL Mexico Office, to the CEPAL Office for the Caribbean and to CARICOM, reproducing the text of the cables sent to the countries and seeking co-operation in obtaining replies by 15 August. Subsequently, communication was maintained with those countries which have indicated the existence of projects in their replies, with a view to obtaining fuller information.

Meanwhile a proposal has been prepared for the use of part of the resources allotted. This provides for the recruitment of a Programme Officer and an assistant for the Special Unit, the recruitment of an expert to carry out centralizing and co-ordination functions in the Caribbean, the collection and processing of statistics, the collection and systematization of basic information for the setting up of a reference service, and the execution of a study in connexion with evaluation activities.

At the beginning of October a new inter-agency meeting was held, to which all the agencies of the United Nations system represented in Santiago were invited. The agenda included the following items: (a) Activities of CEPAL; (b) Consideration of a preliminary version of the inventory of projects of the various bodies operating in the region; (c) Inter-agency co-ordination activities; (d) The 1980 World Conference.

Finally, the secretariat has made preparations for the extraordinary session of the Committee of the Whole of CEPAL convened for the purpose of the final approval of the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in the Economic and Social Development of Latin America.



