



**REPORT OF THE THIRD 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**

(Santiago, Chile, 13 December 1993)

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Mandate

1. The Third 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, was convened by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) pursuant to the Regional Plan of Action adopted at the first session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, held at Havana, Cuba, in 1977. The Regional Plan of Action mandates that "the secretariat of CEPAL will consult with the United Nations specialized agencies which have programmes on women's integration in development".

Place and date

2. In fulfilment of the aforementioned mandates, the Third 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, was held at Santiago, Chile, on 13 December 1993.

Attendance

3. The following specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system were represented at the Meeting: United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), International Labour Organisation (ILO) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Also represented were the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the Inter-American Commission of Women of the Organization of American States (IACW/OAS), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the UNDP/UNHCR Joint Support Unit of the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA).

Agenda

4. The participants adopted the following agenda:
 1. Adoption of the agenda
 2. Comments on the regional programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001
 3. Activities planned for 1994
 4. National and subregional preparations for the next session of the Regional Conference and for the World Conference, and financial coordination
 5. Consideration of the decisions taken at the Second 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
 6. Adoption of agreements.

B. SUMMARY OF DEBATES

5. The Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) said that the preparations for the 1994 session of the Regional Conference offered a very valuable opportunity to address the topic of women and their integration into development. At ECLAC, that subject no longer had a sectoral connotation, since it had been integrated into all of the secretariat's areas of work, reflecting the conviction that the subject of women occupied a prominent place in the Commission's latest proposal. At the regional level, coordination with Governments was crucial to ensuring that mandates relating to women's advancement were not pushed into the background.

6. He referred in particular to intergovernmental organizations, which were free to act in the interest of all the Governments. Thus, preparations for the 1994 and 1995 conferences must continue and, at the same time, concerted efforts must be made to ensure that the topic of women received the attention it deserved in the region.

Comments on the regional programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001 (agenda item 2)

7. The participants analysed the preliminary version of the programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean after 1995, which had been presented at the seventeenth meeting of the Presiding Officers, and the proposed strategic objectives; they also examined the draft programme elaborated at the informal meeting of the Presiding Officers on 6 and 7 December, which included proposed general strategic areas, strategic objectives and tactical objectives. In addition, the ECLAC secretariat had prepared a document containing a list of proposed activities, of which the countries could

select the ones they deemed most appropriate. On the basis of those documents, the participants endorsed the position of ECLAC with regard to the programme of action, and recognized that the latter must be incorporated into processes of reflection at the international level; i.e., it must be linked to the topics to be considered at the 1995 World Summit for Social Development.

8. In general, the participants felt that the regional programme of action should attach special importance to economic considerations, especially labour-related, and should stress the elements that were common to all the countries of the region, such as the impact of the adjustment process under way since the 1980s. In particular, they agreed that the preamble should mention all of the legal instruments related to the topic of women, and should include a brief analysis of the following topics: structural adjustment and regional integration; the concept of gender in the context of the region's political democratization process; positive and negative aspects of the current economic transition; social and gender equity as essential elements of development; and the concentration of wealth and intensification of poverty deriving from structural adjustment. Detailed suggestions were also presented on topics that should be included in the programme of action; reference was made, *inter alia*, to access to professional training and employment, support services for working women, women's full exercise of their human rights and especially their reproductive rights, building the capacity of Governments to carry out programmes for achieving gender equity, strengthening human resources development and eliminating sexual stereotypes.

9. The International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) said that mention should be made of the effects of armed conflicts and political conflicts on women, especially since peace was one of the themes of the World Conference and of the suggestions put forward by its Secretary-General. CIREFCA also proposed including the statement that uprooted women (refugee, displaced and repatriated women) were a vulnerable group and, as such, should be given special attention.

10. With regard to the language used in the programme of action, the participants agreed that the term "gender" should be used in relation to general and theoretical topics, and the expression "women and men" or "men and women" in more specific cases; references to positive discrimination should specifically indicate the need to adopt measures geared towards women. As to the general orientation of the programme, they agreed to work towards the practical application of the gender perspective.

Activities planned for 1994 (agenda item 3)

11. The representatives of the participating organizations reported on the activities to be carried out in 1994 as part of the preparations for the next session of the Regional Conference and for the World Conference. Their reports are summarized below, in the order in which they were presented:

12. The United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) was involved in the organization of meetings of the consultative group established in Central America to define that subregion's position at the Regional Conference. It had also organized a meeting of Mexican non-governmental organizations, to be held during the third week of February, to impart political content to its reports, and had organized national meetings of non-governmental organizations in Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, at which coordinating commissions had been established in order to systematize exchanges of information and organizational activities related to the Regional Conference and the World Conference.

13. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) would participate in the following activities: subregional meeting of the Andean Parliament on legislation and women, and monitoring of legislation on violence; meeting of the Central American Parliament to review legislation on violence; meeting of government offices for women; informational seminars on the conferences planned for 1994 and 1995, which would be attended by press, radio and television journalists; and courses for women participating in politics and holding government office, especially in those countries of the region planning to hold elections in 1994.

14. The representative of the Inter-American Commission of Women (IACW), a specialized body of the Organization of American States (OAS), reported that IACW had allocated an indicative amount, as basic financing for the member States, for the preparation of the national governmental reports evaluating the status of women which were to be presented at the regional preparatory meetings and at the World Conference. IACW had also evaluated the indicators identified by the United Nations, and had suggested the inclusion of additional indicators in order to facilitate a proper analysis. With respect to coordination at the national level, she said she would be requesting the offices of the OAS General Secretariat in all the countries to contact the Resident Representatives of UNDP, who in fact worked closely with official delegates to IACW, most of whom would be directly involved in all the preparations for the World Conference. IACW would be holding its preparatory meeting for that Conference in Mar del Plata, the week before the ECLAC meeting, and was considering the possibility of providing funds for one participant per country. She distributed copies in English and Spanish of the draft Inter-American convention on the prevention, punishment and eradication of violence against women, which had been prepared by IACW and submitted to governments for consideration. IACW hoped to be able to present the draft to the next regular session of the OAS General Assembly, to be held in June at Belém do Pará (Brazil), for adoption and signature. Lastly, UNICEF, IACW/OAS and UNIFEM would be providing support for the holding of a meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Network of Government Offices for Women.

15. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) would organize a regional meeting to formulate a plan of action on parental education, especially for women, in the context of the International Year of the Family. It would also finish preparing, in 1994, a comparative analysis of human development indicators and of the progress of women and young people in the field of education; it had elaborated the analysis with the help of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

16. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) planned to hold subregional workshops for the technical cooperation networks of institutions and agencies working to help rural women in Mesoamerica and South America. One of the main objectives of both workshops was to formulate a subregional plan of action.

17. The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) would continue to participate in activities in support of the Regional Conference and the World Conference. Those activities responded to the initiative taken by 14 bilateral and international cooperation agencies and had the backing of non-governmental organizations and various sectors of civil society. IICA would also be reporting on the results of the programme it had carried out, in cooperation with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), on female producers of food in Central America, the Caribbean and South America.

18. The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) was co-sponsoring, along with ECLAC, the women and development forum to be held on 6 and 7 April, just before the meeting of the Bank's Board of Governors in Guadalajara, Mexico. The forum would focus on a series of high-level debates on technical and political topics, and would also include an audiovisual presentation and various cultural events. At that meeting, the Bank would present the documents it had prepared on the gender dimensions of social reform, the strengthening of women's contribution to economic development, women and democracy, and women's participation in environmental management and protection; the documents contained analyses of those topics and policy recommendations.

19. The International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) planned to carry out the following activities in 1994: a regional workshop on women; water supplies, sanitation and the environment (Guyana, February) and a subregional training seminar on the same topics for Spanish-speaking countries (Ecuador, October); and a national training workshop for producers and users of statistics identifying gender components of the main indicators recommended for inclusion in the national reports (Dominican Republic). In February, it would complete the study it was conducting in Venezuela on the use of time, the results of which would yield data on the formal, informal and domestic activities of men and women, and would be included in that country's national report.

20. The Joint UNDP/UNHCR Unit in Support of the International Conference on Central American Refugees (CIREFCA) would be organizing an international meeting, scheduled for May 1994, to analyse the attention given to the uprooted population in that subregion since 1989 and to identify outstanding tasks. Besides CIREFCA, participants in that meeting would include the governments that convened it, non-governmental organizations working with uprooted populations, cooperation agencies and United Nations agencies. A number of national and regional documents were being prepared, applying the gender perspective and analysing the situation of uprooted women.

21. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) was providing support for two consultants in Argentina who were developing a system of expanded, updated indicators on female employment, which would make it possible to evaluate policies and programmes for promoting equal employment opportunities. There were plans to use the system in other countries of the region, as a contribution to the preparation of national reports for the Regional Conference. There were also plans to analyse and disseminate in government, trade union and business circles, an education and information module on the rights of working women.

National and subregional preparations for the next session of the Regional Conference and for the World Conference, and financial coordination (agenda item 4)

22. The participants agreed to coordinate activities in support of the preparation of the national reports. In that regard, the Chief of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit recalled that the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) was best equipped to coordinate institutional work in that area, since it had offices in all the countries of the region. It was proposed that the agencies should send short-term missions to the countries, in order to pressure Governments to designate focal points as soon as possible.

23. At the technical level, it was agreed to support countries in elaborating their reports, to ensure that the latter provided the desired information. It was suggested that ECLAC should furnish guidelines to the countries so that the reports would contain comparable data, and should help to select experts who could prepare technical reports.

24. With regard to preparations, the participants agreed:

- To send information on the Third Meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), along with a letter expressing the agencies' concern about the insufficiency of country-level activities being carried out by UNDP in preparation for the next session of the Regional Conference and for the World Conference.
- To ask UNDP to designate an official or consultant to assist Governments in preparing their national reports.
- To write to each country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, requesting that national committees be set up. Also, in cases where countries failed to reply promptly to that request, to study the possibility of sending a joint mission of the agencies and ECLAC to ask that such a committee be established.