

**UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FOR LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN - ECLAC**



**Distr.
LIMITED
LC/L.776(MDM.16/7)
22 September 1993
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: SPANISH**

**REPORT OF THE SIXTEENTH 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**

(Caracas, Venezuela, 27-28 May 1993)

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Mandate

1. As stipulated in subparagraph 2 of paragraph 88 of the Regional Plan of Action for the Integration of Women into Latin American Economic and Social Development, adopted in 1977 at the eleventh extraordinary 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 on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean will be the link between member Governments and the secretariat of ECLAC in the field of women's integration in development.

Place and date of the meeting

2. Pursuant to this 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 Sixteenth meeting on 27 and 28 May 1993 in Caracas, Venezuela.

Attendance

3. Representatives of the following member countries of the Presiding Officers participated in the meeting: Chile, Cuba, Guatemala, Mexico, Netherlands Antilles and Venezuela. Also represented at the meeting were the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), 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 International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), 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 Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). The coordinator of the Subregional Network of Government Offices for Women of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, Mrs. Soad Facusse, participated as an observer. The meeting was chaired by Mrs. Yamila Romero, representative of the Netherlands Antilles. In the absence of the representative of Argentina, the Presiding Officers requested the representative of Mexico, Mrs. Aída González, to act as Rapporteur.

Agenda

4. The Presiding Officers adopted the following agenda for their Sixteenth meeting:
 1. Adoption of the agenda
 2. Preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995)
 3. Activities of the ECLAC secretariat and the Presiding Officers in compliance with their mandates and in relation to the World Conference on Women and the regional meeting preparatory to the Conference (Buenos Aires, 1994)
 4. Report of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system on regional preparatory activities for the World Conference on Women
 5. Review of the regional programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001
 6. Formulation of recommendations by the Presiding Officers.

B. SUMMARY OF DEBATES

5. The Chairman of the meeting read out the message sent by the Chairman of the Presiding Officers, which emphasized the importance of analysing the topics selected, which would greatly influence the direction of the economic and social development of the countries of the region. The Chairman of the Presiding Officers mentioned in particular the participation of the specialized agencies in that analysis and their valuable contributions to the debates, and wished all the participants a fruitful meeting.
6. The representative of Venezuela welcomed the participants and said that it was an honour for her country to host such an important meeting, among other things because it was the penultimate meeting before the Conference and was to define priority issues. In addition, the Presiding Officers should continue to strengthen inter-agencies coordination and draw up the new programme in the framework of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.
7. The Resident Representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Venezuela emphasized the close link between gender-related indicators and development, a relationship that was clearly demonstrated in the Human Development Report which had just been presented at a press conference in Caracas. The meeting of specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system, held the previous day, had been a good opportunity to coordinate efforts and define clear positions. She wished the participants success at the meeting in preparing for the World Conference on Women and the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean.
8. The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) thanked the host country for its hospitality and said that Venezuela had been a pioneer in many areas related to the integration of women, especially in the legislative field. After welcoming the

participants, he reported that at the thirty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, held in Vienna in April 1993, activities had been launched with a view to preparing the Platform for Action which was to speed up the implementation of the Nairobi Strategies and that, provided the necessary funds were available, an extraordinary meeting of the Commission would be held in January 1994 to continue work on the Platform. At the regional level, work had continued on preparing the basic documents for the regional programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001. The main aim of the Sixteenth meeting of the Presiding Officers was to move ahead on the drafting of the programme of action and on coordinating the evaluation and programming of activities related to the Regional Conference.

Preparations for the World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) (agenda item 2)

9. The Chief of the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC reported on the probable transfer of the Division for the Advancement of Women from the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs in Vienna to United Nations Headquarters, as part of the restructuring exercise. She said that Mrs. G. Mongella had been appointed Secretary-General of the World Conference and recalled the draft resolution on preparations for the Conference adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its thirty-seventh session (E/CN.6/1993/L.17). She referred to preparations at the national, regional and international levels, particularly the establishment of national committees and the selection of the non-governmental organizations that would participate in the 1994 and 1995 Conferences and in the preparation of the Platform for Action.

10. The Chairman of the meeting said that ministers of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) had decided to hold two preparatory meetings for the Regional Conference in order to identify the strategies and measures that would be proposed for adoption by the World Conference. The first meeting would be held in November 1993, with the participation of all the member countries of CARICOM, and the second meeting would be held in Curaçao, with all the English-speaking countries of the Caribbean participating.

11. The representative of Venezuela, one of the countries of the region that is represented in the Commission on the Status of Women, reported that the participation of Latin America and the Caribbean in the thirty-seventh session of the Commission had been crucial, since it had changed the direction of the Platform for Action proposed on that occasion. She proposed, therefore, that the regional programme of action should be structured according to the format proposed for the Platform and that national reports should take into account certain basic indicators that reflected situations of vital importance for the region, such as poverty and violence.

12. The representative of Mexico said that the participation of Latin America in the sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women reflected a commitment at the regional level. She suggested that, in preparing national reports, consideration should be given to the guidelines to be found in the documents prepared by ECLAC on the programme of action.

13. The representative of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) reported that the secretariat of the World Conference was drafting guidelines for the preparation of national reports which would be distributed shortly. UNDP had launched a special programme in support of national training activities on gender-related issues which took into consideration the needs and possibilities of each country.

14. It was pointed out that very few countries had organizational mechanisms for the World Conference. In particular, the Presiding Officers expressed concern about the ability of countries to prepare country reports according to the guidelines proposed in document E/CN.6/1993/7 of 16 December 1992. Some representatives said that their countries did not have the requisite indicators and needed assistance in preparing the report. It was emphasized that less developed countries had less information and that their reporting capacity was more limited, a situation which perpetuated a discriminatory attitude towards them. As one way to offset these problems, it was proposed that countries be sent a draft outline for them to comment on, in view of the importance of ensuring that reports were completed before the Regional Conference.

15. The representative of Venezuela, in her capacity as president of the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Government Offices for Women, pledged the Network's support for activities at the national level, including the preparation of reports. She also reported that the Network would meet in Panama in July, at which time she would raise the need to establish mechanisms for coordination with the Presiding Officers.

16. The coordinator of the Subregional Network of Government Offices for Women of Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean expressed her gratitude for the invitation to participate in the meeting and emphasized the substantive support that such offices could provide and the importance of their participation in preparations for the forthcoming conferences on women.

17. The representative of Mexico said that when considering the participation of recently established regional or subregional networks in preparations for the upcoming conferences, it should be remembered that different government bodies might be in charge of preparations or the drafting of reports in different countries; she therefore suggested that coordination and liaison should be carried out through ministries of foreign affairs.

18. With respect to the participation of non-governmental organizations in preparations for the conferences and their attendance at them, several participants expressed the opinion that there should be a balance between the participation of government agencies and that of non-governmental organizations. The region should apply different criteria for the participation of non-governmental organizations from those applied to preparations for the World Conference and ensure that the organizations that did participate at the national and regional levels were genuinely representative and from the grass roots since, as one representative emphasized, such organizations were in much closer touch with reality and their input was essential.

19. In this connection, the Chief of the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC said that a long list of organizations was available and needed to be updated. In response to a question from the Presiding Officers, she said that ECLAC and international bodies supported non-governmental organizations, but that the organizations' own committees were responsible for their meetings. Accordingly, the Presiding Officers suggested that such organizations should hold a parallel non-governmental forum, lasting at least three days, before the 1994 Regional Conference, so that they could transmit their recommendations to the Conference through a spokesperson.

20. The discussion then turned to the possibility of selecting non-governmental organizations to attend the Regional Conference or the parallel forum, or both, and it was emphasized that networks of such organizations, such as Isis-International Women's Information and Communication Service, FEMPRESS and Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN/MUDAR), should participate.

Activities of the ECLAC secretariat and the Presiding Officers in compliance with their mandates and in relation to the World Conference on Women and the regional meeting preparatory to the Conference (Buenos Aires, 1994) (agenda item 3)

21. The Chief of the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC said that the Commission was already working on an outline for the documents that the secretariat would be presenting to the Conference and on the preparation of the regional programme of action, which did not necessarily have to be a consensus document but could reflect the diversity of views existing in the region. She referred to coordination with various bodies and to the information she had been receiving for a number of years from various bodies, including academic centres and women's movements. The work done by the secretariat in the population field had also been very fruitful, since it had made it possible to incorporate women's issues into the main areas of work of ECLAC. For example, Population, Social Equity and Changing Production Patterns, a publication presented to the Latin American and Caribbean Regional Conference on Population and Development (Mexico City, April-May 1993), had included a chapter on the status of women.

22. Commenting on the documents presented by the ECLAC secretariat, the representative of Venezuela requested that reports be more substantive, that activities being carried out by focal points in individual countries in cooperation with the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Government Offices for Women be followed up on and that links with the Division for the Advancement of Women be strengthened. She also suggested that the studies on women and legislation made by the Andean Parliament be used to analyse the legislative situation.

23. The representative of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) said that very few countries had begun to carry out activities in preparation for the Regional Conference. Given the overall shortage of funds, measures to support national preparations for the World Conference should help to mobilize resources at the national, subregional and regional levels. The meeting of specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system held the previous day represented such an effort. The latest conference of health ministers of the region had recommended strengthening the coordination between PAHO and ECLAC.

24. With respect to the activities of the Presiding Officers, the Chairman of the meeting recalled the agreement on the importance of further work on the issue of violence, adopted at the previous meeting, and mentioned the training given in Chile and the bill presented to the Venezuelan Congress. She asked participants to inform the Presiding Officers of any progress made in their respective countries in implementing the resolutions of the fifth session of the Regional Conference on strengthening national mechanisms and developing human resources. Lastly, she expressed interest in the ongoing exchange of information among the Presiding Officers and in their cooperation with CARICOM and non-governmental organizations.

25. Responding to the request by the Chairman of the meeting, the representative of Mexico reported that in recent months several member countries of the Presiding Officers had participated actively in the preparation of a draft convention on violence against women. She referred to the meeting convened by the Inter-American Commission of Women (IACW) of the Organization of American States, held in April 1993 to review the draft convention, at which all the countries members of the Presiding Officers had been represented.

26. The representative of Mexico also proposed that the Presiding Officers should undertake to send the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC information on any regional and even bilateral activities

carried out in relation to violence, human resources development and other topics given priority by the fifth session of the Regional Conference. Lastly, she reiterated the importance of strengthening communication or information links between the Presiding Officers with respect to national, regional and international activities.

27. The representative of Mexico said that it was important that the Presiding Officers participate in the Commission on the Status of Women as a way of strengthening the links between regional, national and international activities. Referring to the issue of violence, she suggested that account be taken of the progress made in the framework of the inter-American system, especially at the meeting of the Organization of American States held in April 1993. She proposed that a decision be taken to use the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC as a channel for information at the regional level.

28. The representative of Chile recalled the research done in her country, with funding from PAHO, on the prevalence of cases of domestic violence. That research had led to a bill on domestic violence which had already been approved in the Chamber of Deputies. UNIFEM was also providing assistance for training activities and seminars to combat violence against women.

29. The representative of Guatemala expressed regret that her country had not participated in several earlier meetings. She said that new possibilities existed for working on women's issues in Guatemala, and mentioned, in particular, the implementation of health, education and employment policies and policies for rural areas. For example, the National Office for Women was working with the Ministry of Education, UNICEF and UNIFEM to eliminate gender-related and ethnic stereotypes from school textbooks, and case studies had been undertaken on the way women were treated in health services. At the World Conference on Human Rights, her country would be presenting a proposal requesting that domestic violence be considered a violation of human rights. She asked for support for the bill on violence against women presented in Guatemala by the office of the National Counsel for Human Rights, the National Counsel for Women and the National Office for Women.

Report of the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system on regional preparatory activities for the World Conference on Women (agenda item 4)

30. The agreements adopted at the meeting of specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system (see annex) held the previous day were read out. Representatives of some of the agencies added their comments.

31. The representative of Habitat said that her agency saw development as a process of democratization, sensitization and power-sharing. It was attempting to recruit more women professionals and to contribute to women's participation in the decision-making process concerning housing. She referred to studies done by Habitat that had analysed indicators of the situation of women with respect to housing, and suggested that those indicators be included in national reports.

32. The representatives of the Pan American Health Organization and UNICEF agreed that the inter-agency meeting held the previous day had been very valuable and said that the agencies needed to receive clear requests from countries, whose responsibility it was to take practical initiatives in preparation for the World Conference. Emphasizing the importance of national reports, the representatives of several specialized agencies said that such reports formed part of the preparations and should be integral to them. The representative of IFAD said that preparations for the World Conference should not

be limited to the production of country reports but should form part of a process that did not end with the Conference.

33. The representative of UNIFEM reported that a strategic planning meeting had been held, at which basic recommendations concerning preparations had been formulated. All activities being carried out by the Fund at the global, regional and national levels related to the Conference in one way or another, but in the region priority was being given to assisting in the preparation of country reports, since that was considered an important process in which all of civilian society should participate.

34. The representative of UNESCO said that women and youth were priority issues for her organization and that the importance it attached to them was reflected in every area of its work. The UNESCO unit in charge of coordinating all activities related to the status of women served as a liaison with the other agencies and organizations of the system.

35. The Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA) presented a report on its activities, making particular mention of research on women food producers in 18 countries of the region, carried out with the support of the Inter-American Development Bank with a view to proposing specific agricultural policies to enhance the participation of women in agricultural production.

Review of the regional programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean, 1995-2001 (agenda item 5)

36. The Chief of the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC gave a brief overview of the documents presented by ECLAC to the Presiding Officers (MDM.16/4, MDM.16/5 and MDM.16/6) and recalled the resolution adopted at the fifth session of the Regional Conference, which recognized the need to update the Plan of Action, in view of the major economic, social and political changes that had taken place in the region. A representative of the Unit then explained that the proposed programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean (document MDM.16/6), took into consideration all the programmes and strategies of United Nations agencies and organizations, as well as the recommendations of the First Meeting of Specialized Agencies and Other Bodies of the United Nations System, held in Santiago, Chile, in September 1992, and those of the meetings of the group of experts and the Presiding Officers held in November 1992 in Mexico City. The programme had been structured around four basic objectives, which were subdivided into specific objectives and measures necessary for changing the status of women in the region. In conclusion, she said that the process of reflection on the programme of action was still underway and that the Unit hoped to receive comments that would enable it to make the programme more concrete.

37. The participants took the view that the proposed outline was a valuable preliminary document. They emphasized the need to produce a text that was realistic and easy to understand, and took account of the needs of the region and the individual characteristics of the different countries and subregions. They agreed to analyse the general aspects and to send detailed comments to the ECLAC secretariat. They acknowledged that the preparation of the regional programme of action should take into account the structure of the Platform proposed by the Commission on the Status of Women and that the two documents should be closely linked. In response to suggestions and comments made by several participants, it was agreed to reiterate the decision of the Presiding Officers to formulate a programme that updated the regional plan of action and to extend the Seventeenth meeting in order to devote two or three days exclusively to that task.

38. The representatives of Chile and Guatemala proposed that a new text be drafted in the coming months that would reflect the general observations made about the programme. The representative of ILO proposed that the specialized agencies could send ECLAC their comments on technical issues related to their area of specialization and also work at the national level, following the guidelines of the Presiding Officers.

39. Referring to the content of the programme, the representative of Venezuela stressed that it should take a strategic and gender-related approach. The definition of objectives involved working systematically, without skipping certain stages. A particular effort was needed to make the document conceptually and analytically coherent since, as presented, it fell short in that regard. She asked precisely what kind of document was to be drafted for the World Conference since, in the interest of methodological coherence, it was very important to distinguish between a plan and a programme. The representative of the Pan American Health Organization said that the outline took a different approach from that used in the past and that the identification of the factors that structured subordination represented a qualitative leap forward. The ECLAC formulation not only reflected a new conceptual approach but also stated the issue in new terms and proposed new strategies for working on women's issues. Replying to comments by the representative of PAHO to the effect that there were some novel proposals, *inter alia*, with respect to the factors that structure subordination, the representative of Venezuela said that the new strategies and conceptual approaches were the product of specific proposals made by the Presiding Officers during the Fifteenth meeting, held in Mexico.

40. It was suggested that the programme should also include such other important topics as the region's cultural diversity seen as a positive element; human rights, which were increasingly closely related to women's issues and were only touched upon in the outline; the environment, and ethnic groups.

41. The representatives of Chile and Mexico proposed that the elimination of the factors that structured subordination should be taken as the overall objective and divided into three strategic objectives: egalitarian participation of women in leading and directing society; equitable participation of women in the production and distribution of the benefits of development; and the defence of women's human rights. Each of these objectives would be divided into legislative measures, sectoral policies, measures relating to political participation and citizens' rights, and policies to combat violence. It was also necessary that the preamble be easy to understand.

Formulation of recommendations by the Presiding Officers (agenda item 6)

42. The Presiding Officers agreed to the following:

1. Pursuant to resolution 1 of the fifth session of the Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean, a regional programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean would be prepared that would update the Regional Plan of Action.
2. Pursuant to the same resolution, the Governments of the States members of ECLAC were once again urged "to strengthen their national mechanisms for the advancement of women, to position them at a high decision-making level and to integrate them into the political, economic and social planning processes of their countries".

3. Taking into account the heterogeneity of Latin America and the Caribbean with respect to the capacity of government offices for women to respond to the demands of preparing for the Regional Conference, to recommend that that capacity be analysed in order to obtain resources to strengthen it, through the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Government Offices and in cooperation with UNIFEM and UNICEF, and that a questionnaire be sent first to ECLAC and then to the countries. To make use of the recently established subregional networks in order to strengthen the coordination of regional activities preparatory to the Regional Conference.
4. To hold an informal, two-day meeting of the Presiding Officers, or prior to the Seventeenth meeting, to continue work on the regional programme of action.
5. To adopt the following programme of activities:
 - a) Reception of comments from the Presiding Officers on the outline for the regional programme of action: 30 July 1993
 - b) Distribution of the new proposed outline to the member countries of the Presiding Officers: 30 September 1993
 - c) Informal meeting of the Presiding Officers to draft the outline for the regional programme of action: 8-9 November 1993
 - d) Seventeenth meeting of the Presiding Officers: 10-11 November 1993
 - e) Third meeting of specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system: 12 November 1993
 - f) Distribution of the new outline for the regional programme of action to all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean: 2 January 1994
 - g) Reception of comments from countries: 1 April 1994
 - h) Eighteenth meeting of the Presiding Officers: May 1994 (Curaçao)
 - i) Nineteenth meeting of the Presiding Officers: 22-23 September 1994 (Buenos Aires)
 - j) Sixth session of the Regional Conference to prepare for the World Conference: 26-30 September 1994 (Buenos Aires).
6. To recommend that the sixth session of the Regional Conference work in two commissions and that countries that so desire make available to delegations the reports they will not be presenting in plenary meeting, so that such meetings are limited to one day.
7. To support the initiative of the Caribbean subregion to hold a meeting of the member countries of CARICOM in November 1993 and another in January 1994 of the English-speaking countries of the subregion and the Netherlands Antilles, as preparatory activities for the Regional Conference and the World Conference. To likewise recommend

that the meeting of the CARICOM countries be held prior to the Seventeenth meeting of the Presiding Officers.

8. At the Seventeenth meeting of the Presiding Officers, to begin preparing a preliminary outline for national reports, based on the guidelines formulated by the Commission on the Status of Women and taking into account the situation in the region.
9. To recommend that the outline for the regional programme of action, 1995-2001 be sent to countries for their comments, in order to ensure that the region participates as fully as in its final drafting, a process which should be completed by January 1994. To take into account, in this process, the results of the inter-sessional meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women at which the Platform for Action will be analysed.
10. To recommend to the inter-agency group of specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system that it provide support, through technical and financial cooperation, for national activities preparatory to the 1995 World Conference and the 1994 Regional Conference. To recommend also that the mobilization of national and international resources (financial, human, etc.) be facilitated, and to suggest the creation of inter-agency groups of international agencies and bodies in individual countries to channel assistance to national commissions and identify focal points in each country.
11. To reiterate the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women in its thirty-sixth session that "Governments establish a national committee or designate a national focal point to initiate and promote preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace, by organizing and coordinating national activities, including assembling information and gender-disaggregated statistics for the elaboration of national reports on the situation of women, and increasing public awareness about the Conference, and requests that reports on such activities be made available to the Secretary-General" (resolution 36/8 B) (see also decision 1992/272 of the Economic and Social Council).
12. To send ECLAC lists of non-governmental organizations working on women's issues to help identify the organizations that will be invited to participate in the Regional Conference.
13. To request the following from ECLAC:
 - i) that it send a letter to the Government of Argentina, on behalf of the Presiding Officers, requesting that the Regional Conference be held from 26 to 30 September 1994, and also that it support the forum of non-governmental organizations to be held immediately before the Conference;
 - ii) that it suggest to non-governmental organizations, on behalf of the Presiding Officers, that the regional forum now scheduled to take place at the same time as the Regional Conference be held immediately before it, so that the forum's proposals can be submitted to the Conference for consideration;

- iii) that it send a selection of basic documents and resolutions to all specialized agencies and bodies of the United Nations system that carry out activities in Latin America and the Caribbean;
- iv) that it determine what activities national offices for women are carrying out in preparation for the Regional Conference;
- v) that it distribute among the Presiding Officers all the information they send it on international activities.

14. To adopt the following agenda for the Seventeenth meeting of the Presiding Officers:

- Adoption of the agenda
- Analysis of the outline for the regional programme of action
- Preparations for the sixth session of the Regional Conference and determination of its agenda
- Evaluation of the implementation of the recommendations of the Sixteenth meeting of the Presiding Officers
- Information on non-governmental organizations and analysis of the criteria for their selection to participate in the Regional Conference
- Preparation of the outline for the presentation of national reports
- Formulation of recommendations by the Seventeenth meeting of the Presiding Officers.

Annex

**AGREEMENTS ADOPTED AT THE SECOND MEETING OF SPECIALIZED AGENCIES
AND OTHER BODIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM,
HELD ON 26 MAY 1993**

National agreements

1. To request the specialized agencies and other bodies of the United Nations system to grant priority to national-level activities to achieve the objectives of the 1995 World Conference on Women.
2. To call on Governments to establish, as soon as possible, national commissions composed of State institutions, non-governmental organizations, academic centres and grass-roots organizations that carry out activities or programmes for the advancement of women, and other bodies whose inclusion in the commissions would be deemed useful, to oversee all the technical and organizational aspects of the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women. Also, to recommend that the national commissions establish their own organization, in order to ensure that activities to prepare for the Regional Conference (Buenos Aires, 1994) and the World Conference (Beijing, 1995) are carried out. Among other activities, plans should include forums, workshops, seminars and conventions to sensitize and mobilize Governments and civil society, particularly the mass media, with regard to women's issues, with special attention to the situation of women refugees. All these activities should reflect the cultural diversity of the region and the needs of the whole population, including different ethnic groups, minorities, refugees and displaced persons.
3. To provide support, through technical and financial assistance, to the national commissions, to enable them to fulfil their functions in respect of the 1995 World Conference and the 1994 Regional Conference in a satisfactory manner.
4. To suggest that inter-agency groups of international organizations be created in the countries, to support the national commissions, and that each such group designate a person to coordinate activities.
5. To recommend that a key output of national-level activities, conceived as part of a project to strengthen the protagonistic role of women, be national reports based on compiled data and on a wide-ranging discussion of relevant issues, technical seminars, campaigns, national meetings and forums.

Subregional activities

1. To take note of the organization of the subregional meeting for Central America proposed by the group composed of IICA, the UNDP office in Costa Rica, UNIFEM, UNICEF, ILO, World Conservation Union, EEC, Inter-American Institute of Human Rights, United Nations Latin American Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, ANDAR and other non-governmental organizations, with the understanding that they might

participate in that meeting, according to their work programmes and possibilities. ECLAC, in turn, would analyse the proposal on this meeting sent by the UNDP office in Costa Rica, once the Executive Secretary receives it, and would examine the possibility of broadening participation and providing support, in view of the interest that has been aroused by that initiative.

2. To assume the responsibility to report on all similar subregional activities which may be organized, in order to enhance coordination and mutual support. ECLAC would study on a case-by-case basis, all the proposals it receives for activities in relation to the World Conference on Women and the regional preparatory conference.
3. To ensure that, as a minimum, one inter-agency meeting is held to promote the World Conference in each subregion, at least in the Caribbean, Central America and the Andean subregion. The agenda for each meeting would be determined after analysing the proposals received and the activities scheduled which, pursuant to a decision of the First Meeting of Specialized Agencies, should relate to the following issues: gender equity, sustainable development and consolidation of democracy. Also, concrete topics should be related to the priority issues established by the mandates for the World Conference and the Regional Conference.

Regional agreements

1. To take note of the outline of the regional programme of action for the women of Latin America and the Caribbean and of the guidelines for analysing the situation of women, as well as background information on these issues prepared by ECLAC, and to continue to contribute substantially to the drafting of both documents.
2. To recommend that the regional action programme be closely linked to the Platform for Action that is being prepared by the Commission on the Status of Women and, at the same time, that it reflect the specific characteristics of Latin America and the Caribbean.
3. To disseminate information on the World Conference and its regional preparatory conference, by raising societal awareness and mobilizing community action through forums, publications and information campaigns.
4. In response to the information presented by the representative of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme, to send her all available information concerning women and drugs.