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**REPORT OF THE TENTH 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**

(Santiago, Chile, 28 and 29 May 1990)

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A. ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Place and date

1. In accordance with 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 Meeting of the Committee of the Whole of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), it is incumbent upon the Presiding Officers of the Regional Conference on Women to be the link between governments and the Secretariat of ECLAC in the field of women's integration into development.

2. In compliance with this mandate, the Presiding Officers elected at the Fourth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean held their tenth meeting on 28 and 29 May 1990 in Santiago, Chile.

Attendance

3. The meeting was attended by Presiding Officers from the following member countries: Argentina, Cuba, Guatemala, Venezuela and the Netherlands Antilles. The meeting was chaired by Raquel Blandón de Cerezo, First Lady of Guatemala. The Rapporteur was Teresa Cabrera de Torres of Venezuela. The delegation of Chile and that of the Inter-American Commission of Women (IACW/OAS) which was represented by its vice-president attended the meeting as observers. UNDP, FAO, UNESCO and UNICEF were also represented at the meeting by observers. (For the full list of participants, see the annex.)

Agenda

4. The Presiding Officers adopted the following agenda for their tenth meeting:

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Report on Secretariat activities, including the presentation of documents prepared since the ninth meeting of the Presiding Officers

3. Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean
 - a) Agenda
 - b) Documents
 - c) Logistics
4. Analysis of the operational and technical aspects of joint projects for the advancement of women carried out by ECLAC (Division of Operations)
5. Projects on the promotion of women carried out by other specialized agencies of the United Nations system
6. Activities of the Secretariat in the field of information
7. Other business.

Opening of the meeting

5. The Executive Secretary of ECLAC welcomed participants to the meeting and expressed his pleasure at the fact that the meeting was being held at the Headquarters of the Commission.

6. He then referred to the document Changing Production Patterns with Social Equity that contained the primary agenda proposed by the Secretariat for the region in the 1990s. The Secretariat's proposal reflected the updated thinking of ECLAC and had five basic characteristics: it took a long-term view without overlooking the importance of cyclical problems; restored the social and political dimension of development incorporating the objective of equity as a central part of the proposal; it linked macroeconomic and microeconomic policies; it emphasized the importance of internal efforts by each country to be supplemented by international co-operation; and included the consideration of variables that were often disregarded such as the environment and demographic problems.

7. The Secretariat had, after deep thought and in-depth studies carried out during the 1980s, come up with a global and holistic message that had been updated and presented at the Caracas session. The document gave consistency to the entire ECLAC work programme indicating the priority areas and where emphasis should be put in order to improve performance in the future. The document, which was based on development in a context of democracy and focused on social equity, was the most political document that ECLAC had ever prepared. The document's ideas were based on concrete rather than abstract examples drawn from the many successful experiences in Latin America. In the document, the Secretariat was telling governments of the region that they could overcome the crisis and that they could do so using their own resources: even though it did

not offer a paradigm or blueprint, the document did offer concrete guidelines on how to achieve Latin American development.

8. Within that broad framework, the Secretariat would consider the integration of women into development not in abstract terms but as a topic that was closely related to the Commission's widest concerns. The document provided a new frame of reference for continuing work on that issue within the broader context of the fundamental aim of ECLAC to promote the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean rather than adopting an isolated and partial approach. The document was a new tool that all the delegates should learn how to use because it would have implications on virtually all of the Secretariat's work in the future. In conclusion, the Executive Secretary said that the delegations could count on the Secretariat's facilities and co-operation in ensuring the success of their deliberations.

9. The Chairperson of the Presiding Officers thanked the Executive Secretary for his statement and said that the eleventh meeting of the Presiding Officers was important for two reasons: it was being held at ECLAC Headquarters in Santiago and the host country of ECLAC, Chile, was embarking on a new phase in democracy. She welcomed delegates, invited guests and observers.

10. She briefly outlined the activities that had been carried out since the ninth meeting of the Presiding Officers and highlighted attempts to get all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women; that goal had virtually been achieved. She then mentioned some activities that had been undertaken in favour of various groups especially women in the informal sector, peasant women and poor women and moves to ensure that the resources provided by various donors were actually used to help women in a vulnerable situation and to improve the status of women in the region.

11. After stressing the importance of the democratic processes in achieving social equity, she expressed satisfaction at the optimistic approach of the new ECLAC proposal that offered grounds to hope that the region truly could overcome its crisis and underdevelopment despite the many misfortunes it had faced in the past. She pointed out that Latin America and the Caribbean also had much to teach other regions especially with respect to quality of life. After noting with pleasure that Latin America and the Caribbean currently had four women heads of State she expressed the hope that women would play an ever increasing role in public life.

B. SUMMARY OF PROCEEDINGS

12. The proceedings began with the discussion of agenda item 2. The head of the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC said that the meeting was an expanded one since the Presiding Officers had invited as observers Chile and the Inter-American Commission of Women that was represented by its vice-president. Representatives of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system had also been invited to make statements on their activities.

13. In line with the recommendation of the ninth meeting of the Presiding Officers, the current meeting was being used to provide members with the opportunity to become better acquainted with the activities of the whole ECLAC system especially those of the Operations Division, CELADE, CLADES and ILPES; therefore, the directors of those bodies had been invited to talk about their activities especially those related to women.

14. Due to the fact that both the ECLAC Secretariat and the various substantial and operational units of the system had been providing support for the issue of women within the system better use had been made of resources. The main activities carried out during the period at the institutional level included the adoption of a resolution on women at the twenty-third session of ECLAC, the consideration of the issue of women at meetings of the Executive Secretaries of regional commissions, the preparation of preliminary activities on women in the informal sector jointly with the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), consideration of a plan on preparatory regional activities for the world conference in conjunction with the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (CSDHA) of Vienna and close contacts had been maintained with United Nations bodies and specialized agencies particularly the regional ones with headquarters in Santiago.

15. At the operational level, she said that work had begun on guidelines for the evaluation of general ECLAC projects that would permit the analysis of the gender variable in such projects. Projects were being designed on: the impact of cultural aspects on the participation of women, information for strengthening national machineries and statistics and the improvement of census data.

16. As far as the substantive area of work was concerned, during that period the issue of women had been included in the Commission's new proposal on changing production patterns with social equity which was vital to give the issue once again the theoretical framework it needed to continue being important. The issue of women had been somewhat overshadowed lately by the analyses of the crisis and its impact on women. It was also a question of improving theoretical and conceptual knowledge on women

in the region by including in the analysis cultural and historical variables and adding proposals for medium- and long-term actions.

17. Next, staff of the Women and Development Unit reported on two other topics that the Unit had been working on: women and new technologies and improvement of statistics. The first topic fitted in with the ECLAC proposal on changing production patterns with social equity. Therefore, an effort was being made to supplement that proposal with the incorporation of the gender dimension in the new paradigm and the analysis of the impact of the proposed policies on women. The work on the improvement of statistics focused on both improving existing data and compiling fresh data. On the question of censuses, it was essential to devote attention to the design of questionnaires as well as to the training of enumerators, the sensitization of the population, the design of tabulations and the subsequent utilization of census data.

18. The official in charge of the Women and Development Programme of the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean said that the office's activities had focused during that period on two major regional projects: the participation of Caribbean women in the key sectors of the region's economy such as trade and the export industry in customs-free areas and the compiling of bibliographical data on women in a computer programme especially designed for women.

19. The main aim of the project on women, commerce and industry was to study the nature, scope, history and trends of the women's sector in order to formulate government policies designed to improve the status of underprivileged Caribbean women. Thanks to the project that had so far been implemented in 14 territories of the region, young people had been trained in research techniques, data had been compiled and studies carried out.

20. The project on the compilation of bibliographical data had so far produced a bank of computerized data and a book entitled "Bibliography, Women and Development" was being printed which would be sent to all the countries of the Caribbean Development and Co-operation Committee (CDCC), women's organizations, non-governmental organizations, development agencies and academic institutions.

21. The Director of the Latin American Demographic Centre (CELADE) mentioned the activities carried out under the ECLAC system and emphasized the usefulness of socio-demographic analysis for the design and implementation of economic and social development policies. He mentioned in particular social equity in the context of changing production patterns especially as far as women were concerned. In that connection, he mentioned the peculiar situation of poor mothers and women household heads as it related to fertility and migration. He also reviewed the current situation regarding demographic information on women listing shortcomings with respect to data collection, processing and tabulation.

22. After mentioning recent evaluations of the situation of women in terms of demography and of specific activities in favour of women, he also mentioned information for managing maternal and child health and family planning programmes, the services provided by the Latin American Population Documentation System (DOCPAL), the special demographic bulletin on women, fertility analyses by strata and methods of analysis of family groups. He also referred to ongoing work on family planning, teenage pregnancies, women and health, women and aging highlighting, in particular, a project on home visitors.

23. With respect to future lines of work, he mentioned and stressed the relationships between information and collaboration with concrete political activities. Finally he referred to the ties of co-operation that CELADE maintained with governments, non-governmental organizations, other bodies of the ECLAC system, in particular the Women and Development Unit and with other agencies of the United Nations system.

24. The Director of the Latin American and Caribbean Institute for Economic and Social Planning (ILPES) welcomed participants and said that his statement would focus on three aspects: the nature of the Institute, the latest ILPES activities on women and the promotion of women in the development process and the Institute's view of the 1990s that permitted it to sound a word of warning on probable changes in the role of women in the future.

25. With respect to the nature of the Institute, he explained that although it was a regular body of the United Nations it received guidelines directly from the Conference of Ministers and Heads of Planning of Latin America and the Caribbean that was currently chaired by the Minister of Economics, Finance and Planning of Brazil. The activities of ILPES consisted of providing assistance to governments and providing training mainly in the areas of development programming and projects, public sector programmes, social policies, regional planning and promoting interregional co-operation.

26. He felt that women were not given enough coverage in the ILPES programmes despite the fact that many courses had been held on the issue of women and many women planners had been trained as specialists from 1986 onwards; on some occasions they had been trained jointly by INSTRAW and ILPES. The issue of women continued to be a challenge that ILPES hoped to join forces with the Women and Development Unit to meet. Regarding the third aspect of his statement, he said that the insertion of women occupied a fundamental place in future plans in which there would necessarily be elements of uncertainty; the types of structural dissimilarities were growing and appeared to be challenges to the creation of new social organizations that required major changes in the mentality of people.

27. The representative of Venezuela briefly outlined progress made with respect to the advancement of women in her country. She stressed that Venezuela had a woman Cabinet Minister responsible for the advancement of women, the issue of women had been included in the nation's plans and a National Council on Women had been established as a permanent administrative body.

28. She said that the new labour law that was about to be approved by Congress was innovative in that the pre-natal and post-natal periods had been increased by four weeks and mothers had been granted a year of job stability aimed at giving children greater security at least during their first year of life. The business sector had objected strongly to those proposals. Her country was making preparations for the October census and work had been done on redesigning the population census forms and household surveys in co-ordination with the Central Statistics and Information Office. As a result of the conditions of critical poverty in some areas of Venezuela, analyses had been made in order to take measures such as the programmes for overcoming poverty.

29. She stressed the importance of a Ministry that was responsible not only for co-ordinating and evaluating the scope of women's policies but also for executing such policies. Finally, she reported on the establishment of a data base on women in co-ordination with the Central Statistics and Information Office; the data base would be essential for the National Council on Women.

30. After she had thanked ECLAC for its warm welcome, the representative of the Netherlands Antilles said that the Caribbean had a wealth of experience on the issue of women and the family and that her country was very interested in benefiting from such experience through its links with other nations of the subregion.

31. She said that the current atmosphere in her country was peaceful and that the new government had achieved some progress despite difficulties stemming from the fact that the country was made up of five islands. During the year that had elapsed since the new government had come into power, the economic situation had improved and the tourist industry had recovered. The government had helped small-scale businesses and as a result many women had been able to find work.

32. Next she said that an interesting meeting had been held in her country on "Youth and the future" which had been attended by participants from various countries. She also reported that the International Labour Organization had provided training in project design and the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean had provided assistance with the aim of establishing an office on women in her country. Talks had also been held with the University of the Netherlands Antilles for the establishment in that University of a documentation centre and a women's department.

33. The representative of Cuba expressed pleasure at being able to attend a meeting of Presiding Officers at ECLAC Headquarters in Chile at a time when Chile was embarking once again on the path of democracy and wished the country every success.

34. She said that the meeting's proceedings had been positive so far especially the ECLAC Executive Secretary's statement on the Commission's proposal with respect to changing production patterns with social equity. She said that the ECLAC proposal was a challenge to the Women and Development Unit and stressed the need to prepare a strategy for promoting the incorporation of women in the transformation of production patterns.

35. She also felt that the participation in the meeting of the directors of CELADE and ILPES who had kept in touch with the governments of the region was positive although they still had a long way to go before closer ties could be established.

36. Turning to work with respect to statistics in her country she said that preparations were underway for the next census and work had been carried out in conjunction with the Statistics Department. There were still indicators that had not been broken down by sex, for example, average wages of men and women. The statistics available had been very useful in carrying out a seminar to evaluate the application of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women.

37. She informed participants about the Fifth Congress of the Federation of Cuban Women held in March. In the course of preparations for the Congress, extensive debates had been held from the grass-roots upwards in which both men and women had participated. The successes and failures with respect to the issue of women, the family, problems of young women, teenage pregnancies had been examined as had the impact of the double work day as a result of the fact that although 38.6% of women of working age participated in economic activities and did household work all the changes required in the households had still not been effected. She said that during the preparations for the Congress it had been possible to have a clearer idea about the awareness of equality in the country.

38. As regards difficulties still facing Cuba, she stressed the efforts that were being made to ensure that more women took part in decision making. She added that there were still few women in executive positions despite the fact that there were more female than male university-level graduates and that job profiles had changed (58% of technicians were women). She said that the Cuban Federation of Women was currently designing new policies for the following five years.

39. She also said that a ministerial meeting of non-aligned countries on the role of women in development had been held in

Havana which had been well attended by delegations from the region composed of both women and men. The participants were ministers of labour, family planning and so on. With the active participation of representatives of Latin America, a document on the situation of women and their integration into development was prepared.

40. The Women, Health and Development programme was actively being prepared in Cuba. With the collaboration of the Pan-American Health Organization, training seminars were being prepared that would lead to a national seminar.

41. She reported on the assistance provided by ECLAC in strengthening the Cuban Documentation Centre on Women; a consultant from ECLAC on documentation was expected to visit Cuba soon.

42. Finally, she mentioned on-going research on peasant women, the impact of the double work day on women, the situation of women in textile enterprises and the awareness of equality. She also informed the meeting that a National Family Group made up of institutions and organizations involved in the topic had been established that was responsible for working out appropriate policies.

43. The representative of Argentina informed the meeting about the changes that had occurred in her country and that had not been reflected in the ECLAC document entitled "Instituciones gubernamentales encargadas de la condición de la mujer y cambios recientes en la situación jurídica de ésta". First, in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Religion, the Department of Women's Affairs had become the Division of Women's Affairs and the Human Rights Division had become the Department of Human Rights and Women's Affairs. The Division of Women's Affairs of the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare had been phased out and three national departments on the advancement and participation of women, institutional relations and studies and project and research had been established. Women's bodies in the provinces had remained as secretariats of State.

44. The President had created two posts of presidential advisors with ranks of secretaries of State and three posts of advisors with the rank of assistant secretaries of State to co-ordinate policies on women between the President and the eight ministries.

45. As far as legislation on domestic violence was concerned, five women's commissariats had been established in Buenos Aires and a direct line for reporting incidents of violence had been installed that operated 24 hours a day.

46. The representative of the Servicio Nacional de la Mujer (SERNAM) of Chile thanked the organizers for inviting her organization as an observer to the meeting and said that the aim of SERNAM was to promote equal opportunities and to deal with

specific problems of Chilean women under a government that was rebuilding democracy. She explained that the aim was to give SERNAM a high profile within the State as it would be put under the Secretaría General de Gobierno and its director would have the rank of a minister.

47. SERNAM would have a free hand in designing public policies and programmes to tackle the problems of women who were critically poor. Such programmes touched on training, employment and health while others were designed for groups with specific problems such as pregnant teenagers and women household heads. There were also projects to introduce legislative reforms since laws that discriminated against women still existed. Finally, she indicated that the immediate aims were to secure the support of Congress in having a law promulgated on the establishment of SERNAM which would give continuity to the work in favour of women.

48. At the beginning of the discussions on agenda item 3, the representative of the Netherlands Antilles informed the meeting that her government was offering to host the next regional conference and that a formal letter of invitation would soon be sent to ECLAC.

49. The Presiding Officers included in item 3 considerations on its next session. Thus, it was agreed that the Eleventh Meeting of the Presiding Officers would be held in Cuba on 19 and 20 November 1990 and that the Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean would take place from 10 to 13 September 1991 in Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles. Although the final agenda of the Fifth Conference would be discussed at the next meeting of the Presiding Officers, the following topics were tentatively proposed: incorporation of the gender dimension in the ECLAC proposal; culture and gender relationships in labour and education; information, documentation, statistics and data bases on women (censuses and surveys); evaluation of new technologies and their effect on women; adolescent women and young women; education; women and the informal sector.

50. The Presiding Officers requested that with respect to operational matters and projects and in order to be able to consolidate a more practical phase of work, ECLAC should initiate a project as a basis of activities in order to present it at the next meeting of the Presiding Officers. Such project would have to centre on subjects such as information, documentation and communications as well as on a data bank for women. For that, ECLAC could provide training in project preparation and evaluation methods.

51. With respect to agenda item 4, the Director of the ECLAC Division of Operations outlined the usual procedures that had to be followed in order to have access to technical co-operation. He

stressed that ECLAC had always had problems in securing regular funding for such activities although voluntary donations partly made up for such shortcomings. Potential subjects for technical co-operation should form part of the ECLAC work programme and be regional or subregional in nature or at least touch on problems that were common to several countries. Very exceptionally, projects on situations that affected only one country could be approved. Thus conceived, projects had to meet the following two operational requirements: i) be geared mainly to specific activities and not to research, and ii) the scope of each project must be defined clearly beforehand in a document.

52. He stressed the high priority accorded to the issue of women in the ECLAC work programme and stressed that the topic had a very strong pull on voluntary donors especially Italy and the Netherlands.

53. On that basis, he proposed that a regional survey comprising five main phases should be carried out:

- a) Drafting by the Women and Development Unit of ECLAC of a questionnaire addressed to the countries asking for suggestions on topics or problems that required a solution.
- b) Dispatch of the questionnaires to the countries by the Division of Operations and the subsequent processing of information obtained in order to work out priorities.
- c) On the basis of the replies, drafting of a matrix that made it possible to visualize topics common to several countries and the specific problems of each country.
- d) Preparation of a project on technical co-operation.
- e) Search for financing.

54. During the discussions on agenda item 5, the representative of the United Nations Childrens Fund (UNICEF) for Argentina, Chile and Uruguay said that UNICEF gave special priority to the formulation of policies in favour of women and girls and protected the interest of girls and women as well as to efforts to drum up social support for women and girls and to provide assistance under programmes aimed at meeting the unsatisfied needs of the female population.

55. With respect to the first line of work, she said that conceptual frameworks had been prepared on the participation of women in the region through the publication of a series of studies that had been put together in a book entitled El ajuste invisible. She also outlined activities relating to the strengthening of institutional capacity for the formulation of policies, stressed the need to develop managerial and technical capacity and the ability to convene meetings and highlighted the work done for Chile by a specialized consultant in that area. With respect to protecting the interests of women, she said that there was a publication on social indicators that tried to make available to

the general public basic statistics on the situation of Chilean families, women and children in line with the UNICEF policy of sharing the findings of situation analyses. As far as programmes designed to assist women in various areas of endeavour were concerned, she emphasized that socioeconomic inequalities had been reduced.

56. She then mentioned the addition of some specific topics: girls school dropouts, adolescent mothers, women household heads and other women in dangerous situations as well as a specific programme on maternity without risks.

57. Finally, the UNICEF representative said that there was a need both to categorize and document experiences by developing statistics that helped in formulating policies and providing services and to increase technical co-operation among developing countries.

58. The representative of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) reviewed the activities carried out by his organization with respect to women and said that the issue of women, which he termed "transversal", was one that went beyond the sectoral level. Specifically, UNESCO endeavoured to analyse the situation and recognized that although the region had made some progress in integrating women into education, science and culture, there were still problems of discrimination which were confined more to the labour market than to education. Such discrimination was irrational and since there was no objective basis, sex was the variable used as a criterion.

59. He said that one of the region's most critical problems was that of the indigenous populations and that UNESCO's approach to the problem was aimed at achieving three key objectives: eliminating illiteracy, providing basic universal education and improving the quality of basic instruction. With respect to the specific problem of women, he mentioned some projects aimed at overcoming certain key problems: the problem of mothers, that of bilingual education and the problem of training teachers. He stressed the crucial importance of the latter since as a result of the deterioration in the training of teachers and subsequent low salary and career prospects men and women were leaving the profession for better paid activities. Consequently, the lack of properly trained teaching staff in the future could create a large-scale crisis for education in the following decade. With respect to information, he mentioned the work of the recently created regional system on educational information. He also stressed the need to modify school manuals in order to strengthen the most suitable models of socialization.

60. In other areas of activity, UNESCO also had tackled issues relating to women namely women in scientific and technological careers, the promotion of the participation of women in

communications and sociological research on the role of women and the family especially in rural areas. UNESCO had implemented activities with respect to more specific problems (such as those stemming from AIDS and drugs) designed to protect women and the family. Throughout his statement, he stressed the need for the various agencies to co-operate.

61. The representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) said that his organization had been dealing with the issue of women since 1945 and that there had been a substantial change in policy since the World Conference on the International Women's Year held in Mexico in 1975 which had been consolidated by the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development held in Rome in 1979.

62. The FAO had focused its attention on problems that affected rural women in the region; in order to solve such problems, different types of projects of varying sizes were being implemented. In that connection, he mentioned the voluntary assistance of Italy, the Netherlands, the Scandinavian countries and the United Nations Population Fund. He stressed the considerable potential for horizontal co-operation in the region among countries and both governmental and non-governmental institutions and observed that often, as a result of physical isolation, it was not possible to benefit from the efforts of individual countries. The governments of those countries that wished to secure assistance from FAO could contact the FAO offices in their respective countries and where there were no FAO offices requests for assistance should be channelled through UNDP.

63. He listed some of the activities relating to women that FAO had implemented in the region over the past three years; the bulk of these related to rural women and include topics such as income generation, legislation, and support for women's organizations. He also mentioned the establishment recently of the FAO Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development that covered topics in the civilian and economic spheres, questions relating to decision-making, the elaboration of statistics and indicators, etc. Above all, the new FAO policy stressed that in all technical fields the topic of women should be incorporated whenever relevant.

64. The representative of the Inter-American Commission of Women (IACW) stressed the need to improve statistics on women in the region in order to have a solid support for the 1995 conference. She particularly lamented the fact that the documents prepared by the secretariat contained scanty statistical data on the Caribbean adding that the holding of the next conference in the Caribbean could provide an excellent opportunity to increase co-operation between ECLAC and IACW with respect to that important aspect.

65. With respect to agenda item 6, staff of the Women and Development Unit outlined the work that had been accomplished in

the area of classifying and analysing information and providing assistance to institutions of member governments and the preparation of an information and communications strategy for women of the region. They also presented the activities being carried out with respect to the design and implementation of the information system on women and health (SIMUS) in collaboration with the Pan-American Health Organization. Finally, a draft project was presented on strengthening the management of national machineries for the advancement of women; its aim was to contribute to improving information required for decision-making through the creation of data bases, the organization of information flows and the preparation of consolidated information for the use of those who formulate policies with respect to women.

66. The Presiding Officers agreed to request ECLAC to tackle some topics that they deemed priorities for the next meetings of women. Specifically, they recommended that ECLAC carry out small technical seminars to consider relevant priority topics as inputs to be presented and discussed later at major meetings. The advantage of devoting some of the workshops to the teaching or review of project preparation techniques was particularly stressed. Another recommendation was that the issue of migrant women should be included in the Commission's work programme. One topic that all the Presiding Officers mentioned as being essential was that of productive projects especially those for micro-enterprises; the secretariat was requested to provide assistance in that regard.

67. The Chairperson requested the secretariat to consider using the basic outlines of the ECLAC document entitled Changing production patterns with social equity that had been presented at the twenty-third session of the Commission in May 1990 at Caracas as the basis for defining the future priority agenda on women. She also suggested that the statistics offices of the various countries be kept informed about the guidelines prepared by the Women and Development Unit and CELADE to improve the collection of data on women especially data obtained from censuses and other instruments.

68. The Presiding Officers stated the need to go back to the system of holding technical meetings with national experts such as those of the Committee of High-Level Government Experts (CEGAN) on various topics in order to evaluate existing information on the same to be used as the basis for policy decisions aimed at consolidating recommendations. At the beginning of the decade such meetings had been held and they had been very useful in making a more thorough analysis of issues.

69. Finally, it was stressed that the issues that were considered important at the regional level needed to be compatible with important international issues being discussed at Vienna by the Commission on the Status of Women.

70. At the request of the Presiding Officers, the Secretary of the Commission made a general statement on the Session of the Commission that had been held in Caracas. He said that during the political and economic phase of the meeting, the document Changing Production Patterns with Social Equity had been examined and that a resolution had been approved by consensus. During the administrative phase, the Commission had considered the ECLAC work programme for the 1992-1993 biennium.

71. He said that a resolution on women had been adopted by consensus; that fact reflected the importance accorded to women. The Fifth Regional Conference on the Integration of Women into the Economic and Social Development of Latin America and the Caribbean was included in the schedule of activities approved which meant that funds would be available for organizing the Conference.

Annex

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PRESIDING OFFICERS

Dra. Zelmira Regazzoli
Embajadora para Derechos Humanos y Mujer
Directora General Derechos Humanos y de la Mujer
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Dra. Noemi Haristegui
Subdirectora General de la Mujer
Dirección General de la Mujer
Ministerio de Relaciones Exteriores y Culto
Buenos Aires, Argentina

Sra. Esther Velis
Secretaria de Relaciones Exteriores
Federación de Mujeres Cubanas
La Habana, Cuba

Sra. Rita María Pereira
Federación de Mujeres Cubanas
La Habana, Cuba

Sra. Raquel Blandón de Cerezo
Presidenta de la Mesa y
Primera Dama de Guatemala
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Sra. María Teresa Rodríguez
Encargada de Asuntos de la Mujer
Oficina de la Primera Dama
Ciudad de Guatemala, Guatemala

Sra. María del Rosario Rojas de Pabón
Primer Secretario Embajada de Venezuela
Santiago, Chile

Sra. Teresa Cabrera de Torres
Director General Sectorial Promoción de la Mujer
Instituto para la Promoción de la Mujer
Parque Central Torre Oeste piso 34, fono 5731353
Caracas, Venezuela

Mrs. Bernarda E. Dougle
Miembro de la Mesa Directiva de la
Conferencia Regional sobre la
Integración de la Mujer
Consejo de Ministros de las Antillas Neerlandesas
Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles

Mrs. Criselda Hart-Pieterella
President Steering Committee Women's Organization
Curaçao, Netherlands Antilles

OBSERVERS

Sra. M. Teresa Chadwick
Encargada Relaciones Internacionales
Servicio Nacional de la Mujer
Santiago, Chile

Mrs. Constance Mitcham
Delegada titular de St. Kitts y Nevis ante la CIM/OEA y Ministra de
Salud Pública de St. Kitts y Nevis
Basseterre, Saint Kitts y Nevis

UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES

Sra. Haydeé Martínez de Osorio
Representante de Area para Argentina,
Chile y Uruguay
UNICEF
Santiago, Chile

Sr. Renán Fuentealba
Oficina de Enlace PNUD/CEPAL
Santiago, Chile

Sra. Virginia Lattes
Oficial Regional de Economía del Hogar y
Programas Sociales
Oficina Regional de la FAO
Santiago, Chile

Sr. Rafael Moreno
Director Regional
Oficina Regional de la FAO
Santiago, Chile

Sr. Juan Carlos Tedesco
Director OREALC
UNESCO
Santiago, Chile

ECLAC Secretariat

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Mr. Daniel Blanchard, Secretary of the Commission

Mr. Ernesto Ottone,
Deputy Executive Secretary of the Commission

Mr. Alfredo Costa-Filho, Director of ILPES

Mr. Reynaldo Bajraj, Director of CELADE

Mr. Jorge Israel,
ILPES

Mrs. Dolores Rufián
ILPES

Mr. Ruben Kaztman, Acting Director
Social Development Division

Mrs. Miriam Krawczyk, Chief
Women and Development Unit

Mrs. Sonia Cuales
Social Affairs Officer

Mrs. Evangelina Mijares
Focal Point, Women

Mrs. Irma Arriagada
Social Affairs Officer

Mrs. Soledad Parada, Consultant

Mrs. María Rebeca Yáñez, Consultant