

Chapter II

ORIGINS OF THE CONFERENCE

The origins of the Conference are traceable, in the final analysis, to the pre-occupation which has for long been expressed, in virtually every country and in increasing measure, with questions concerning the position of women in society, in the family, in national economic, cultural and political life and on the international scene. In the United Nations system of organizations the subject of the status of women has been receiving increasing attention at almost every level ever since the establishment of the Organization. The relevant discussions and resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, especially the Commission on the Status of Women, the specialized agencies, the regional commissions, ad hoc international conferences and many other bodies affiliated to the system reflect the growth, especially since 1975, of the interest of Governments in the situation of women at the international and national level. In addition, many intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations have for many years been pressing for a greater recognition of the importance of the role of women in all walks of life.

It was in response to the great interest manifested throughout the world in the status of women that the General Assembly adopted, on 18 December 1972, its resolution 3010 (XXVII) by which it proclaimed the year 1975 as "International Women's Year" and recommended certain action to achieve the objectives set out in the resolution. Subsequently, on 16 May 1974, the Economic and Social Council, acting on a recommendation by the Commission on the Status of Women, adopted resolutions 1849 (LVI) and 1851 (LVI) concerning the convening of an international conference during the "Year" as a focal point of the international observance of the Year. The General Assembly took action on these proposals at its twenty-ninth session, 1/ and at the invitation of the Government of Mexico the World Conference of the International Women's Year was held in Mexico City from 19 June to 2 July 1975.

That Conference adopted the "Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace 1975", a "World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year", several regional plans of action, and a number of resolutions and recommendations. 2/ In order to maintain the momentum it had created, the Mexico Conference recommended, inter alia, that the General Assembly should consider at its thirtieth session the convening of another world conference on women in 1980. 3/

In the course of that thirtieth session the Assembly adopted, on 10 December 1975, resolution 3520 (XXX) by which, inter alia, it took note of the

1/ Resolutions 3276 (XXIX) and 3277 (XXIX) of 10 December 1974.

2/ See the report of the Conference, document E/CONF.66/34, United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.76.IV.1.

3/ Ibid., p. 113.

report of the Mexico Conference and endorsed its proposals for action, proclaimed the period from 1976 to 1985 as the "United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace" to be devoted to effective and sustained national, regional and international action to implement the World Plan of Action and related resolutions of the Conference; and - as recommended by that Conference - decided to convene in 1980, at the mid-term of the "Decade", a world conference of all States "to review and evaluate the progress made in implementing the objectives of the International Women's Year as recommended by the World Conference of the International Women's Year and, where necessary, to readjust existing programmes in the light of new data, and research available".

6. By resolution 32/140 of 16 December 1977, the General Assembly referred, inter alia, to action taken by the Economic and Social Council ^{4/} with a view to advancing preparatory work for the 1980 Conference, in particular to the Council's decision to establish a preparatory committee for the Conference.

7. In the course of its next session, the General Assembly adopted several resolutions, all dated 29 January 1979, relating to the Conference. In particular, it adopted resolution 33/189, the annex to which set out the provisional agenda for the Conference and by which, inter alia, it specified the States, organizations, bodies and movements to be invited by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to participate in or to be represented at the Conference, and requested him to appoint the Secretary-General of the Conference and to make the necessary arrangements for the provision of services to the Conference. By the same resolution the Assembly also decided on the organization of the work of the Conference.

8. By resolution 33/185, the Assembly inter alia invited the specialized agencies and other bodies concerned in the United Nations system to review progress made as well as constraints and specific problems encountered in their technical and operational areas in the achievement of the objectives of the "Decade" and to suggest appropriate programmes for the second half of the "Decade" and called for regional preparatory meetings to suggest such programmes.

9. By resolution 33/191, concerning the venue of the Conference, the Assembly decided to accept with thanks the offer of the Government of Denmark to act as host to the Conference and decided that the Conference would be held in Copenhagen in 1980. ^{5/}

^{4/} Council resolutions 1999 (LX) of 12 May 1976 and 2062 (LXII) of 12 May 1977. By its resolution 2062 (LXII) the Council established the Preparatory Committee consisting of 23 Member States. The following were designated by the President: Australia, Brazil, Cuba, Egypt, German Democratic Republic, India, Iran, Japan, Madagascar, Mexico, Netherlands, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Philippines, Senegal, Uganda, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Venezuela and Yugoslavia.

^{5/} It was subsequently decided by Economic and Social Council decision 1979/4 that the dates of the Copenhagen Conference would be 14 to 30 July 1980.

On 12 February 1979, the Secretary-General appointed Mrs. Lucille Maïr (Jamaica) as Secretary-General of the Conference. She took up her functions officially on 1 April 1979.

1. The Preparatory Committee of the Conference had held its first session in Vienna from 19 to 30 June 1978. 6/ It held its second session at United Nations Headquarters from 27 August to 8 September 1979. 7/ At its first session the Committee elected as its Presiding Officer Mrs. Lena Gueye (Senegal), who was succeeded at the second session by Mrs. Maimouna Kane (Senegal).

2. At its thirty-fourth regular session the General Assembly took action concerning a number of questions related to the Conference. By resolution 34/162 of 17 December 1979 it approved the Preparatory Committee's recommendations (in the report on the Committee's second session) concerning activities preparatory to the Conference and inter alia requested the Secretary-General to provide the budgetary funds necessary for certain specified purposes, including the convening of a third session of the Preparatory Committee. By resolutions 34/160 and 34/161 of the same date the Assembly decided to add an item entitled "Effects of Israeli occupation on Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories: (a) Review of the social and economic needs of Palestinian women; (b) Special measures for Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories" and a sub-item concerning the situation of women refugees the world over to the provisional agenda which it had settled at its previous session. By resolution 34/158, also of the same date, the Assembly called on all Member States to give their support to the Conference, requested the Preparatory Committee to intensify its work in preparing an effective programme of action, and urged the Commission on the Status of Women "to consider at its twenty-eighth session the question of elaborating a draft declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for the strengthening of international peace and security and against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, foreign aggression and occupation and all forms of foreign domination, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 32/142, and for the full and effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, taking into account the views of Governments thereon and views expressed during the thirty-fourth session of the Assembly". At its first regular session of 1980, the Economic and Social Council, acting on resolution IV of the twenty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, adopted resolution 1980/36 of 2 May 1980 by which it referred to the General Assembly the question of elaborating such a draft declaration and invited the Assembly to consider the question at its thirty-fifth session.

3. The Commission on the Status of Women had earlier, at its twenty-seventh session, given consideration to an item relating to the agenda of the Conference and had recommended, as a subtheme of the Conference, the subjects "Employment, Health and Education", as well as the inclusion of an agenda item concerning "Effects of Apartheid on Women in southern Africa". At its twenty-eighth session the Commission gave extensive consideration to the documents prepared for the Conference.

6/ For the report on that session see document A/CONF.94/PC.4.
7/ For the report on that session see document A/CONF.94/PC.12.

14. Another relevant resolution adopted by the Assembly at its thirty-fourth session was resolution 34/204 of 19 December 1979, for in one of its provisions it called upon the Conference to include in the programme of action for the second half of the Decade measures for the integration of women in development.

15. The Preparatory Committee for the Conference held a third session from 7 to 18 April 1980, at United Nations Headquarters, the presiding officer being Mrs. Maimouna Kane (Senegal), at which it considered substantive reports relating to specific items on the Conference's provisional agenda, reports of regional and sectoral meetings preparatory to the Conference and questions concerning the organization of the Conference and other matters. 8/

16. Preparatory meetings at which the role of women was considered and certain recommendations were adopted were held in the various regions, under the auspices of the regional commissions. 9/

17. The Secretariat of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women co-sponsored the following seminars in May 1980 in preparation for the World Conference: the Hemispheric Seminar on Women under Apartheid, in Montreal (with the United Nations Special Committee Against Apartheid); the International Seminar on Women and Apartheid, in Helsinki (with the Special Committee Against Apartheid and UNESCO); and the Seminar on Women and the Media (with UNESCO).

18. A Conference of Non-Aligned and Other Developing Countries on the Role of Women in Development was held in Baghdad from 6 to 13 May 1979. 10/ The agenda included, inter alia, items on national development strategies, rural development, the impact of migration, the role of women's organizations, and the participation of women in the political, social and economic life of their countries and their contribution to the consolidation of peace.

19. The OECD organized a high-level meeting on the employment of women in OECD countries which was held in Paris on 16 and 17 April 1980.

8/ For the Committee's report on its third session, see document A/CONF.94/23.

9/ See:

Report of the seminar on the participation of women in the economic evolution of the ECE region (A/CONF.94/14)

Report of the regional preparatory meeting of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (A/CONF.94/15)

Report of the regional preparatory meeting of the Economic Commission for Latin America (A/CONF.94/16)

Report of the regional preparatory meeting of the Economic Commission for Africa (A/CONF.94/17)

Report of the regional preparatory meeting of the Economic Commission for Western Asia (A/CONF.94/18).

10/ See A/34/321.

Chapter III

ATTENDANCE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

Date and place of the Conference

20. The World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, was held at Copenhagen from 14 to 30 July 1980, in conformity with General Assembly resolution 33/191 of 29 January 1979. During that period the Conference held 21 plenary meetings.

Pre-Conference consultations

21. Pre-Conference consultations open to all States invited to participate in the Conference were held at Copenhagen on 13 July 1980 to consider a number of procedural and organizational matters. These and other informal consultations were conducted under presidency of Ms. Maimouna Kane (Senegal), Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference. The report on the consultations (A/CONF.94/L.2 and Add.1) was submitted to the Conference and was accepted as the basis for the organization of its work.

Attendance

22. The following 145 States were represented at the Conference:

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|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Afghanistan | Comoros |
| Albania | Congo |
| Algeria | Costa Rica |
| Angola | Cuba |
| Argentina | Cyprus |
| Australia | Czechoslovakia |
| Austria | Democratic Kampuchea |
| Bahrain | Democratic People's Republic of Korea |
| Bangladesh | Democratic Yemen |
| Barbados | Denmark |
| Belgium | Dominican Republic |
| Benin | Ecuador |
| Bhutan | Egypt |
| Bolivia | Ethiopia |
| Botswana | Fiji |
| Brazil | Finland |
| Bulgaria | France |
| Burundi | Gabon |
| Belorussian Soviet Socialist Republic | Gambia |
| Canada | German Democratic Republic |
| Cape Verde | Germany, Federal Republic of |
| Central African Republic | Ghana |
| Chile | Greece |
| China | Grenada |
| Colombia | Guatemala |

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| Guinea | Paraguay |
| Guinea-Bissau | Peru |
| Guyana | Philippines |
| Haiti | Poland |
| Holy See | Portugal |
| Honduras | Qatar |
| Hungary | Republic of Korea |
| Iceland | Romania |
| India | Rwanda |
| Indonesia | Samoa |
| Iran | Saint Lucia |
| Iraq | San Marino |
| Ireland | Sao Tome and Principe |
| Israel | Senegal |
| Italy | Seychelles |
| Ivory Coast | Singapore |
| Jamaica | Somalia |
| Japan | Spain |
| Jordan | Sri Lanka |
| Kenya | Sudan |
| Kuwait | Suriname |
| Leo People's Democratic Republic | Swaziland |
| Lebanon | Sweden |
| Lesotho | Switzerland |
| Libyan Arab Jamahiriya | Syrian Arab Republic |
| Luxembourg | Thailand |
| Madagascar | Togo |
| Malawi | Trinidad and Tobago |
| Malaysia | Tunisia |
| Maldives | Turkey |
| Mali | Uganda |
| Mauritania | Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic |
| Mauritius | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics |
| Mexico | United Arab Emirates |
| Mongolia | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| Morocco | United Republic of Cameroon |
| Mozambique | United Republic of Tanzania |
| Nepal | United States of America |
| Netherlands | Upper Volta |
| New Zealand | Uruguay |
| Nicaragua | Venezuela |
| Niger | Vietnam |
| Nigeria | Yemen |
| Norway | Yugoslavia |
| Oman | Zaire |
| Pakistan | Zambia |
| Panama | Zimbabwe |
| Papua New Guinea | |

23. The United Nations Council for Namibia and the Special Committee on Apartheid were represented at the Conference.

24. The Palestine Liberation Organization and the South West Africa People's Organization attended the Conference in the capacity of observers.

25. The following national liberation movements were represented by observers:
African National Congress (South Africa), Pan Africanist Congress of Azania.

26. Members of the secretariat of the following United Nations offices were present throughout or during part of the Conference:

Office of the Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-Operation

Department of International Economic and Social Affairs

Department of Technical Co-operation for Development

Department of Political and Security Affairs

27. The secretariats of the following regional commissions were represented at the Conference:

Economic Commission for Europe

Economic Commission for Latin America

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

Economic Commission for Africa

Economic Commission for Western Asia

28. The following United Nations bodies and programmes were also represented:

United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)

United Nations Children's Fund

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

United Nations Development Programme

United Nations Environment Programme

United Nations Fund for Population Activities

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

United Nations Institute for Training and Research

United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office

United Nations University

World Food Programme

Federation of International Civil Servants Associations

29. Representatives of the following specialized agencies and related organizations participated in the work of the Conference:

International Labour Organisation

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

World Health Organization

World Bank

30. The following intergovernmental organizations were represented by observers:

Caribbean Community Secretariat

Commonwealth Secretariat

Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

Council of Europe

European Economic Community

International Center for Public Enterprises in Developing Countries

League of Arab States

Nordic Council

Organization of African Unity

Organization of American States (Inter-American Commission of Women)

31. A large number of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, or on the Roster, attended the Conference. The list of participants is given in document A/CONF.94/INF.3 and Add.1.

D. Opening of the Conference and election of its President

32. The Conference was opened by the Secretary-General of the United Nations. In the course of his address he stated that global problems were so interlocked that efforts for their solution must proceed simultaneously along several paths. The three goals of the Decade for Women - "Equality, Development and Peace" - were those of the United Nations itself, and their attainment demanded increased international collaboration. Without peace, there could be no true equality nor genuine development. In a climate of fear, tension and instability like the one prevailing at present, the arms race proceeded apace at the expense of programmes of social development. Deterioration in international relations was compounded by the sombre outlook for the world economy. Such was the gravity of the situation of the Third World that international political stability would be further eroded if rapid changes were not forthcoming in economic co-operation between nations. He urged vigorous efforts to achieve the consensus required for establishing a new international economic order.

33. He said that these were issues in which women were as much involved as men. Issues apparently specific to women could not be dissociated from the broader questions of development and peace. He expected the Conference to make a realistic appraisal of what had been achieved since the Mexico Conference in 1975 and what yet needed to be done to fulfil the goals laid down in the World Plan of Action. The progress that had been made should not be overlooked. There were signs that stereotyped attitudes about the respective roles and positions of the male and female halves of society were being steadily reformed. There was increased recognition on the part of Governments and international institutions that women's participation was critical to the achievement of their goals of progress. Equality between women and men was being better ensured through legislation and various

national machineries. At the same time, it was to be recognized that gaps occurred between laws and social practice and that these needed to be prevented through sustained social action, resources and political will. In many respects, women still suffered discrimination in employment and education. In developing countries, they were especially vulnerable to chronic poor health and inadequate nutrition. These realities should encourage a redoubling of the admirable efforts made by women in many parts of the world to help each other and work for the progress of their societies. While acknowledging the support given to these efforts by many governments, he made an appeal for increased contributions to the Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women.

Concluding, the Secretary-General said that humanity had reached a stage where the strengths and energy of women needed to be utilized in the collective effort to attain if universally accepted goals had to be attained. He hoped that the Conference would succeed in formulating programmes motivated by idealism and also achievable in practice. It would thus make a contribution to the international effort for releasing humanity from the bondage of hunger and disease, hate and prejudice, conflict and injustice.

In an inaugural address, Her Majesty Queen Margrethe II of Denmark said that the Conference was an important event not only for the participants but also for Denmark as the host country. She expressed the hope that women all over the world would benefit from the work of the Conference, which marked the mid-point in the United Nations Decade for Women and which provided an opportunity for reviewing results achieved in the five years that had elapsed since and for planning future action. The Plan of Action adopted at the Mexico Conference envisaged the full and real participation of women in economic, social and political life. People everywhere would now look to the Copenhagen Conference for positive and constructive results in its work for the enhancement of the status of women, especially the least privileged among them. The Conference was taking place at a time when national societies and the international community were developing rapidly, with far-reaching consequences for the structure and balance of societies. Hence it was more imperative than ever that all sectors of the population should be able to participate actively in the shaping of humanity's common future. Efforts to achieve equal rights and opportunities for men and women should take due account of the personal capacity of the individual. Attitudes towards the role of men and women in society should be flexible, and rigid concepts of stereotyped roles for either sex should be avoided. Proceeding, Her Majesty stated that women were experiencing the necessity of establishing their own premises for an active contribution to the development of society. They felt that they must draw up their own demands and themselves specify under what human conditions and in what kind of society they wished to live. They were urging men to take this as a challenge and to realize the possibilities inherent in a new family pattern where the role of each member of the family unit was no longer hampered by fixed ideas. It was equally important that education and employment, both public and private, should offer incentives leading towards the sharing of opportunities and responsibilities, both outside and inside the family.

The World Plan of Action adopted in Mexico was based upon the concept that, in a broader perspective, efforts for the advancement of women could not be pursued in a political vacuum, but must be closely related to parallel international efforts for strengthening the plans for international development and peace. Her Majesty expressed the hope that all participants in the Conference would remember that they

were dealing with human individuals, each woman or man a separate personality with hopes and fears, joys and sorrows, each one unique. She hoped that the Conference would provide a fresh and strong impetus towards a progressive realization of the objectives of the Decade.

37. His Excellency, Mr. Anker Jørgensen, Prime Minister of Denmark, in an address to the Conference stated that the Conference offered an opportunity to bridge the varied views on the concepts of "Equality, Development and Peace" which existed in different parts of the world. He believed that democracy was the system most conducive to the achievement of these three objectives. But also in this system the objectives of equality, development and peace should be pursued consistently and determinedly. Assessing the results during the past few years, he recognized that progress had been slow. Women in the developing countries were faced with by far the greatest difficulties. It was quite natural, therefore, that the Conference should focus first and foremost on the possibilities of women to influence the social and economic development of those countries. He expressed the best wishes of the Danish Government for the successful outcome of the Conference for the benefit of all women of the world, especially women in the least developed countries, and assured it of his Government's readiness to do its best to help the Conference to fulfil its tasks.

38. The Conference elected by acclamation Mrs. Lise Østergaard, Minister for Cultural Affairs of Denmark and head of the delegation of Denmark, as President of the Conference.

39. In thanking the Conference for her election, the President said that, ever since the establishment of the United Nations, it has been one of the objectives of the Organization to contribute to the advancement of women. The outstanding event in the history of its efforts in that direction had been the adoption of the World Plan of Action at the Mexico Conference in 1975, as a result of which public opinion had become increasingly conscious of the important part women could play in the development process. It was the task of the Copenhagen Conference to take action tending to improve the conditions of poverty under which millions of women were living, the consequences of which were illiteracy, poor health and lack of access to remunerated employment. In stressing that equality was a prerequisite of wholesome social, economic and cultural development, she considered nevertheless that account should be taken of possible differences in concepts of values between women and men. In referring to the economic situation of women, she said that prejudice and other factors still accounted for the inferior and dependent status of women in many societies - a phenomenon not confined to the developing countries. Efforts to establish a new international economic order should aim, therefore, not only at redressing the balance between rich and poor countries but also at rectifying the inequalities between the sexes. She expressed the hope that the Copenhagen Conference would recommend international action and ensure that decisions concerning development strategies would never more be made without taking into account their effects on the living conditions of women.

40. She emphasized that the conclusions of the Conference ought to be such as to be universally acceptable, for only then would its decisions and recommendations produce effects world-wide. Accordingly, she hoped that the deliberations of the Conference would be conducted in a spirit of dedication to the common cause of ensuring that women took an active part, on a par with men, in the shaping of

future societies. As President she would spare no effort in seeking consensus on all matters of substance relevant to the agreed subjects of the Conference.

11. An appeal, in the form of a petition signed by more than half a million women of the Nordic countries was presented to the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The petitioners urged prompt action to achieve disarmament and peace, an end to all aggression and to the power struggle of the great Powers, in order that the resources so released might be used for constructive purposes.

12. In responding, the Secretary-General said he had been deeply touched by the appeal, the sentiments of which he echoed.

13. Messages from Heads of State or Government

13. The Conference received messages wishing it success addressed to it by the Heads of State or Government of Bangladesh, Bulgaria, China, Congo, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Ethiopia, France, Gambia, Guyana, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Japan, Kenya, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Maldives, Mongolia, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Senegal, Syrian Arab Republic, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

14. Other messages

14. A message for the success of the Conference was received from the Palestine Liberation Organization.

15. Adoption of the rules of procedure (agenda item 3)

15. At its first plenary meeting on 14 July 1980 the Conference adopted the provisional rules of procedure recommended by the Preparatory Committee (A/CONF.94/2), subject to the amendment of rule 6 to read:

"The Conference shall elect the following officers: a President, a Vice-President in charge of co-ordination and 23 other Vice-Presidents and a Rapporteur-General, as well as a Presiding Officer for each of the Main Committees provided for in rule 42. Each Main Committee shall elect three Deputy Presiding Officers and a Rapporteur."

16. Adoption of the agenda (agenda item 4)

16. At the same meeting the Conference adopted as its agenda the provisional agenda (A/CONF.94/1) recommended by the Preparatory Committee, viz:

1. Opening of the Conference
2. Election of the President
3. Adoption of the rules of procedure
4. Adoption of the agenda
5. Election of officers other than the President

6. Other organizational matters
 - (a) Allocation of items to the Main Committees and organization of work
 - (b) Credentials of representatives of the Conference
 - (i) Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee
 - (ii) Report of the Credentials Committee
7. Effects of apartheid on women in southern Africa
 - (a) Review of the situation
 - (b) Special measures for assistance to women in southern Africa
8. Review and evaluation of the progress made and obstacles encountered in attaining the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, at the national, regional and international levels, from 1975 to 1980, in keeping with the World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year:
 - (a) Review and evaluation of progress made and obstacles encountered at the national level in attaining the minimum objectives set forth in paragraph 46 of the World Plan of Action
 - (b) Review and evaluation of regional and global programmes of the United Nations system of organizations aimed at promoting the objectives of the Decade
9. Programme of Action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, 1981-1985, designed to implement the World Plan of Action
 - (a) National targets and strategies for women's integration and participation in economic and social development, with special emphasis on the subtheme "Employment, Health and Education"
 - (i) Planning and monitoring
 - (ii) National machineries
 - (b) Regional and international targets and strategies, taking into account the subtheme "Employment, Health and Education"
 - (c) The situation of women refugees the world over
10. Effects of Israeli occupation on Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories
 - (a) A review of the social and economic needs of the Palestinian women

(b) Special measures for assistance to Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories

11. Adoption of the report of the Conference

Election of officers other than the President (agenda item 5)

At its second plenary meeting on 15 July 1980, the Conference elected Mrs. Helga Hörz (German Democratic Republic) Vice-President in charge of co-ordination and the following 23 States as Vice-Presidents: Australia, Austria, Barbados, China, Congo, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, Iraq, Kenya, Nigeria, Pakistan, Philippines, Poland, Syrian Arab Republic, Tunisia, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United States of America, Venezuela, Zimbabwe.

Ms. Anasixta Gonzales de Cuadros (Colombia) was elected Rapporteur-General.

The Conference elected Mrs. Maimouna Kane (Senegal) Presiding Officer of the First Committee and Mrs. Shiela Kaul (India) Presiding Officer of the Second Committee.

The First and Second Committees elected their Deputy Presiding Officers and Rapporteurs:

First Committee

Deputy Presiding Officers:

Ms. Rafidah Aziz (Malaysia)
Ms. Leonidas Paez de Virgili (Paraguay)
Ms. Maria Groza (Romania)

Rapporteur:

Ms. M. Van Hemeldonck (Belgium)

Second Committee

Deputy Presiding Officers:

Ms. Maria de Lourdes C. E. S.
de Vincenzi (Brazil)
Mr. Chavdar Kiuranov (Bulgaria)
Ms. Nermin Abadan-Urat (Turkey)

Rapporteur:

Mr. Ali Benbouchta (Morocco)

Officers of the Committee of the Whole

The Committee of the Whole established by the Conference ^{1/} elected as its Presiding Officer Ambassador Ifigenia Martinez (Mexico). It elected Mr. Umayya Tukan (Jordan) as its Deputy Presiding Officer and Ms. Inonga Lewanika (Zambia) as its Rapporteur.

Other organizational matters (agenda item 6)

1. Allocation of items to the Main Committees and organization of work

At its 1st plenary meeting the Conference further decided:

(i) That items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 11 would be considered in plenary meetings;

^{1/} In conformity with a recommendation by the pre-Conference consultations (A/CONF.94/L.2/Add.1).

- (ii) That items 7 (a), 8 (a), 9 (a) and 10 (a) would be considered by the First Committee;
- (iii) That items 7 (b), 8 (b), 9 (b), 9 (c) and 10 (b) would be considered by the Second Committee.

53. In addition, at the same meeting the Conference decided to establish a Committee of the Whole whose terms of reference would be to consider Part One "Background and framework" of the Programme of Action contained in document A/CONF.94/22 and Corr.1, and to report to the plenary.

2. Credentials of representatives to the Conference: Appointment of the members of the Credentials Committee (agenda item 6 (b) (i))

54. In conformity with rule 4 of the rules of procedure the Conference at its 1st plenary meeting established a Credentials Committee composed of the following States: Belgium, China, Congo, Ecuador, Pakistan, Panama, Senegal, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States of America.

K. Tribute to the memory of the late President of Botswana

55. At its 2nd plenary meeting on 15 July 1980 the Conference observed one minute's silence in tribute to the memory of Sir Seretse Khama, President of Botswana, whose death had been announced.

L. Implications of Conference decisions for the programme budget of the United Nations

56. At the 20th plenary meeting on 30 July 1980, before the consideration of the recommendations made by the Committees and of other draft resolutions, the Secretary of the Conference stated that any provisions of the Programme of Action or draft resolutions that had implications for the programme budget of the United Nations would be brought to the attention of the General Assembly by the Secretariat at the time when the Assembly considered the report of the Conference.

Chapter IV

SUMMARY OF THE GENERAL DEBATE

57. The general debate, which took place in the course of 18 plenary meetings of the Conference, from 14 to 29 July 1980, covered the whole range of the topics that were referred for more specific consideration to the Committees established by the Conference. The passages which follow give a brief account of the points that were stressed by speakers in the debate.

58. The representatives of States and the observers who addressed the Conference, as well as the representatives of specialized agencies, regional commissions and other United Nations bodies, programmes and offices who made statements commented on the central issues before the Conference. Some intergovernmental organizations also made statements in the plenary. A statement was also made on behalf of a number of non-governmental organizations. In addition, statements were made in the plenary by the representatives of nine non-governmental organizations.

59. Many representatives referred to the adoption by the General Assembly of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women ^{1/} as an event of great significance. A large number of the representatives who spoke in the general debate announced that they had been authorized by their Governments to sign the Convention on behalf of their countries at the ceremony arranged, in conformity with Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/34, to take place during the Conference. ^{2/} They added that the signature and ratification of the Convention by as many States as possible and its early entry into force would promote the achievement of the objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women.

60. In an inaugural statement, the Secretary-General of the Conference said that the 1975 Conference of the International Women's Year, by unanimously approving the World Plan of Action, had affirmed the comprehensive scope of women's concerns. Inherent in the World Plan was the recognition that, if women were a critical component in every aspect of national life, it was necessary to involve them in planning and implementation in every sector, including those traditionally perceived as masculine. This was equally true at the international level. Accordingly, just as the Conference would consider specific sectors such as employment, health and education, it should also examine what progress had been achieved in making the new vision of women as agents and participants as well as beneficiaries a national and international reality.

61. Responding to a decision of the Mexico Conference, she said the United Nations system had assembled for the mid-Decade review the most complete data yet available

^{1/} General Assembly resolution 34/180 of 18 December 1979.

^{2/} The signing ceremony took place at the Bella Center, Copenhagen, on 17 July 1980.

on the condition of women. The emerging picture permitted of no complacency, for there was evidence that in the main the targets established in the World Plan were still as elusive as in 1975; however, by its greater detail and clearer focus, this picture should provide the basis for practical, action-oriented strategies for the rest of the Decade, and the motive for mobilizing national and international resources behind them. Improved research and analysis, carried out by experts from a wider range of regions, had also served to confirm the hypothesis that the situation of women in any country was conditioned by global economic and political situations. Both the current world economic crisis and international political tensions were probably having an adverse impact on efforts for the advancement of women.

62. In the field of employment, increased participation of women had not brought increased rewards, for the majority of women were confined to low-paid, sex-stereotyped and insecure jobs. In many instances technological change had actually set women back, and continued failure to redefine economic activity had meant that much of women's productive work remained uncounted and ignored by economists. As regards health, the data revealed widespread chronic ill-health among women, and women's greater vulnerability to certain diseases. As regards education, in spite of increased female enrolment parity had not been achieved; the drop-out rate for girls was high, while women's workloads often precluded their access to adult education programmes where these existed. Moreover, the content of education frequently tended to reinforce, rather than to change, attitudes which inhibited improvement in the status of women.

63. The Secretary-General of the Conference further stated that the General Assembly, recognizing that women were both participants and victims in political struggles, had directed the Conference to consider three issues - the effects of apartheid on women in southern Africa, the effects of Israeli occupation on Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories, and the situation of women refugees the world over - and to formulate special measures of assistance in each case. Each of these situations was being dealt with in other United Nations bodies; the Conference, therefore, had the responsibility of identifying the special needs of the women involved, and of devising means of aiding them which neither duplicated nor detracted from existing programmes.

64. The major part of the Conference's work, she said, would be the adoption of a programme of action at the national, regional and international levels, designed to ensure that the targets of the World Plan were met by the end of the Decade. The review indicated that at all three levels the lack of structural change had impeded efforts. At the national level, mechanisms established had tended to remain advisory, and to be hampered by a lack of resources. At the regional and international levels, there had been some progress: programmes and resource centres had been established within the regional commissions, and in the United Nations and the specialized agencies the growing recognition that women were important to all developmental concerns had been reflected both in their programmes and in intergovernmental meetings. Structural changes at these levels, however, had not been adequate even to carry out the activities recommended in the World Plan, let alone the further initiatives recommended by the regional preparatory meetings for the Conference. There was still too great a tendency to regard programmes for women as a separate exercise within a given institution or department, too great a reliance on extrabudgetary sources to fund such programmes, and insufficient co-ordination among them.

The object of the draft Programme of Action before the Conference (CONF.94/22 and Corr.1) was to suggest priorities for the rest of the Decade. Its thrust was twofold; first, toward integrated planning at all levels and in all sectors, with the provision of necessary resources, and second, toward establishing adequate institutional arrangements both to implement plans and programmes and to monitor their implementation. The draft Programme of Action further sought to increase the participation of women at all levels and in varied ways, and was intended to be complementary to the efforts of Governments in attaining the objectives of the Decade.

The over-all situation, although by no means satisfactory, nevertheless contained positive elements. Governments and international organizations had come to recognize that both women's problems and their potential for problem-solving must be taken seriously, and were beginning to see new possibilities for linking women's advancement to the solution of global problems such as the formulation of a new international development strategy, which the General Assembly would shortly be considering. It was appropriate that the considerations of the Conference would find a place in that process.

In opening the general debate the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs stressed the historic significance of the preceding eight years when women had made the first meaningful contribution to world affairs at the international, regional and national levels. The Mexico Conference had been the first and only World Conference where women had formed a large majority among the government delegations, most of which had been headed by women. The World Plan of Action adopted at the Mexico Conference was the most comprehensive socio-economic and political programme ever devised in order to improve the situation of human beings.

In reviewing the first part of the Decade for Women she singled out the major achievements. In the field of equality the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in December 1979 had been a big step forward. In the field of development some visible achievements were: growing awareness of the important role of women; the increasing realization that the situation of women crucially affected the situation of children and families, including future generations; the concentrated efforts, with considerable results, to enlarge the data base, research and analysis with the object of identifying the linkage between the situation of women and other issues related to the development of society; the significant interest in the implementation of the World Plan of Action and the programme for the Decade as part of the national and international development plans and programmes; the increasing number of non-governmental organizations involved in the implementation of the programme; the growing and concerted commitment by women the world over to becoming a major force in the development of the national and international societies.

So far as peace was concerned, she said that successes had been less striking, women had contributed to friendly relations among States and to the elimination of threats to peace.

Two new programmes for the advancement of women and new contributions to development were direct results of the Mexico Conference: the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

71. She added that the secretariat unit responsible for implementing the recommendations of the Mexico Conference needed to be strengthened. The second part of the Decade should fully reflect women's increasing participation in all national and international affairs, and women should not let the responsibility for the future remain solely in the hands of male leaders. The desire to create a better future for themselves, their children and families united women all over the world, but they had to be fully involved in all affairs affecting the common destiny of all humanity.

72. The words of Matthew Arnold quoted in the Mexico Conference, "if women of the world will once unite, there will be a power which the world has never seen," had really become true. She hoped the trend would continue towards the creation of a more human world for all.

73. The delegations which spoke in the ensuing debate agreed that the Conference was an important opportunity to assess the progress which had been made since the Conference of the International Women's Year in Mexico. Many representatives stated that the Conference could have a substantial impact on the efforts of Governments to achieve the goals of the Decade.

74. Many participants recognized the close relationship between the three themes of the Conference: equality, development and peace, for in their opinion it was a condition of the realization of these objectives that women should play an important part in their achievement.

75. Other representatives held the opinion that the Conference represented the expressed will of people and Governments to eliminate poverty, all forms of discrimination, injustices and inequalities. They stated that peace, détente, international co-operation, general and complete disarmament, especially nuclear disarmament, and national liberation, as well as respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms constituted the indispensable conditions for the emancipation of women.

Equality

76. Almost all representatives supported the principle of the equality of women and men in all fields. They considered that there had been progress and some success in combating the inequality of the sexes. Some speakers stated that more concrete and practical suggestions were needed aiming at ensuring a higher degree of equal opportunities and that equality should be translated into economic and social terms. A number of delegations stressed that education should inculcate a spirit of equality - racial and sexual equality. Many delegations considered that, for deep historical, social and economic reasons, it would probably not be possible to achieve full legal and factual equality of women and men all over the world during the Decade. Other representatives considered that equality for women would become possible if men and women together shared in the construction of a new international economic order. In this connexion one representative stressed that women's efforts to achieve equality in the developing countries were firmly linked to the struggle for the right of national self-determination without any outside intervention or exploitation. Many delegations stated that the recognition of the equal place of women in society was the objective of the most progressive social and political movements in history. They added that nowadays women's movements were not confined to the narrow framework of purely

"refeminine" matters but constituted an active factor in the achievement of economic and social progress. As a contribution to the attainment of women's equality, many delegations urged that action should be taken to eradicate hunger, disease, unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance and backwardness in countries where these evils still existed.

77. Many delegations referred to the function of the State as the ultimate guarantor of the rights of all citizens of either sex and to the institutions which in their countries were responsible, under the law, for ensuring the respect of these rights. They said that many of the international instruments and conventions that provided for the equality of the sexes in the matter of employment, social security benefits, health care, education and in other respects had become part of national law, as had certain recommendations of the International Labour Organisation and other bodies (including regional bodies) that provided for preferential treatment of women in specific fields. Many representatives stated that the Constitutions, laws and regulations in force in their countries provided material guarantees for the full equality of the sexes in every respect and that there was governmental and other institutional machinery for ensuring the observance of these legislative provisions.

78. The delegations of some other countries stated that economic and social progress, including progress towards full equality of the sexes in so far as it did not already exist, depended not only on initiatives taken by the State, but also on the efforts and contributions on the individual: the citizens, female and male, had responsibilities and duties, and it was the task of the State to create conditions propitious for the fulfilment of those duties.

Development

79. Most delegations agreed that peace and security, national and international, were essential for progress and development. They also stated that the preconditions for achieving economic and social development on a global scale were the establishment of a more just and equitable economic order.

80. Many speakers referred to the need for a New International Economic Order and to the importance of women as participants and beneficiaries of such an order. One delegation proposed that the results of the Conference should be brought to the attention of the special session of the General Assembly on economic development.

81. Some representatives stated that women did not always share in the fruits of development and that any definition of development should include provision for the concerns and participation of women. One representative stated that there was no question of a separate development strategy for women. Women should be an integral part of every development programme, both at the microeconomic and at the macroeconomic level. They should be treated as a target group in development plans, and budgetary allocations should be made accordingly. In addition, each development project and programme should have a built-in mechanism for assessing their impact on women.

82. A number of representatives pointed out that the world economic crisis had placed additional burdens on women. Others stated that the Conference should emphasize the interdependence of political and economic development more strongly than did the draft programme of action.

83. Many delegations said that, for the purpose of integrating women into the development process in their countries, it would be necessary to break down attitudinal barriers inherent in the national culture through public enlightenment programmes, including specific programmes for women. In most cases these programmes were sponsored by the Government or a governmental agency and provision was made for them in the national budget. These speakers added that some of these activities received welcome support from international organizations or from aid-giving agencies of donor countries. Moreover, they said, the movement towards the greater participation of women in the development effort of their countries had received a considerable boost from the events organized in connexion with the International Women's Year, 1975, as a result of which women's groups and associations had sprung up in many countries where previously none had existed or where public life had been almost entirely dominated by men.

84. Some delegations, referring to the economic situation in the world in general and in their countries in particular, said that in times of economic recession it was invariably the weaker sectors of the population that were most adversely affected by the hardships which were the consequence of a slackening of industrial and commercial activity. Among the first victims, they said, were the women in occupations hard hit by the downturn of the economy, who swelled the ranks of the unemployed and whose loss of income aggravated the family circumstances, which in many cases were straitened by the simultaneous unemployment of another member of the household. A number of speakers pointed out that the effects of a country's economic stagnation were particularly frustrating for persons who had become accustomed, in earlier periods of affluence, to a certain standard of living and who had come to expect a continuation of their lifestyle: there again, the adjustment to a different way of life often fell hardest upon the women.

85. Other delegations stressed that many of the women in their countries had been influenced by commercial publicity to overestimate the materialistic values of a civilization alien to their national or religious tradition.

86. A few delegations expressed the opinion that one of the causes contributing to the present economic crisis, which was severely hampering the development efforts of many developing countries and which gravely affected the women in these countries, was the rise in the price of fuels, in particular petroleum products. They explained that petroleum and its derivatives were indispensable to the daily life of the households in their countries, for cooking and heating, and the high price of the fuel eroded the already meagre resources available to families in these countries for buying food and other necessities. In addition, they said, as petroleum was the basis of many synthetic materials, the higher price of the raw material was reflected in the retail price of garments. Transport costs also rose in keeping with the price of petroleum, and hence added to the cost of living of the population, including that of working women.

87. Some delegations considered that the Conference ought to pay special attention to the case of women in the least developed countries. These countries would need sustained and adequate international assistance in order to be able to carry out the quite ambitious provisions of the draft Programme of Action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women. In that connexion a number of speakers pointed out that the Voluntary Fund had provided such assistance in certain cases; they expressed the hope that the Fund would receive generous support from Governments in a position to provide financial resources.

Peace

88. Many delegations pointed out that women all over the world accepted peace as an objective necessity and that many supported concrete action in favour of disarmament and an end to the arms race. Other representatives also stressed the necessity to safeguard peace. Some delegations expressed the opinion that peace was the condition for the achievement of equality and development. A number of delegations endorsed the peace initiative of the group of Nordic women as an example of grass roots efforts to influence strategies that would ensure world peace. Other delegations stressed that regional conflicts should be resolved by peaceful means. One delegation stated that, as yet, women's influence on such issues as peace and security, disarmament, détente and the realization of a New International Economic Order had been modest. The delegations of several developing countries said that war and the threat of war constituted a particularly serious danger for the daily life of women and children in their countries. Other delegations stated that facts showed that the threat to peace came mainly from hegemonist aggression and expansion.

89. Many delegations pointed out that lasting peace and security were basic preconditions for the achievement of equality and development. They expressed their conviction that the struggle for peace and disarmament, for national independence, against aggression, foreign occupation and all forms of enslavement and dictatorship, colonialism, neo-colonialism, racism, racial discrimination, apartheid was at the same time a struggle for the improvement of the status of women and their equal participation in social and economic development. They also pointed out that a new war would put in peril the very existence of civilization, and called upon all women of the world to work actively to prevent it. In this connexion, they expressed apprehension about the plans to deploy in some countries of Western Europe medium-range missiles. Some of them referred to proposals aimed at strengthening peace and security and curbing the arms race, in particular the declaration adopted on 15 May by the Political Consultative Committee of the Warsaw Treaty States. Some of these delegations stressed the need to elaborate a declaration on the participation of women in the struggle for international peace and security. One of these delegations proposed that the Conference should adopt a resolution calling upon the General Assembly to consider and accept such a declaration. These delegations pointed in particular to the significance of a broad and continuous process of preparation of societies for life in peace which involved the recognition, in word and deed, that every nation and every human being, regardless of race, conscience, language or sex, has the inherent right to life in peace.

Employment

90. A subject to which virtually all speakers addressed themselves in the course of their statements in the general debate was that of the economic position of women, and in particular the employment of women. Many representatives referred to the increasing share of the active labour force that was accounted for by women in the modern economies of the industrialized countries. Women performed in many sectors tasks on a footing of equality with men; in some sectors, particularly in those traditionally reserved for women, female employees outnumbered males, and in certain professions a significant percentage of the posts was now held by women. Many representatives stated that in their countries women enjoyed equal opportunities with men in all fields of economic activity and that

special legislative and other measures ensured the employment of all persons, including women; as a result, a very high percentage of women of working age was gainfully employed, on terms of equal remuneration with men. The importance of the participation of women in economic activity, including agriculture and certain industries, was stressed also by many representatives.

91. Some representatives referred to the increase in the number of women in professional and technical occupations, and one of these representatives stated that there were more professional women than men in her country. It was pointed out that often an excessive burden fell on women who were employed inasmuch as they continued to bear, often alone, the full burden of family responsibilities. In addition, many representatives stated that the principle of "equal pay for equal work", though enshrined in the labour legislation of their countries, was not always respected in practice owing to the prejudices and stereotyped vision of employers. The representatives of some developed market economy countries commented that the phenomenon of discrimination against women as regards their remuneration was observable in their countries as well, and added that it was not an infrequent practice for employers to reserve certain occupations to the one or the other sex, the low paid jobs being commonly given to female workers. The representative of one of these countries considered that what was needed was a redistribution of jobs: in her opinion, men should do less paid work and should share the domestic duties with women so as to relieve women of their double burden. She added that women should participate on a larger scale in the activities at present reserved to men. Other representatives noted that special compensatory measures were necessary to achieve a redistribution of jobs.

Women and health

92. Several delegations expressed the view that improvements had taken place in the area of women's health, as indicated by the decline in infant and maternal mortality rates and by figures showing a higher life expectancy for women. Most representatives stressed that adequate health was a prerequisite for the effective participation of women in development, in education, in employment and in political life.

93. Many delegations stated that in their countries medical services for women, particularly maternity and child care, were provided free of charge and were among these countries' basic achievements. They described extensive measures taken in these countries to ensure an appropriate level of health services for women and children, including the further development of a vast network of specialized institutions and clinics.

94. In describing the progress made in the last five years in the health care system of their countries, many other delegations mentioned improvements in primary health care services, with emphasis on maternity and child care clinics.

95. Many delegations referred to the extension of pre-natal and post-natal child care, midwifery services and maternity clinics to the rural areas of their countries. Some representatives noted the increase in the number of women practising or being trained as doctors, midwives, nurses or officials in the national health system.

96. Several speakers mentioned the need for increased health education for women. In this respect, some representatives considered that the elements of basic nutrition should be taught to women, and pointed out that in countries where

nutrition and feeding programmes had been implemented, malnutrition had decreased. Many delegations urged that family planning programmes be included in health education. One speaker stated that family planning was part of her country's family welfare policy.

97. Many delegations, referring to priority areas for action, stated that improvements in water supply and sanitation facilities would benefit the rural areas and contribute to better health for women in developing countries.

98. Several speakers commented on the disquieting incidence of domestic violence, sexual assault and maltreatment of women and urged that in countries where the existing law provided insufficient protection against such offences legislation should be enacted to safeguard the relatively helpless woman and child against abuse, and social services should be provided to offer relief to the victims of abuse. One delegation noted the crucial role that women's organizations played in aiding battered women and in exposing their problems to society.

99. One representative stated that in her continent infant and maternal mortality rates were among the highest in the world, and the life expectancy for women one of the lowest.

Environment

100. The delegations of a number of countries, particularly those of the South Pacific region, protested against the use of that region as a testing ground for nuclear devices. They stated that the periodic tests, and especially the nuclear fall-out and the effects of radiation, constituted a threat to the environment, the resources and the population of their countries. One of these delegations stated that this disregard for the quality of the environment and for the well-being of its country's population, including women and children, prejudiced national efforts to improve health and living conditions. Some speakers appealed to the Governments of countries carrying out nuclear tests to confine such tests to their own territories. They maintained that the continuation of nuclear tests betokened a lack of respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Pacific Island nations.

Education

101. It was generally recognized that one of the most serious and most persistent deficiencies from which many developing countries suffered was the widespread illiteracy, especially among the female population. Numerous speakers acknowledged that a principal cause of illiteracy among women was the historical and cultural attitude of society to the education of girls and that what was needed was a transformation of traditional attitudes and prejudices which had contributed to the underprivileged position of women and girls so far as education was concerned. Many representatives referred to action taken or contemplated in their countries to improve the access of the female population to primary and secondary education. In some cases the efforts of the Governments in that direction were supported by unilateral or bilateral assistance. A number of representatives pointed to successes achieved by the literacy campaigns in their countries. Others pointed out that national efforts to promote literacy were hampered by lack of resources, geographical factors, the wide dispersal of population groups, poor transport and communications. It was generally agreed that the status of women in societies,

in which illiteracy was still a common phenomenon, could not be raised unless females were admitted to, and encouraged to attend, schools on a footing of equality with males.

102. A considerable number of representatives stated that, although it was true that in many respects women had not achieved parity with men in their countries so far as higher education was concerned, it was no less true that the number of female entrants into institutions of higher learning had increased in recent years and was still rising. Several of these representatives stated that in their countries the conditions governing admission to universities were the same for women and for men. Many representatives reported that in their countries almost equal numbers of women and men graduated from institutions of higher learning, thanks to guarantees provided by the entire social policy pursued by their Governments. Some representatives stated that in their countries a large number of women from urban areas attended courses of higher education, but that the enrolment of rural women in such courses was low. One representative reported that almost half the students enrolled in his country's universities were women, but that the drop-out rate among the female students was high. Several representatives announced action taken or envisaged in their countries to adapt curricula to the special needs of female students and to remove or revise sex-stereotyped textbooks. Some representatives considered that there should be a possibility of choice between coeducational and single-sex schools.

Political participation

103. Most representatives indicated that broad national and international objectives could not be achieved without taking account of issues affecting women or without ensuring that women participated in the benefits of policies and programmes.

104. Other speakers referred to the growing realization that the participation of women in political life and in the decision-making process increased the benefits to society as a whole, as well as to women.

105. Many delegations referred to the increase in the number of women occupying both elective and appointive positions in governments since 1975. Several representatives cited figures showing women's participation in different offices. Greater acceptance of women in high government, political, labour union and other posts was noted, as well as growing efforts by women to organize to promote their political interests. Several speakers referred to revolutionary struggle as a means of increasing and consolidating women's political participation.

106. Some representatives cited a drop in the number of women elected to their countries' legislature, which was not explained by the trends of events in those countries, and they expressed the hope that this decline would not continue and would if possible be reversed. Another representative pointed out that the respect of human rights and access to full democratic participation were basic rights of women, and that one of these rights was the right to elect and to be elected.

107. The representatives of several countries in Africa, Asia, the Pacific and the Caribbean which had attained independence recently described steps taken by their Governments to enlist the support of their female population in building a new nation. They referred to the participation of women in political and social life

at the local and national level, gave particulars of the legislation concerning the electoral franchise and cited examples of cases in which women had been elected to the legislature or to local government bodies.

108. A statement was made on behalf of a group of States participating in the Conference voicing their concern about the situation in Bolivia, the overthrow of undemocratic methods of the administration headed by a woman President in that country and the flouting of the democratically expressed will of the Bolivian people.

Women in rural areas

109. Many representatives referred to the conditions under which large numbers of women were living in the rural areas of developing countries. The situation of these women, they said, was distressing in many respects, for they not only had to perform arduous agricultural tasks but also had to look after their children and carry out the household chores. A number of delegations said that in many developing countries women were the main producers of food and cash crops but did not own the means of production. In many of the countries in question, these women were not integrated into the society or into the national economy but lived in isolated regions with little or no contact with the outside world. In certain of these countries the rural population was leaving the countryside and migrating to the cities in search of a better life. Only too often, however, the hopes of these migrants were frustrated by the conditions prevailing in the overcrowded cities where thousands of others were competing for the same menial and poorly-paid jobs. In these circumstances it was the women migrants who were most vulnerable to exploitation and who bore the brunt of the harsh conditions of the urban environment to which they were unaccustomed. Several representatives described measures taken in their countries to relieve the hardships facing those who joined the flow of internal migration.

110. The representative of the Commission of the European Communities noted the interest of the countries members of the Communities in the situation of migrant women. Aside from the disadvantages under which women in general continued to suffer, immigrant women suffered in addition from the fact that they were strangers in the society of the host country. He reported that the Commission has undertaken a study aimed at identifying, within the context of the phenomenon of labour migration in modern society, solutions to the specific problems of women migrants.

Legal status and legislation

111. Many representatives of both developed and developing countries stated that the principle of equality between the sexes was enshrined in national constitutional and other legislative provisions currently in force in their countries.

112. Some representatives referred to new constitutions adopted in their countries since 1975 which not only proclaimed the equality of men and women but also contained guarantees of such equality. Several representatives stated that special commissions had been established to give legal assistance and to monitor the effectiveness of legislative measures designed to eliminate discrimination against women. Many speakers expressed concern over the continuing gap between the de jure and the de facto status of women in their countries.

113. Some delegations observed that legislative measures in themselves were

insufficient to ensure the equality of the sexes. In order to support such legislative provisions concurrent changes were needed in the political and economic structures.

114. Some representatives indicated that in their countries it was planned to introduce new legislative measures to deal with cases in which the existing legislation was inadequate to remove discrimination between the sexes. A number of representatives stated that the review period was insufficient to assess the results of measures currently being implemented. One delegation recommended that periodic reviews should be undertaken to ensure that legislative provisions being implemented were consistent with international standards.

Institutional arrangements

115. It was generally agreed that institutional structures, both public and private, had emerged, as means of mobilizing opinion, influencing the acceptance of laws and policies and facilitating the implementation and monitoring progress in the achievement of objectives.

116. Several representatives referred to the creation or reinforcement of ministries responsible for women's affairs, national commissions, ombudsmen, political and private organizations to promote and enforce laws and policies, for equal rights and opportunities at the national and local level. Some of the bodies were attached to government departments, others functioned autonomously.

117. It was agreed that strong institutional support for equality of treatment and equality of opportunity was a necessary but not a sufficient element in the achievement of the national and international objectives. Several speakers noted that such bodies must have broad governmental and public support if they were to be effective.

Southern Africa

118. The representatives of a large number of Governments spoke on the involvement of women in the struggle against apartheid.

119. The majority of speakers recognized that apartheid was a matter of concern to humanity as a whole. Most of the delegations expressed their sympathy with the South African women suffering under apartheid and condemned the policy and practice of apartheid.

120. A number of other representatives urged that a concerted campaign should be launched to isolate the South African régime politically, economically, socially, culturally and diplomatically. Other delegations considered that peaceful change could best be brought about by maintaining a dialogue with the South African authorities.

121. Many delegations recommended that measures should be taken to assist women oppressed by apartheid.

122. A large number of delegations expressed deep concern and solidarity for the women in Namibia.

Palestinian women

123. Most speakers expressed support for special measures of assistance for Palestinian women. In the view of some of these representatives the rights of Palestinians, including the right to set up an independent State, should be recognized. Many representatives considered that the recognition of these rights should be without prejudice to the territorial integrity of all States in the region. Other delegations urged that Israel should withdraw from all Arab territories occupied in 1967. They stated that only a consistent, universal, permanent and just solution of the Middle East crisis could provide peace and security to all countries of this region. Other expressed the opinion that the Palestine Liberation Organization should be recognized as the only legitimate representative of the Palestinian people. They stressed that the Palestinian people must be allowed to return to their homeland and determine their future by themselves. A number of delegations demanded that political oppression and economic exploitation of the Palestinian people, including women, must cease. Many delegations condemned zionism. Other delegations called for assistance to the Palestinian women through medical aid, education and employment within and outside the occupied territories.

Refugees

124. Many delegations stated that the situation of the large and growing numbers of refugees in various parts of the world was extremely distressing, both for the displaced persons themselves and for the countries of temporary asylum and the countries of eventual resettlement. Some delegations noted that women and children constituted the largest proportion of refugees and were often the most seriously affected. Some speakers emphasized that conditions should be created which would enable refugees to return to their homelands in safety and dignity. Other speakers proposed in-depth studies of the situation of refugees. Some representatives demanded increased assistance to refugee women; others stated that solidarity and humanitarian actions were needed and important, the paramount need being to keep the refugees alive, but that it was primarily necessary for the international community to concentrate on eliminating the causes of the refugee situation. Representatives of countries of first asylum expressed concern that the burden of providing assistance to refugees was extremely heavy, and addressed an urgent appeal to the international community for aid for refugee relief and for expediting the process of resettlement for a greater number of refugees.

Voluntary Fund

125. Support and appreciation for the work of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women were expressed by many delegations. A number of them announced the amounts their Governments intended to pledge to the Voluntary Fund at the Pledging Conference for Development Activities in November 1980, at the same time expressing their hope that other Governments would follow their example. Several recipient countries commented on the usefulness of the Fund, especially in the area of rural women's programmes in their respective countries, and echoed the hope expressed by the General Assembly at its thirty-fourth session that the activities of the Fund would be continued beyond the Decade. One delegation called for higher priority for projects in the Latin American region; other delegations expressed their appreciation for the efficiency and common sense approach of the administration of the Fund. Long-term pledges were considered by one delegation

as desirable, in that they allowed for effective planning in the allocation of resources.

126. In accordance with the goal set by the Secretary-General of pledges amounting to \$6 million by 1981 and \$10 million before the end of the Decade, intentions of making pledges to the Voluntary Fund in November were announced by the following countries: United Republic of Cameroon (\$6,000); Iraq (\$50,000); Japan (\$1 mill.); Kenya (\$20,000); Kuwait (\$20,000); Libyan Arab Jamahiriya (\$50,000); New Zealand (\$10,000); Oman (\$10,000); Pakistan (\$5,000); Sweden (\$200,000); Syrian Arab Republic (\$2,000); Upper Volta (\$1,000). The United States of America stated that it had deposited \$1 million in May 1980.

127. Several countries announced that they would in 1980 commence or augment their contributions to the Fund; these countries included Australia, Austria, Botswana, Finland, Lebanon, the Netherlands and Mexico. Norway reconfirmed its pledge of \$200,000 per year until the end of the Decade, and urged other countries to make long-term pledges.

Statements by representatives of organizations in the United Nations system

128. The Director-General for Development and International Economic Co-operation, speaking in the general debate, said that the basic texts relating to the establishment of a New International Economic Order clearly implied that, in order to realize the development potential of the developing countries, structural changes in the world economy must be accompanied by the full and effective mobilization of domestic resources. It was self-evident that in this process women, who constitute half the population, must be fully involved. Social well-being was not merely a result of but also a contribution to the development process and the final goal of development. Perspectives were changing and must now be fully reflected in policy formulation and implementation. He referred to some illustrative critical areas of development in which more research, analysis and data were required regarding issues of particular relevance to women. These included food and agriculture, industrialization and technology. The subthemes of the Conference - employment, education and health - reflected important components of development which acquired special significance in relation to women, given the fact that women remained on the periphery of the development process. Failure to mobilize women as full and equal partners in development would be a major constraint on the efforts of the international community to move towards a new and equitable international economic order.

129. It was in order to contribute to a fuller and more effective integration of women in the development process that the United Nations family of organizations had established an interagency programme on women and development under the auspices of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. After the Conference and the adoption of its recommendations by the General Assembly, the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination would consider the best ways and means of implementing those recommendations of the future Programme of Action which required system-wide action and determine its work for the remainder of the Decade for Women. The subsidiary machinery of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, with the participation of the regional commissions, would ensure that the concerns reflected in the Programme of Action received special focus in all relevant substantive discussions.

130. He added that the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs would

continue to provide a focal point within the United Nations Secretariat for implementing activities relating to women and development, particularly the Programme for the second half of the Decade. It was the intention of the Secretary-General to ensure that all departments and units of the United Nations, in particular the Centre, should rethink, reorient and strengthen these long-term programmes and strategies in order to reflect the requirements of the Conference. To carry out its functions more effectively it was envisaged that a small liaison unit should be outposted from the Centre to United Nations Headquarters, which would also assist the Centre in integrating the contributions of other substantive units in New York to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the second half of the Decade.

131. In conclusion he emphasized that the new Programme of Action should make a substantive contribution to a new international development strategy that would ensure fuller participation by all segments of society in development.

132. The Under-Secretary-General for International Economic and Social Affairs emphasized that the problems of women's full and active participation in development were twofold. First, it would be necessary to devise policy measures to ensure greater responsiveness of the over-all development process to the needs and interests of women. Second, and concurrently, ways and means would need to be adopted for enhancing the productivity and effectiveness of women's contribution to the total development effort. Concern should not be limited to sectoral considerations, which may at times only result in marginal adjustments to the existing system, but should comprehend the role of women in the development process as a whole.

133. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs, had, therefore, undertaken special efforts to deal with issues relating to women in the context of global, over-all strategies for development. It would further reorient and strengthen its research and analysis activities and its publications in response to the recommendations that will emanate from the Conference. He endorsed the view expressed by Ms. Helvi Sipilä, the Assistant Secretary-General for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, that the growing recognition of the multisectoral nature of the problems of women and development must be translated into action by suitably reorienting, enlarging and strengthening the scope of the programme of work of the Branch for the Advancement of Women within the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs, and also of other relevant substantive units within the United Nations.

134. A major responsibility of his Department was to assist the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, the apex body for co-operation within the United Nations system. The Department had, therefore, a crucial role to play in the implementation of the integrated approach to women's participation in development proposed by the draft Programme of Action, which called for greater co-ordination of the relevant activities undertaken by the United Nations system.

135. The representatives of the secretariats of the regional commissions active in the developing regions stated that since 1975 these commissions had created or reinforced institutional arrangements, both at the intergovernmental and at the Secretariat levels, for conducting regional intergovernmental consultations and promoting research and analysis concerning women and development; for sponsoring training activities; and for assisting in the establishment of regional centres for training and research in cases where the need for such institutions had been

established by the member Governments. While many of the activities of the regional commissions were regional or subregional in scope, the commissions also contributed to the formulation of regional positions to be taken into account in global United Nations policies and strategies, including those relating to the World Conference; accordingly, they were capable of supporting the implementation of the Programme of Action at the regional level. Some of these representatives added that extrabudgetary contributions, including the support received from the Voluntary Fund for the Decade for Women, had greatly facilitated the activities of the commissions for specific projects or purposes. However, a sustained effort to promote the integration of women in development within the framework of the respective work programmes could only be made on the basis of adequate financial support from the regular budget of the United Nations.

136. The Executive Director of UNICEF said that, being committed to improving the lives of children, UNICEF was naturally committed to improving the lives of women. Assistance to women in their roles as mothers was, he noted, non-controversial. However, social advances of the past generation - the extension of health and education services to hitherto deprived social groups - had occurred at a time when the process of modernization had discriminated against women and left many of them poorer than before. Poverty, limited earning capacity, lack of employment and of access to education were indicators of the likelihood that social conditions would not improve until women shared in the fruits of development. He added that planners and policy-makers were beginning to recognize women's productive role, but needed to take it more fully into account in plans and policies. UNICEF was co-operating with developing countries in dealing with the problems arising in the development process that were of particular concern to women and children, especially those living in rural areas and in marginal urban communities.

137. The Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) said that at the mid-point of the Decade no one could be satisfied with the performance as measured against the World Plan of Action, and UNDP certainly had no sense of complacency. Guidelines and training materials on programming for women had been issued to UNDP staff world-wide, and special advocates of women's interests had been designated in each of the regional programme bureaux which were supporting a variety of national and regional projects. Under a new agreement, UNDP's support for the innovative Voluntary Fund would be increased and UNDP would become responsible for administering Fund projects at the country level. In terms of staff, 50 per cent of professionals recruited in 1979 were women; since 1975 UNDP had doubled the proportion of women in professional posts on its staff. UNDP's major contribution to the Conference was a report calling for reliable information about the real functions of women in rural development, and for their access to training, technology, rural industry, water and sanitation, and credit. Although women were essential to the operation of the world economy, their inputs were all too frequently taken for granted and they were at the mercy of, yet had little influence over, the gyrations of the existing international economic order.

138. He considered that certain terms, like the "contribution", "participation", "involvement" and "integration" of women in development were undesirable, for they were not currently used in relation to men. It was time to sharpen the language and intensify the struggle against the most pervasive of all forms of colonialism, for humanity was denying itself the intelligence, experience, sensitivity and vision of half of its members, in decision-making, negotiation, planning and practical action.

139. The representative of the World Food Programme stated that the Programme's assistance was provided exclusively on a project basis, the projects being executed by Governments of recipient countries themselves. The Programme consulted and co-operated with specialized agencies and with other international and non-governmental organizations. With a strong rural development bias, and being concentrated on the poorest and most vulnerable population groups, WFP-supported projects should have a favourable impact on women. Moreover, the assistance of the Programme could support innovative projects for the advancement of women for which more conventional forms of financial assistance were not provided. With the Programme's help, national, regional and local authorities could assume increased responsibility for measures for the advancement of women. He referred to a background paper prepared for the Conference on "The contribution of the World Food Programme to the United Nations Decade for Women" (A/CONF.94/BP5) which described what could be done for women not as passive receivers of food aid, but as active participants in the design and implementation of projects assisted by the Programme. The Committee on Food Aid Policies and Programmes - the governing body of WFP - had given general endorsement to the recommendations contained in the paper, which would be used as a manual for Programme staff and would also be made available to officials of Governments and co-operating aid organizations involved in projects for the benefit of women.

140. The representative of the International Labour Organisation stated that women were permanently working, but not permanently employed in the work force. Most recent calculations based on ILO and United Nations data showed that they received less than 10 per cent of world income; their income was so low that most women had no margin for savings, and hence minimal ownership of assets. The ILO instruments directly relevant to women workers incorporated provisions to improve their status in society, and related to some important areas, such as equality of remuneration, underground work, night work and, in the case of a new instrument currently under discussion, workers with family responsibility. This proposed Convention and Recommendation, when adopted, would influence national trends and policies at the level of the social infrastructure and working conditions, and would facilitate women's entry and re-entry into the work force. Further, because of the importance of analysing the economic and social contribution of women in society, the ILO was planning to carry out, *inter alia*, studies which would provide an insight into the concept of discrimination against women in the labour market and the workplace, during the second half of the Decade for Women.

141. The representative of FAO stated that by the year 2000 about 96 per cent of the world's agricultural labour force would be in developing countries, with women accounting for a large share of this labour force. FAO recognized the existing and potential role of women in agricultural and rural development. The 1979 World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development had emphasized the need for increasing women's participation in rural organizations, for reducing inequalities in the distribution of productive assets and for increasing resources commensurate with problems of the rural poor. The Programme of Action adopted at that Conference complemented the draft programme of the Copenhagen Conference so far as rural women were concerned. Rural women were also target groups in a broad range of FAO action programmes relating to agriculture, forestry and fisheries, as well as home economics and population education. In carrying out these programmes FAO collaborated with the Governments of Member States and also with other United Nations bodies, specialized agencies and non-governmental organizations.

142. The Director-General of UNESCO, referring to the historical and cultural context of the relationship between men and women, said that men - even those advocating the equality of the sexes - tended to see an intrinsic difference between the aptitudes and capacities of women and those of men. For that matter, even many women had become so accustomed to the place assigned to them in what was still largely a man's world that they were apprehensive of any radical change. Accordingly, he considered that a profound transformation of received ideas would alone be capable of opening up the possibility for humanity to attain the ideals of liberty, justice, peace and happiness. For that purpose, the international community would have to make a determined effort to "demasculinize" the very concepts of universal knowledge and to adopt a scientific approach to the barriers that still obstructed the common understanding of men and women of the unity of the human species.

143. The representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that health was an integral and essential part of development. Governments were committed to achieving the goal of "the attainment by all citizens of the world by the year 2000 of a level of health that will permit them to lead a socially and economically productive life". Primary health care was the key to attaining this goal and had direct implication for development and for the improvement of the status of women. Its principles and content were relevant to the goals and priorities of the United Nations Decade for Women. Women and women's organizations must play major roles in the planning and implementation of primary health care at the family, community and national levels. The health needs and problems specific to women must be met, particularly those related to the synergistic conditions of malnutrition, infections and the consequences of unregulated fertility. Emphasis should accordingly be placed on preventive health measures, for example, maternal and child health, family planning, nutrition and health education. Intersectoral approaches were required to support women in and to give value to their reproductive role, especially as regards care and nutrition during pregnancy and childbirth; women should be given the means to regulate their own fertility; and women should be enabled to breastfeed their children and have adequate time and resources for child care.

144. The representative of the World Bank stated that the Bank's loans were being granted increasingly for the purpose of relieving poverty in developing countries, and as a consequence the Bank was giving greater attention to the concerns of women, not in isolation but as an integral aspect of the design and implementation of Bank-financed projects. The Bank's adviser on the role of women in development examined project proposals in order to ensure that women's problems were taken into account, that there were opportunities for women to benefit and that consequences which may be detrimental to women were avoided or eliminated. The Bank had also been making special efforts to increase the number of women in higher-level positions on its staff. Bank-financed projects helped to create employment opportunities for women, to improve their productivity and increase their income and to benefit family welfare. Other projects were designed to develop human resources, provide better education and improve health and nutrition. The Bank's policy and practice emphasized the links and complementarities among the facets of development. The education of girls, for example, not only offered opportunities for their employment, but had beneficial effects on fertility, child health and nutritional practices.

145. The representative of UNIDO stated that the activities of her organization had an indirect but important influence on employment, health and education. She drew attention to a resolution on "Women and industrialization" adopted by the Third General Conference of UNIDO in February 1980, which recognized that the integration and participation of women at all levels of the industrialization process were prerequisites for balanced and equitable development. In order to attain their industrialization goals, the developing countries would have to utilize to the fullest extent their human resources, of which women constituted about half. Particular attention should thus be given to conducting surveys of skill demand and availability, and to identifying training needs and Governments should emphasize comprehensive training development policies and introduce structural adjustments for the integration of women in development. At the same time, decisions relating to industrialization strategies and policies should take into consideration how industrialization affected women and how it meets women's needs. UNIDO was carrying out some studies to assist Governments in this respect. As far as the problems of rural women were concerned, most, if not all activities of UNIDO had a bearing on rural development and the satisfaction of basic needs of the populations in developing countries. While UNIDO had the structure and capacity to influence the integration of women, the extent to which it could assist would ultimately depend on the attitudes and priorities in each country.

146. The representative of the United Nations Environment Programme stated that UNEP was concerned with the protection and improvement of the physical environment. Accordingly, its activities included those relating to the provision of a sufficient supply of safe domestic water in areas where this was lacking or where water was carried laboriously over long distances, usually by women. It would be a noble initiative of the Conference to recommend measures that would ensure, especially at the country level, an adequate supply of safe water for women in rural communities in developing countries.