



SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 29th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. ZAWAWI (Indonesia)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.45 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 92: UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE (continued) (A/40/3, 188, 239 and Add.1, 365, 703 and Corr.1, 727; A/CONF.116/28 and Corr.1-3)

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AGENDA ITEM 100: ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (continued) (A/40/3, 45, 623)

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- (b) STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN: REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL (continued)

1. Mrs. TOURE (Mali) said that the progress made in translating the principles of the United Nations Decade for Women into reality was very slow and, in some parts of the world, almost non-existent. For example, women living under apartheid suffered from the double discrimination of racism and sexism. Sustained efforts must therefore be made to eradicate that abhorrent system. Her delegation appealed to those delegations which, while joining the consensus on the report of the Nairobi World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women (A/CONF.116/28 and Corr.1-3), had expressed reservations on or had voted against paragraph 259 concerning women and children living under apartheid, to continue to work towards the restoration of justice and equity.

2. Mali, a landlocked country affected by drought and desertification, recognized the potential of women as agents of social and economic progress, and had therefore devoted an increasingly large part of its development efforts to the status of rural women. However, in order to achieve self-sufficiency in food and water supply, Mali needed the co-operation of the international community.

(Mrs. Toure, Mali)

3. Her delegation affirmed that the Nairobi Conference had been a success because the Member States had worked together and exchanged points of view on a common front to achieve equality by the year 2000. Indeed, the perspectives to the year 2000 set forth in the Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (A/CONF.116/28, chap. I A) should be approached with confidence and determination.

4. Her delegation hoped that the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) would continue and diversify its activities in Africa in close co-operation with the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which had a specialized structure, for the advancement and training of African women. In addition, the information, documentation and communication system being established by INSTRAW (A/40/707, para. 114) could be linked with ECA headquarters.

5. Her delegation welcomed the initiatives taken by the United Nations Development Fund for Women and unreservedly supported its Africa Investment Plan, based on food policy, energy, credit support systems, and programming and management of development activities (A/40/727, sect. III B). Her delegation hoped that the Fund would also grant small credits to women for the financing of small, short-term projects, particularly in the area of transport infrastructure and the storage of perishable products.

6. Her delegation supported the proposal that the Commission on the Status of Women, at a special session in 1987, should study thoroughly the resolutions and declarations that had not been discussed or adopted by the Nairobi Conference in order to enable the General Assembly to examine them at its forty-second session.

7. Mr. TROUVEROY (Belgium) said that his delegation welcomed the consensus reached at the Nairobi Conference on the Forward-looking Strategies, a document rich in substance. If Governments, which had the major responsibility of implementing the Strategies, really wished to find the means for their realization, there was no doubt that the cause of equality between men and women would progress markedly in the coming 15 years. His delegation was all the more satisfied with the results because his Government's commitment domestically to the equality of women coincided to a great extent with the relevant provisions of the Strategies.

8. While his delegation was basically satisfied with the results achieved at Nairobi, it believed that there were some shadows hanging over those results. Because of the scope of the tasks entrusted to the Conference, there had been little time for certain delegations to contribute to the extent that would have permitted the final document to be even more polished. Similarly, he did not see how the Third Committee could deal, in addition to its regular agenda with the mass of draft resolutions on which no action had been taken by the Conference. The Committee should deal primarily with the implementation of the Strategies, which already implied a substantial rearrangement of its regular agenda. His delegation also regretted that certain items of which the Conference should have merely taken note in the preparation of the Strategies had in fact dominated the discussions to such a point that they had threatened until the last minute the desired consensus on the Strategies.

(Mr. Trouveroy, Belgium)

9. The end of the Decade was not the end of the process for the promotion of equality between men and women. The United Nations must continue to play its inspiring role by basing itself on the Strategies. His delegation believed that that could be done through the optimum use of existing structures, which could be improved. There should be no attempt to create additional mechanisms with the risk of duplication.

10. Two other factors should be borne in mind in the promotion of the equality of women. The first was co-operation for development. The bridges that existed between donor and beneficiary countries should be strengthened through the added dimension of the advancement of women. The Government of Belgium, in both bilateral multilateral co-operation programmes for rural, industrial and infrastructural development, had systematically taken that into consideration. In that connection, special attention must be paid to the situation of women in Africa confronted with the crisis affecting that continent.

11. The second factor was the participation of women's organizations at all levels. His Government would continue its policy of participation through, for example, the advisory committees established in Belgium on the occasion of the Decade.

12. Belgium, which contributed to the United Nations Development Fund for Women, noted with satisfaction that the establishing of a new administrative structure had been completed. With UNDP support, the Fund could devote itself to its activities with renewed vigour. The directors of the Fund should perhaps prepare regular, detailed budgetary and financial reports as well as documentation on the progress of projects. That would permit a closer examination of the use of contributions and the role played by the Fund.

13. Mr. POERSCHKE (German Democratic Republic), speaking on item 100, said that his delegation was gratified to note that an additional number of States had become parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, an indication that more attention was being devoted to the role of women in society. The Convention had added substance, in legally binding terms, to the non-discrimination clause enshrined in the Charter.

14. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women had stood the test of time as a forum for an exchange of views on the full realization of equality and on the conditions existing in individual States. Every effort should be made to ensure that all women were given the opportunity to participate in activities for a peaceful future, since peace and détente were prerequisites for social progress.

15. With regard to that Committee's intention to discuss the interpretation of article 21 of the Convention, he acknowledged that an exchange of views on article 21 might well be of some importance. However, the discussion should not lead to the violation of the sovereign rights of the States parties to the Convention: questions concerning the interpretation of the Convention came

(Mr. Poerschke, German
Democratic Republic)

exclusively within the competence of States parties. The principal task of the Committee must therefore remain that of discussing the reports submitted by States parties.

16. Turning to item 92 (c), he said that the participation of women in national and international development programmes had no doubt been accelerated as a result of the work of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women (A/40/727), whose mandate had been expanded by the General Assembly in resolution 39/125. His delegation was convinced that that resolution provided the most favourable framework for enhancing the effectiveness of the Fund's work. Attempts to sidestep or reinterpret provisions of that resolution could only have adverse effects on the participation of women in development.

17. The decision of the Fund to enter into an autonomous association with UNDP had raised high expectations. That association could indeed play an innovative role in implementing the principle of economic and social equality of women; close and equal co-operation was the key element towards fulfilling the high expectations for the Fund. It would be inconsistent with resolution 39/125 if the Fund was transformed into a purely technical development body. In that connection, it was imperative to maintain or extend relations with such bodies as the Commission on the Status of Women and the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs.

18. Mr. DUGUAY (Canada) said that the Nairobi Conference had been a resounding success because of the contribution of Member States, United Nations bodies and non-governmental organizations. It had been one of the great achievements of the fortieth anniversary year. It ranked as the largest world conference ever convened, and its success had proved the doomsayers wrong. It was the only one of the three world conferences of the Decade that had been able to adopt its final document (A/CONF.116/28) by consensus. Accordingly, that consensus should be regarded as a strong political commitment on the part of Governments to implement the Strategies adopted at the Conference.

19. The success of the Decade had been the result of activism of women the world over. It was now for Member States to honour what the international community had fashioned at Nairobi by working within the United Nations system to help women to participate in all spheres on an equal footing with men. Efforts must be vigorously pursued: the goal of full equality was only 15 years away.

20. His Government was making every effort to distribute the Nairobi Strategies to men and women in all walks of life. Within Canada's federal system, many areas of concern to women were within the jurisdiction of provincial or territorial levels of government. Accordingly, the Federal Minister responsible for the status of women had already met with his counterparts in those jurisdictions to discuss the follow-up to the Strategies. Canada's work towards the advancement of women would be guided by a new awareness that women's concerns were basically economic.

(Mr. Duguay, Canada)

21. As recommended in the Strategies, bilateral-aid agencies should pursue a corporate-wide response to the integration of women in development. Canada had recently endorsed such a plan of action covering the period 1986-1990. Its goal was to respond to women's own development initiatives.

22. With regard to implementing the Strategies at the multilateral level, Member States had two obligations. They must appoint more women to represent them internationally so that women could participate equally with men in making international policy and taking international decisions. After 10 years of so-called intensified action to advance equality of women internationally, it was abundantly clear that the work had barely begun. The Canadian Government would be seeking ways to move ahead on the Nairobi Strategies. It was an imperative of Canadian policy.

23. Another important aspect of the multilateral process was institutional co-ordination and interagency co-operation. Obviously common steps must be taken early to see to it that the Nairobi document fared better than its predecessors from the Copenhagen and Mexico City conferences. In that connection, his delegation was pleased to note that some parts of the United Nations system had begun to respond positively. It was the first time that an intergovernmental decision-making body had requested that a thematic plan for the advancement of women should take effect across the United Nations system. The Department of International Economic and Social Affairs must be given every assistance over the next two years as it worked to give substance to that truly significant objective.

24. Canada's view was that the first priority must be to endorse the Strategies as a base from which to launch future activities. That was the central task of the General Assembly at its current session and Canada would work actively with all other interested countries to that end.

25. Looking beyond the current session, institutional and organizational steps would be required to equip the Organization to meet the imperatives of Nairobi. Canada believed that the membership of the Commission on the Status of Women should be increased to reflect more accurately the current composition of the United Nations. Secondly, if the Commission was to be charged with the major responsibility for implementing and monitoring the Strategies, the time had come for it to meet annually once again. In addition, Canada believed that progress in implementing the Strategies should be reviewed every five years. It intended to use every opportunity, in every international forum, to achieve and to consecrate the rights of women. The benefit would accrue to all of mankind.

26. Miss CHENG Phobol (Democratic Kampuchea) said that the Nairobi Conference had been a unique opportunity to exchange experiences and views with women the world over. Her country had shared in the consensus reflected in the Strategies adopted at the Conference. Despite the warfare currently besetting it, her country had always stressed the improvement of the status of its women, and had acceded to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

(Miss Cheng Phobol,
Democratic Kampuchea)

27. For more than half of the Decade for Women, Kampuchean women had been struggling for national survival, being subjected to all forms of aggression, including mass murder, starvation and forced labour. Bodies such as Amnesty International had produced ample testimony to the crimes and human-rights violations committed against the Kampucheans. The women were being increasingly subjected to arrest, imprisonment and ill-treatment. Under the pretext of security, villagers were herded into so-called strategic villages, where women were abused by soldiers of the occupying forces. Since the beginning of the invasion, over 700,000 Vietnamese settlers had been introduced, who, aided by the occupation forces, plundered with impunity.

28. Kampuchean women were also alarmed about the destruction of the country's culture, which was being forcibly assimilated with Viet Nam's as part of a "Greater Viet Nam" policy; she drew attention, in that regard, to documents A/39/185, A/40/636, A/40/678 and A/40/750.

29. Kampuchean women were playing an active part in the efforts to achieve national independence and peace. Only through peace could the other two aims of the Decade, equality and development, be achieved. The struggle being waged was only part of the effort to force the invaders to the negotiating table with a view to finding a comprehensive solution to the problem of Kampuchea, in accordance with the relevant United Nations resolutions.

30. On the occasion of the Organization's fortieth anniversary, Viet Nam should reconsider its actions and show respect for the Charter and the resolutions calling on it to withdraw from Kampuchea, so that the latter could become an independent, peaceful, neutral, non-aligned country with a parliamentary democracy and a free-market economy. Her delegation called on all nations, especially those which had helped to formulate the Nairobi Strategies, to help the Kampuchean women by urging such a withdrawal and the convening of an international conference on Kampuchea.

31. Mrs. ITO (Japan) said that the United Nations had played a significant role in promoting international efforts to raise awareness of the status of women, but much remained to be done.

32. The Strategies adopted at the Nairobi Conference clearly pointed to the goals to be sought, and their adoption by consensus was an important achievement. Japan had hosted a regional preparatory meeting relating to the Nairobi Conference, and had participated in the preliminary work carried out by the Commission on the Status of Women. The adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women had been an outstanding achievement of the Decade. Japan, in order to ratify the Convention, had considerably amended its domestic law in such matters as equality of naturalization, equal opportunity of employment, promotion, benefits and retirement, and the relaxing of protective measures for women workers.

(Mrs. Ito, Japan)

33. Other measures had included the setting up of a government department which had formulated a national plan of action and priority targets for the second half of the Decade, and implementation at the local level. Every year since 1959, her Government had appointed a woman from among non-governmental organizations to serve on its delegation to the General Assembly. It had also promoted women's education and training through the establishment of suitable centres.

34. Her delegation welcomed the efforts of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (A/40/727) and the General Assembly's decision, in resolution 39/125, to continue the Fund's activities. Her Government had contributed about \$2 million to it, and would contribute some \$300,000 during 1985. Her country would also continue to co-operate with INSTRAW.

35. The Secretary-General's report on the Interregional Seminar on National Experience Relating to the Improvement of the Situation of Women in Rural Areas (A/40/239) would help to implement the measures described in the Nairobi Strategies. Japan had extended technical assistance in various fields; for example, since 1980 it had provided training programmes to improve rural living conditions in South-East Asia. Moreover, with reference to the International Youth Year, some 200 young Japanese women were serving as volunteers in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

36. Her Government considered that, in the efforts to give effect to the Strategies, the Commission on the Status of Women would be an appropriate review body. It also hoped that as many countries as possible would ratify or accede to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and attached great importance to the Committee established pursuant to that Convention. It hoped that all States would strive to ensure that the Convention and the Committee alike lived up to their potential.

37. Mrs. NGUYEN BINH THANH (Viet Nam) said that, as a result of the Decade for Women and the Nairobi Conference, there was much greater awareness of women's essential contribution to the common struggle for peace and social progress. Attendance at the Conference had reflected Governments' concern and commitment to the advancement of women and recognition of women's vital contribution. The Conference had been a truly broad forum for the aspirations of women everywhere, first and foremost for peace, and the majority of delegates had voiced the need to oppose the arms race, both on earth and in space.

38. Women bore the brunt of oppression and exploitation by imperialism, colonialism, apartheid and racial discrimination. That truth accounted for the fitting position accorded in the Strategies to the status of women and children under apartheid and the situation of Palestinian women and children, despite certain determined attempts to exclude those issues.

39. Her delegation fully agreed as to the relevance to the objectives of the Decade of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations

(Mrs. Nguyen Binh Thanh, Viet Nam)

Development Decade and the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation. It shared the view expressed by the Nairobi Conference that high priority should be given to those instruments and to the Strategies.

40. Equality of men and women had been recognized in her country's 1946 Constitution and reaffirmed in the new Constitution of 1980. Women occupied 23 ministerial and equivalent positions; they made up nearly one quarter of the New National Assembly, nearly one third of the members of the People's Councils and almost a half of the public sector work-force. Moreover, equal responsibility between husband and wife was widely recognized in Viet Nam. Through their own experience, Vietnamese women recognized that equality could be achieved not through legal and administrative measures alone but through their own tireless efforts to overcome prejudice.

41. Viet Nam had been one of the first countries to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; it urged all States that had not yet done so to follow suit. Her delegation appreciated the work of the Committee established pursuant to that instrument and the forum it offered for exchanging views and experience, identifying obstacles and promoting women's advancement in society. The Committee's task was to consider reports submitted by States parties and to make suggestions based on the information received; however, recommendations for amendments to the Convention were a matter for States parties alone.

42. As a modest contribution by the women of Viet Nam to the Decade, a seminar of South-East Asian women for peace, development and the happiness of women and children had been organized at Hanoi in 1984. All participants had agreed that there should be more such meetings, for women of all political opinions, to promote peace and stability in the region and throughout the world.

43. Miss PANEZAI (Pakistan) said that her delegation attached great importance to the outcome of the Nairobi Conference. The comprehensive understanding of the progress achieved and the obstacles encountered in realizing the objectives of the Decade were well-documented in the Strategies adopted at the Conference. The Government of Pakistan was committed to the advancement of women of all strata of society and to improvement of the quality of their lives, particularly in rural areas. She noted that Islam, the religion of the overwhelming majority of the people of Pakistan, made no discrimination between the sexes as to their rights and duties and applied the same treatment to both sexes on the basis of absolute justice.

44. Her Government was doing everything possible within its limited resources to improve the conditions of women in Pakistan. Thus far, efforts had been made to involve women in various fields of national life and to provide them with equality of opportunity, mainly through constitutional provisions and legislative action. The emphasis had now been shifted, however, to operational and institutional measures, in line with the recommendations of the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the Decade.

(Miss Panezai, Pakistan)

45. The low level of literacy and lack of political awareness, particularly in the rural areas, remained obstacles to greater participation of women in the political life of the country. Nevertheless, the election of 8,000 women councillors in 1983 had been a major breakthrough in local government, and, in the 1985 elections, the number of reserved seats for women in the National Assembly and provincial assemblies had been increased by 100 per cent. A special chapter in the five-year plan for 1983-1988 had been devoted to the need to provide greater opportunities to women. Moreover, the President of Pakistan was taking a special interest in policies and programmes relating to the involvement of women in all walks of life, and the Women's Division, set up in 1979 under the supervision of the President, was designed to formulate public policies and laws and to promote projects to meet the special needs of women.

46. Pakistan was faced with the formidable task of caring for over 3 million Afghan refugees, most of whom were women, children and the aged. She underlined the urgency of taking appropriate steps to avert the exodus of refugees and to ensure their voluntary return to their homeland in conditions of safety and honour.

47. Her delegation highly valued the research being undertaken by INSTRAW, as indicated in its report (A/40/707). With regard to the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women, she said that her delegation welcomed the autonomous association of the Fund with UNDP (A/40/727, para. 1). She expressed the hope that action plans would soon be approved by the Fund for the women of Asia and the Pacific, and that thought would be given to the recent decline in assistance for projects in that region. Lastly, her delegation reaffirmed its support for the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and welcomed the fact that so many States had become parties to the Convention.

48. Mr. CERMAK (Austria) said that, now that the Decade for Women was drawing to a close, women's issues must continue to be viewed as just as important as they had been during the Decade. Although it would take considerable time before substantial progress was made, the only possible way to achieve it was through perseverance. While the introduction of legislative measures in many countries to improve the status of women was a step forward, only until there was a deep-rooted change, which included a change in basic attitudes between men and women, could the international community feel reassured. There was also a danger that, because of a certain spirit of confrontation which existed, the advancement of women might be seen by some as cutting into the prerogatives of men. That might very well be one of the largest obstacles to be faced. Men should look upon the call for equality for women not as a threat, but as a more positive input into society in terms of creativity and fresh ideas for the benefit of both women and men.

49. Although the Decade was coming to a close, the endeavour for lasting change was only beginning. By adopting the Strategies by consensus, the Nairobi Conference had ended on a promising note. He noted that, of the 105 draft resolutions introduced during the Conference, six had been submitted by the Austrian delegation; they pertained to unemployment, equal wages for women, new

(Mr. Cermak, Austria)

technologies, genetic technology, sexual violence against women and children and the strengthening of the Commission on the Status of Women. Since there had been insufficient time at Nairobi to deal with them, they had been transmitted to the Third Committee for further consideration, and he expressed the hope that it would find a suitable way to deal with them.

50. His delegation reaffirmed its support of the role of the Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs as a focal point for women's issues and activities in the United Nations system. He noted that the Centre, with a share in the total budget of the Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of less than 20 per cent, had had a share of nearly 50 per cent of the total output of that Department. His delegation therefore felt that the Centre had thus far operated quite successfully. Although there had been some well-founded criticism of the Centre, it was not clear to whom such criticism should be directed. There was a need to review the general arrangements with Headquarters regarding the integration of the Centre into the Department's overall decision-making, the processing of documents and personnel and budgetary administration, as improved co-ordination with Headquarters was essential. His delegation supported a strengthening of the Centre, in its ability not only to design programmes but also to implement them.

51. His delegation would like to see social development stressed, because it should be promoted on an equal footing with economic development. It also felt that the Commission on the Status of Women should be strengthened, as the workload concerning women's issues had dramatically increased in the recent past. The possibility of either annual sessions of the Commission or biennial sessions of at least two weeks should be closely examined.

52. Miss ABAS (Indonesia) said her delegation felt that the Nairobi Strategies, given the painstaking preparations and efforts involved in the Nairobi Conference, were a notable achievement. The recognition of the importance of women's full participation on an equal basis in all aspects of human endeavours should open a new era in the common efforts to achieve the goals set by the Conference.

53. The strategy for the labour, health and education sectors was most applicable to Indonesia's development efforts. It should prove complementary to Indonesia's efforts to attain its national social objectives by the year 2000, the most important of which were the eradication of illiteracy, the improvement of health and life expectancy, and the expansion of employment opportunities. In Indonesia, the office of the Minister of State for the Role of Women was the co-ordinating centre responsible for strategies for the advancement of women in all fields of development and employment.

54. Her delegation felt that activities at the national level should be co-ordinated by national machinery, while co-ordination at the Secretariat level in the United Nations system should be carried out by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, particularly through its inter-agency consultations on women. Moreover, the role of the relevant international bodies, in particular that of the Commission on the Status of Women, should be strengthened.

/...

(Miss Abas, Indonesia)

55. To that end, her delegation proposed that the biennial session of the Commission should be extended to three weeks; that the number of items on the agenda should be limited; and that the implementation of the Strategies should be reviewed every five years until the year 2000, either by the Commission itself or by a special conference. It was essential that the regional commissions should also conduct their respective regional reviews prior to the Commission's review.
56. Her delegation expressed its support for the work programme drawn up by INSTRAW (A/40/707). Those activities would contribute to the development of developing countries which, like Indonesia, regarded the training of women as a priority for the integration of women in development.
57. Her delegation supported the continuation of the Voluntary Fund for the United Nations Decade for Women as a separate entity in autonomous association with the UNDP (A/40/727, para. 1). It would be a good idea, however, to require the Fund to submit its annual reports not only to UNDP but also to the Commission on the Status of Women. Her delegation was also encouraged by the intensification of the participation of women in the UNDP country-programming exercises.
58. With regard to item 100, she reminded the Committee that Indonesia had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women in 1984 and would soon be submitting its report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.
59. Ms. BARUTCU (Turkey) said that the various conferences held under United Nations auspices since 1975 had significantly contributed to improving the status of women. Turkey felt the strategies would constitute a valuable framework for promoting equality of opportunities for women as well as their future development.
60. While the legal framework establishing the equal status of women in society had already existed in Turkey at a far earlier date than was the case for many other countries, the steady improvement in the status of Turkish women over the previous 50 years had gained new momentum during the Decade. In that context, a number of legislative and administrative measures had been adopted to enhance the equality of women and ensure their participation in various areas of national life, including provisions for equal remuneration for equal work and for the enrolment of an increasing number of women in the national and local civil services.
61. The Turkish Government shared the belief that education was a basic tool to enable women to fulfil their roles as full members of society. Accordingly, as a result of continuous efforts on the part of the Government, the literacy rate among women had reached 65.2 per cent in 1984; in 1985 female students represented 34 per cent of the overall university enrolment in Turkey, and the number of women occupying managerial positions was increasing. Moreover, amendments had been made to the 1982 Constitution providing special protection to working women. The scope of the social-insurance scheme covering independent economic enterprises had also been enlarged so as to include voluntary insurance of housewives, who now constituted 70 per cent of the membership.

(Ms. Barutcu, Turkey)

62. Developments in primary health care and improvements in the quality of health services in general had led to a significant decline in the infant-mortality rate, and the life expectancy of women over 65 had increased. Moreover, as a developing country, Turkey fully realized the ever-growing role of women in development, and the increasing participation of women at all educational levels provided avenues for greater employment opportunities, thereby considerably enhancing the role of Turkish women in almost all sectors of the economy.

63. She drew attention to two significant developments which had taken place in Turkey during the Decade: first, the anniversary of female suffrage had been celebrated in 1984 by a series of national and international meetings with participation of women from all over the world, and, secondly, the Turkish Parliament had ratified, in June 1984, the International Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

64. Continued efforts were required, however, to give full effect to the principle of equality for women. To that end, the Strategies would be an important guide and inspiration; it clearly assessed the extent to which the goals had been realized, as well as outlining the main obstacles to equality for women, which, as the Nairobi Conference had shown, had not everywhere been achieved. The Conference marked a new beginning. Turkey, which had co-sponsored several of the draft resolutions annexed to document A/CONF.116/28, was seeking to give effect to the Strategies, and reiterated its commitment to the principles underlying the consensus achieved at the Conference.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.