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Folder Title:
Briefing Book of the First Lady - U.N.. Fourth World Conference on Women - September 5-6, 1995
[binder] [3]

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001. report	re: U.S. Government Report (1 page)	09/27/1994	P1/b(1)
002. bio	re: Gertrude Mongella [Personally Identifiable Information] [Partial] (1 page)	00/00/0000	b(6)
003. cable	re: Pragmatists vs. Purists in the Vatican Beijing Delegation (4 pages)	08/30/1995	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
First Lady's Press Office - Lisa Caputo
OA/Box Number: 6059

FOLDER TITLE:

Briefing Book of the First Lady - U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women,
September 5-6, 1995 [binder] [3]

2012-0094-F

jp3674

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
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Commitments

Divider Title: _____

**US COMMITMENTS
for the
FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN**

I. THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS ITSELF

- An Inter-Agency Task Force, operating out of the White House Office of Women's Outreach and Initiatives, will direct a year-long process to begin implementation and develop a long-term plan. The U.S. delegation to the Conference, consisting as it does of government and non-governmental people of wide geographic and demographic representation and expertise in the Platform issues, will serve as an advisory body to the Task Force.

II. ECONOMIC SECURITY INCLUDING BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor will launch a campaign to solicit pledges from employers, organizations and community groups to make systemic changes in policies and practices in the workplace to benefit women and their families.
- The Community Development Financial Institutions Fund of the Treasury Department will inaugurate an annual Presidential Awards for Microenterprise Excellence and serve as coordinator of a new Federal Microenterprise Initiative.
- The Agency for International Development will launch new activities in its Microenterprise Initiative and continue its support of microenterprise programming for women around the world.

III. EQUALITY AND POWER-SHARING

- The Agency for International Development is launching two mutually reinforcing international programs under an initiative on Women's Political Participation and Legal Rights.

IV. THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

- The new office on Violence Against Women at the Justice Department will lead a comprehensive national effort to fight domestic violence and other crimes against women by combining tough new federal laws with assistance to states and localities in law enforcement, victim assistance, prosecutions and crime prevention.
- The Administration reaffirms its commitment to obtain ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

V. HEALTH

I THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS ITSELF

In keeping with both the provisions of the Platform for Action to be adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the firm intention of the United States Government to promote the empowerment of women and advance their status, and the strong interest expressed by US non-governmental organizations concerning implementation, the United States' follow-up efforts include a year-long process to develop a comprehensive implementation plan until the year 2000. In addition, many specific steps will be taken to put the Platform's words into action.

This public/private partnership will continue the process begun in preparation for the Fourth World Conference -- a two-way communication that puts government and citizens in direct contact with each other to facilitate a plan for implementation.

An Inter-Agency Task Force, operating out of the White House Office of Women's Outreach and Initiatives, will direct implementation and follow-up efforts. The U.S. delegation to the Conference, consisting as it does of government and non-governmental people of wide geographic and demographic representation and expertise in the Platform issues, will serve as advisory body to the Task Force.

The Task Force and Advisory Committee on Implementation will form sub-groups from their members plus other interested and relevant individuals to analyze the Platform recommendations and their relevance to the U.S., to conduct outreach to American women about the conference and their priorities and recommendations, to explore mechanisms and processes for continuing implementation at the federal level, to develop ongoing communications between government and young people to develop youth initiatives, and to consider possible legislative action or reforms at the federal, state and local levels.

I. ECONOMIC SECURITY

A. BALANCING WORK AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES

This month the Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor will begin a year-long campaign to make work better for women and their families. The Bureau will solicit pledges from employers, organizations and community groups to make systemic changes in policies and practices in the workplace. These pledges will be recognized in a Working Women Count Honor Roll that the Bureau will publicize in order to encourage others to implement similar changes.

The changes will fall under three broad categories:

- **IMPROVED PAY AND BENEFITS:** especially health benefits, in order to obtain economic security. For example, a group of small businesses will collectively purchase health insurance for employees and their families; a national non-profit organization, (an NGO), will provide pro-rated sick leave to part-time and temporary employees.

- **WORK AND FAMILY:** changes in the workplace culture in order to help balance work and family responsibilities. For example, a county public service organization will offer seed money for local groups to develop innovative child care services, including care for children whose parents work nights and weekends; a school district will redesign its bus schedule to make it easier for children to attend after-school child care programs.

- **INCREASED VALUE FOR WOMEN'S WORK:** For example, a community foundation will raise funds over three years to provide job training for hundreds of infant/toddler child care providers. A professional association will establish a job-training scholarship fund for women re-entering the workforce.

The campaign goal is to obtain thousands of changes in policy and programs that will affect a million people. The target is employers, businesses, state and local governments, unions, advocacy organizations and individuals.

B. MICROENTERPRISE: EXPANDING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Self-employment by American women is growing at an unprecedented pace, and women constitute the great majority of Americans who gain access to credit through microenterprise lending. **The United States will take several key actions to further support self-employment and microenterprise development in our country.**

- The US Department of the Treasury has recently established the Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFI) Fund, will help promote the development of micro-lenders and other financial institutions dedicated to community development through financial support, technical assistance and training to micro-lenders. It will also identify and disseminate information on best-practice microenterprise assistance.

President Clinton has asked the Secretary of the Treasury to undertake two additional programs to further enhance US microenterprise development:

- The Treasury Department, through the CDFI Fund, will help establish and run a new Presidential program to honor outstanding micro-lending organizations. In publicizing their achievements, the awards will provide challenging benchmarks for microenterprise programs throughout the nation to use in assessing their own efforts and in learning from well-performing peers.
- The Treasury Department, through the CDFI Fund, will serve as coordinator of a new Federal Microenterprise Initiative to ensure coherence among the many microenterprise programs operating across a number of Federal agencies. This initiative will ensure that Federal funding effectively supports the growth and development of the microenterprise field. The Treasury Department, through the CDFI Fund, will coordinate program requirements, work to standardize data collection and reporting, take steps to harmonize regulations where appropriate, identify complementary roles among programs, and explore the feasibility of a one-stop shop for obtaining information on Federal microenterprise programs.
- USAID's continuing commitment will ensure a significant level of agency support through its Microenterprise Initiative, with a continued focus on reaching women and the very poor. Highlights of this strategy include a new \$125 million Microenterprise Innovation Project, and promotion of high-level policy attention to microenterprise through the new Consultative Group to Assist the Poorest (CGAP), managed out of the World Bank.

II. EQUALITY AND POWER SHARING

A. Political Participation and Legal Rights Initiative

Women's legal status is closely linked with their political participation, and has an impact on their ability to contribute to and benefit from economic and social progress. Yet limitation on women's legal rights are widespread. To address these critical development issues, the Agency for International Development, USAID, is launching a Political Participation and Legal Rights Initiative. The Initiative will consist of two distinct but mutually reinforcing programs for women around the world:

A. WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The goal of the Women's Political Participation program is to increase women's access to and participation in political processes and elections in both transitional and consolidating democracies around the world. Specifically, the program will provide assistance in four areas which are critical to achieving this goal:

- **Political Leadership Training:** Expected results include an increased number of women joining political parties, an increased number of elected women assuming leadership positions in the legislative and executive branches of government, and an effective use by politically active women of traditional political tools such as coalition building, lobbying, policy analysis, and formation of women's caucuses.
- **Supporting Networking Among Politically active women and women's political organizations:** Specific objectives include the development of women's political organizations to train and support women candidates for public office. Also, institutional support will develop and strengthen financial management capability, organizational structure, and democratic processes for decision-making and leadership selection.
- **Civic and Voter Education:** Objectives include increased registration and voter participation among women, and an increase in the number of women serving on electoral commissions, working in political parties, and participating in monitoring groups.
- **Technical Training and Leadership Services.** Provision of such services, including through grants to indigenous NGOs in pilot or experimental activities, will strengthen women's participation in the political process.

B. LEGAL RIGHTS INITIATIVE

The Women's Legal Rights Initiative of USAID will adopt a strategy to both develop knowledge and disseminate information regarding women's legal status; and build the capacity of NGOs, PVOs and other institutions to implement corrective programs and actions.

Women's legal rights are shaped by legislation, the judiciary and community attitudes or customs. In some countries, women suffer from laws that discriminate against them. In many others, women's rights are not clearly addressed in legislation and it is judicial interpretation that results in women's inequitable treatment. Local practices and beliefs also shape the level of acceptance and enforcement of women's legal rights. Thus the Initiative's research and capacity building efforts will focus on each of these three key levels.

- **Research and Information Dissemination:** This element of the program will focus on supporting research and documentation efforts as a basis for identifying the highest priority legal rights issues affecting women, by region and at the country level; determining at which levels the most severe obstacles to women's legal rights exist (legislative, judicial, community awareness/ acceptance); and identifying the types of program interventions that are most effective in producing changes in women's legal status. Dissemination of findings will be an integral part of all such activities including information exchange within target countries and within target regions. Particular emphasis will be placed on strengthening and development of South-South networks to share lessons learned and best approaches.

- **NGO Capacity Building:** Improving the capacity of the NGO community and that of other private sector organizations will also be a focus of the program given their expanding role in the design and implementation of development programs. A combination of program support and direct provision of technical assistance with institutional development will be available to support organizations that are striving to improve women's legal rights.

Programs to be supported will include those that strengthen women's legal literacy; integrate gender issues into law school curricula; provide gender sensitivity training to the judiciary; provide or support legal clinics; engage in direct policy dialogue with legislators to promote more equitable laws and policies; and facilitate partnerships and networks across sectors. Collaboration between PVOs and NGOs, development and legal professionals, and women's groups and other organizations addressing women's legal rights will be an important outcome of this element of the program.

III. Violence Against Women

A. The Violence Against Women Office

Earlier this year President Clinton announced the creation of the Violence Against Women Office at the Justice Department, following the passage of the 1994 Crime Bill which included the Violence Against Women Act. This new office on Violence Against Women will lead a comprehensive national effort to fight domestic violence and other crimes against women.

The effort will combine tough new federal laws with assistance to states and localities to make real progress in law enforcement, victim assistance, prosecutions and crime prevention.

Through outreach, collaboration and public education initiatives, the Office will work to transform public attitudes towards these crimes and dispel the notion that acts of violence against women are private disputes not fit for public scrutiny or legal judgment.

The Director of the Office of Violence Against Women, working closely with an Advisory Council, will bring broader public attention to the problem of violence against women and on-going programs to prevent it through meetings across the country with law enforcement and advocacy groups and through public appearances and media interviews.

The Act provides for \$1.6 billion in federal resources to be expended over the next six years. This coming year the Office expects to devote about \$200 million to the effort, concentrating on helping U.S. jurisdictions across the country to establish specialized police and prosecution units for sexual and domestic violence and to enhance training of police, prosecutors and judges and court personnel.

Also the Office will support the adoption of reforms and new procedures and regulations in cases of crimes of sexual or domestic violence in U.S. jurisdictions that include:

- ordering restitution for the victim;
- establishing registration systems for child molesters and other sexually violent criminals and encouraging nationwide criminal history background checks for persons employed in child care, disabled care and elder care positions
- permitting evidence of the accused's history of commission of other sexual or domestic violence crimes introduced into cases involving these such offenses;
- ensuring confidentiality about the victim's address and whereabouts and about communications between victims and counselors, therapists and advocates.

B. ENFORCEMENT OF FREEDOM OF ACCESS TO CLINIC ENTRANCES ACT

The United States has committed and continues to commit considerable resources to the enforcement by the Department of Justice of the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act of 1994, including the deployment of three principal investigative agencies -- the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and the Marshal's Service -- as well as attorneys from the Criminal, Civil and Civil Rights Divisions.

Ongoing task forces directed by U.S. Attorneys that include federal, state and local law enforcement officials will continue to develop plans to ensure security for reproductive health clinics.

Finally, at the direction of the Attorney General, the United States Marshal's Service will continue to facilitate and coordinate communications among clinics and federal, state and local law enforcement officials regarding potential threats of violence.

C. RATIFICATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

The Administration has submitted its ratification package to the Senate and reaffirms its commitment to make every effort to obtain its ratification.

HEALTH

(See attached raw, unedited and uncleared sheets from HHS.
Work in progress to be fine-tuned next week.)

Health Commitments:**Smoking Prevention among Children and Adolescents**

We are proposing a comprehensive and coordinated plan to reduce smoking by children and adolescents by 50 percent. The plan would:

- * Prohibit sale of tobacco products to anyone under 18;
- * Require face-to-face sales - no vending machine or mail order sales;
- * Eliminate free samples, self-service displays, single cigarettes, and "kiddie packs."
- * Ban outdoor advertising within 1,000 feet of schools and playgrounds;
- * Restrict to black-and-white, text only:
 - * Outdoor ads
 - * Magazines, newspapers with significant youth (under 18) readership. Significant readership means more than 15 percent or more than 2 million.
 - * In-store ads
- * Prohibit sale or giveaway of products like caps or gym bags that carry cigarette or smokeless tobacco product brand names or logos. Prohibit exchange of non-tobacco products for proof of purchase of tobacco products.
- * Prohibit brand name sponsorship or sporting or entertainment events, but permit it in the corporate name;
- * Require industry to fund \$150 million/year educational campaign to prevent kids from smoking.

Health Commitments:**Preventing Teenage Pregnancy**

We will work to address the multiple factors that contribute to teenage pregnancy, our most serious social problem, by:

- encouraging abstinence and personal responsibility for young men and women;
- providing access to health and family planning services;
- supporting health education in schools;
- assisting youth in crisis situations;
- providing positive activities for youth; and
- researching and disseminating helpful information about programs and approaches that work.

DRAFT

Health Commitments:**HIV/AIDS**

We will pursue a public policy agenda on HIV/AIDS specific to women, adolescents, and children by:

- conducting behavioral research that is sensitive to the diverse needs of women of different backgrounds and that examines factors influencing women's risk-taking and risk reduction behaviors, including characterizing the role of social and community norms in influencing risk behaviors;
- identifying biological factors related to transmission and describe ways in which these factors can be modified to prevent or reduce the risk of HIV transmission;
- conducting prevention research that defines which interventions are most relevant to women;
- supporting research to develop female controlled prevention methods, including barrier methods and microbicides;
- continuing research to better understand the natural history of HIV infection in women and related medical problems, and developing treatments to improve survival and quality of life for women with HIV infection;
- supporting integrated services for HIV infected women and women at risk for infection, to accommodate their multiple roles and family needs; and
- mounting culturally appropriate public information campaigns nationally and at the community level to increase women's awareness of HIV infection and ways they can protect themselves.

Health Commitments:**Contraceptive Research and Development**

We will continue to conduct and fund contraceptive research and development, with special emphasis on:

- * microbicides, which provide a chemical barrier to conception and viral infection;
- * developing and testing new non-latex condoms;
- * hormonal implants, including variations in both the contraceptive compound and the delivery mechanism;
- * immuno-contraception, involving the production of a contraceptive vaccine that will induce antibodies in either males or females to block some aspect of the reproductive process; and
- * Mifepristone (RU-486), including its potential use for medical abortion, contraception, Cushington's Syndrome, endometriosis, meningioma and breast cancer.

DRAFT

Health Commitments:**Health Promotion and Disease Prevention**

In addition to working toward health care reform by seeking changes to improve efficacy in the health care system and curtail health spending, we will continue to address the health needs of women through such initiatives as:

- The National Action Plan on Breast Cancer, a public-private partnership working with all agencies of government, the Congress, the White House, the media, scientific organizations, advocacy groups and industry, to advance breast health and eradicate breast cancer as a threat to the lives of American women.
- New Frontiers in Breast Cancer Imaging, an initiative which explores mechanisms through which defense, space, and intelligence imaging technologies can be used to develop more accurate methods for the early detection of breast cancer.
- The Mammography Quality Standards Act (MQSA). New regulations (effective October 1, 1994) establish quality standards on equipment, personnel, and record keeping, and a certificate system for the more than 10,000 U.S. facilities that perform mammography and interpret films. The purpose of these regulations is to ensure quality mammography, which is essential for early diagnosis of breast cancer.
- Expansion of the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program that will ensure that every woman for whom it is deemed appropriate receives regular screening for breast and cervical cancers, prompt follow-up if necessary, and certainty that the tests are performed in accordance with current recommendations for quality assurance. This national program brings critical breast and cervical cancer screening services to undeserved women, particularly women of low income, racial/ethnic minorities, and older women.
- Inclusion of Women in Clinical Trials, which includes NIH guidelines that ensure that women are represented in all areas of federally funded biomedical research and FDA guidelines that specify the necessity of analyzing safety and efficacy of data with respect to race, age and gender for new drugs and devices.
- The National Women's Health Clearinghouse, which HHS is developing with DoD, is a state-of-the-art toll free health information telephone line (1-800-4-WOMEN) to disseminate a broad range of women's health-related

information. The Clearinghouse will provide easy accessibility to women's health materials (brochures, pamphlets, fact sheets, booklets, videos) developed both for health professionals and consumers by the Public Health Service. A regular newsletter on Women's Health on up-to-the-minute women's health issues will also be available through the Clearinghouse.

- Expansion of the Infertility Prevention Program which provides screening for chlamydia, the leading cause of preventable infertility among women in the US. In 1995 this program was established across the country in a limited basis.

Health Commitments:**Older Women**

We will continue to address the health needs of older women through such initiatives as:

- * an educational campaign to encourage women who are over 65 years of age to use their mammography screening benefit covered by Medicare;
- * developing and coordinating the first nationwide, multi-audience, osteoporosis education campaign;
- * the NIH Women's Health initiative, the largest clinical research study ever conducted in either men or women with over 40 States now participating, examines the major causes of death, disability and frailty in post-menopausal women: heart disease, breast and colon cancer, and osteoporosis -- DHHS will commit \$628 million, over 15 years to complete this study;
- * the HHS Initiative on Older Women, which informs the public about the many challenges facing older Americans and promote individual and community action to meet the needs of older Americans; and
- * follow-up to the White House Conference on Aging and the Healthy Women 2000 Conference on Menopause and Related Health Issues.

**THE DEPARTMENT OF
THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET**

CANBERRA, A.C.T. 2000

TELEPHONE (06) 271 8111
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A PROPOSAL FOR A CONFERENCE OF COMMITMENTS

- At CSW38 Australia put forward a proposal that the Fourth World Conference on Women be an action orientated conference of commitments. The proposal was agreed to at CSW38 in Resolution 38/10 (Copy attached).
- The Concept is quite simple, but not in line with usual UN practice.
- The idea is that countries go to Beijing and not only agree to the Platform for Action but further to specify a couple of actions which they are prepared to commit to within the context the 11 critical areas of concern and within the framework of their own national priorities and budgets.
- For example: A country might commit to increasing literacy for women from say 15% to a target of 25% by the year 2000. Another country might choose to make a commitment of trying to reach a target of 35% of women in Parliament by the year 2000. Another may choose to work toward ratifying CEDAW or removing reservations they have to CEDAW by the year 2000. The options are endless and are chosen by individual countries to meet their own needs and priorities.
- We do not necessarily mean commitments should be financial, we mean commitments to a change in policy, program and attitudes.
- Countries are in a good position to make commitments of priority given preparations of their national reports to the UN and through preparations for regional conferences.
- Copies of Ms Kathleen Townsend's letter to Mrs Mongella explaining the concept and Mrs Mongella's response are attached for information.

Let us begin by working together on commitments. We would like your input on turning words into actions. If possible, try to be visionary, innovative and realistic at the same time. We are not anticipating that new resources will be made available for these commitments.

We welcome your ideas on legislation, policies, events, programs and processes that would enhance the status of women in the United States and that would relate to the recommendations of the Platform.

The Platform addresses twelve critical areas:

- The effects of poverty on women
- Access to education and training
- Access to appropriate health care and nutrition through the complete lifespan
- Violence against women
- The advancement of peace, promotion of conflict resolution and impact of armed conflict on women
- Economic opportunities for women, including ways to balance of work and family responsibilities
- Sharing in power and decision-making between men and women at all levels
- Institutions and mechanisms to promote the advancement of women
- The human rights of women
- The role of the media regarding the image and status of women
- Women and the environment
- Discrimination against girls

Examples of recent initiatives that relate to the Platform that can serve as models for future commitments

- The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993
- Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act of 1994
- Department of Justice's new Domestic Violence unit that was established as a result of the 1994 Violence Against Women Act.
- Establishment of office of Deputy Assistant Secretary for Women's Health at HHS
- The Women's Bureau of the Department of Labor's recent "Women Count" survey of working women
- The establishment of the Glass Ceiling Commission at the Department of Labor
- The increase in presidential appointments of women, in general and at senior level
- The recent policy change at INS that allows consideration to be given to women who base their claims for asylum wholly or in part on gender.

cc: Melanne



U.S. AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT

August 21, 1995

Office of
the Administrator

MEMORANDUM FOR: The First Lady
FROM: Carol Lancaster, Acting Administrator
SUBJECT: Women's Political Participation and
Legal Rights Initiative

I wanted to bring you up to date on the initiatives that the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been developing that are relevant to the Beijing Conference and will be ready to be announced there.

It is increasingly well recognized that economic and social progress will remain daunting -- not only for women, but for developing nations as a whole -- if women are denied equal legal status and lack a clear voice in public decision making. To respond to this challenge, USAID has developed a Women's Political Participation and Legal Rights Initiative. The Initiative recognizes that:

- While on paper most women around the world enjoy the right to vote, a web of cultural, social, legal, economic, and educational constraints often inhibit their actual political participation.
- Women's legal status is closely linked to their political participation, yet limitations on women's legal rights are widespread. Globally, restrictions on women's ownership of land and other property are common, making women less able to invest, borrow, and otherwise be economically productive. Moreover, women's ability to marry, divorce, conduct a wide variety of transactions, and even -- in some instances -- participate in family planning programs, is also often legally constrained and subject to the approval of male family members or guardians.

- Enforcement of women's legal rights is often lax: intimidation and violence are often used to discourage women's legal claims and disenfranchise women.

USAID's initiative will consist of two distinct, but mutually reinforcing, programs to address these concerns: political participation and legal rights.

Women's Political Participation

The goal of the Women's Political Participation program is to increase women's access and involvement in both elections and ongoing political activities in emerging democracies around the globe. Specifically, the program will provide assistance in four areas critical to achieving this goal:

- *Leadership Training:* Efforts will include support to women candidates and newly elected officials. Through this support, women's abilities to build a base of political power and to conduct political, legislative and other governmental activities will be enhanced.
- *Networking:* Supporting networks among politically active women is the second integral component of the program. This will enable women who are already active in politics to share their valuable experiences and ideas with other women leaders. The initiative will support women's political organizations which engage and empower other women and which help to build networks in support of women's participation.
- *Civic Education:* Activities will include support for long and short-term programs involving civic education for women, particularly for groups that have traditionally been marginalized. Civic education will result in increased knowledge and awareness among all women about their political and legal rights and responsibilities and increased registration and voter participation among women.
- *Technical Training.* The achievement of the program's goal also requires the provision of technical services which will strengthen women's participation in the political process. These activities may include a small grants program to support indigenous nongovernmental organizations in pilot or experimental activities, as well as general institutional support, research and studies.

Women's Legal Rights

While a number of effective programs have been put in place to facilitate women's awareness of their legal rights, much greater capacity is required to adequately address the widespread problem of women's legal status. Equitable enforcement of women's legal rights necessitates the strengthening of nongovernmental organizations, academic institutions and other organizations that facilitate linkages between communities and the state, encourage a more participatory decision making process, and demand greater accountability from governmental institutions.

The Women's Legal Rights program will both develop knowledge and disseminate information regarding women's legal status and build the capacity of organizations and institutions to bolster those legal rights. The Initiative's research- and capacity-building efforts will focus on three key areas: legislative issues, the judiciary, and community attitudes and customs with regard to women's legal rights. It is clear that discriminatory laws, judicial interpretation and local practices all shape the level of acceptance and enforcement of women's legal rights in the developing world. The initiative will undertake important programs in:

Research and Information Dissemination: This will support research and documentation as a basis for identifying the highest priority legal rights issues affecting women to determine the most severe obstacles to women's legal rights (legislative, judicial, community awareness/acceptance). These programs will also identify the types of program interventions that are most effective in improving women's legal status.

Nongovernmental Organization Capacity Building: Improving the capacity of nongovernmental organizations will be crucial as these organizations are given an expanding role in the design and implementation of development programs. A combination of program support and technical assistance will be available to support organizations that are striving to improve women's legal rights. These programs will include those that strengthen women's legal literacy, integrate gender issues into law school curricula, provide gender sensitivity training to the judiciary, provide or support legal clinics, engage in direct policy dialogue with legislators to promote more equitable laws and policies, and facilitate partnerships and networks across sectors.

We believe the Women's Political Participation and Legal Rights Initiative will make an important contribution to the goals expressed in Cairo, Copenhagen and those that will come out of Beijing.

It is our hope that you may be able to announce this Initiative if you go to Beijing. I am sure you have heard all the arguments, pro and con, repeatedly for attending the Conference. Our view at USAID is that women's issues are urgent and compelling throughout the World and your presence would call attention to them in a way that no other person's would. It should be possible to do that without appearing to give approbation of any kind to the Chinese government's human rights, nuclear or other objectionable policies. Indeed, your being there could bring even more attention to the human rights failures -- especially as they affect women -- of the government of China and perhaps serve to bring about a more rapid amelioration in those policies.

Please let me know if you need further information about this Initiative or any other of our programs before your departure.

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Key UN Officials

Divider Title: _____

UN OFFICIALS

Fawzi Hamad AL-SULTAN
*President, International Fund for
 Agricultural Developments (IFAD)*
 (since January 1993)

KUWAIT

Financial expert ... joined World Bank in mid-1980s, served as senior executive director before receiving current post ... has worked for International Financial Advisers KSC (1981-84), Bank of Kuwait and the Middle East (1971-81), Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development (1966-69, 1971-77) ... earned B.A. in economics from American University of Beirut, M.A. in economics from Yale during the 1960s ... speaks English ... married, has three children ... age 50.

Jose Julio AYALA Lasso
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
 (since February 1994)

ECUADOR

Career diplomat ... Ecuador's Permanent Representative to the UN (1989- February 1994), led UN working group that organized Human Rights Commission and also chaired UN Security Council affairs committee ... has served as Minister of Foreign Relations (1977-79), subsecretary of Foreign Relations (1975-76), director general of territorial sovereignty (1974-75) ... Ambassador to Belgium, Luxembourg, EC (1979-83), Peru (1983-89) ... during 1961-74 was posted to Japan, Taiwan, South Korea, Peru, Italy ... studied at Catholic and Central Universities in Quito, Louvain University in Belgium ... holds graduate degrees in political and social sciences, economics, international law, canon law ... speaks English ... married, has four children ... age 63.

Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI
Secretary General, UN
 (since January 1992)

EGYPT

Former Egyptian Minister of State for Foreign Affairs (1977-May 1991), Deputy Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs (May-December 1991) ... academic background ... member of Cairo University faculty during most of 1949-77, chairman of political science department in 1970s ... has written over 10 books on international law, political science ... studied in 1940s at Faculty of Law of Cairo University, University of Paris ... holds diplomas in public law, economics, political science, Ph.D. in international law ... was a Fulbright scholar at Columbia University in 1950s ... speaks English ... married... age 72.

Maurico DE MARIA Y CAMPOS
*Director General, UN Industrial
 Development Organization (UNIDO)*
 (since April 1993)

MEXICO

Expert on technology transfer and economic development ... served briefly as deputy director general in charge of UNIDO's Industrial Operations Department before assuming current post ... served as member of Special Advisory Group to director general of UNIDO during 1986-92 ... was director general of fiscal promotion for Mexican Finance Secretariat during 1979-86 ... executive

Withdrawal/Redaction Marker

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
001. report	re: U.S. Government Report (1 page)	09/27/1994	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
First Lady's Press Office - Lisa Caputo
OA/Box Number: 6059

FOLDER TITLE:

Briefing Book of the First Lady - U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women,
September 5-6, 1995 [binder] [3]

2012-0094-F
jp3674

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed of gift.

PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]



Biography
Mrs. Gertrude Mongella
Secretary-General
Fourth World Conference on Women

Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women is a Tanzanian who has served her country with distinction in the fields of education, national life and at the international level.

Her appointment by United Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali in December 1992 to head the Secretariat for the Conference on Women has given her a unique opportunity to shape future international action for development and for the promotion of equality, development and peace.

Mrs. Mongella's career has had three distinct phases - beginning in education following her graduation from the University College, Dar-es-Salaam with a degree in education. She became a teacher and was later an inspector of secondary and teacher training colleges.

She then went into public life and in 1976, became a member of the East African Legislative Assembly. Since then, she has held several Ministerial positions, the first being Minister of State responsible for Women's Affairs. In addition she was also Minister of Lands, Natural Resources and Tourism from 1985 to 1987 and Minister Without Portfolio in the President's Office from 1987 to 1991. Mrs. Mongella has been a member of the Central and National Executive Committee of the ruling political party in Tanzania and from 1982 to 1991 was Head of the Social Services Department at party headquarters.

At the end of 1991, Mrs. Mongella was appointed High Commissioner to India. During the previous ten years, Mrs. Mongella had represented her country at numerous international meetings, conferences, seminars and workshops, particularly on issues relating to women and to development and the environment. In 1985, at the World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women, held in Nairobi, Mrs. Mongella was the Chairman of the African group and Vice Chairman of the Conference.

In 1988, Mrs. Mongella was Tanzania's representative on the Commission on the Status of Women and led a delegation to present the country's report to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women in 1990. That same year, she participated in an Expert Group Meeting on Women in Political and Decision Making Positions, which was held in Vienna. She had served for three years from 1990 to 1993 as a member of the Board of Trustees of INSTRAW - the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
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002. bio	re: Gertrude Mongella [Personally Identifiable Information] [Partial] (1 page)	00/00/0000	b(6)
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concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

Mrs. Mongella has maintained an interest in global environment issues and attended the World Women's Congress for a Healthy Planet in 1991 in Miami, Florida as well as the Global Assembly on Women and the Environment which preceded it. She also participated in the Conference on the Supportive Environment for Health in Sundevall, Sweden in 1991.

Since taking up her UN appointment in 1993, Mrs. Mongella has been undertaking extensive consultations with Heads of Government and senior government officials, attending regional preparatory conferences and meeting with NGO's who will be attending the Conference from 4 to 16 September and the NGO Forum scheduled for 30 August to 8 September 1996.

[002]

(b)(6)

Mrs. Mongella is married and has four children.

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"THE WORLD OF WOMEN"

Interviews with Influential Women from Around the World

A 13-Part Radio Series (13 programs x approx. 30:00 each)

Program #7: Gertrude Mongella, Tanzania Secretary-General of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women

Produced by the Population Reference Bureau
1875 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Suite 520 • Washington, DC 20009 • USA
202/483-1100 (tel) • 202/328-3937 (fax)

MARLOW: WELCOME TO "THE WORLD OF WOMEN," A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS WITH INFLUENTIAL WOMEN FROM AROUND THE WORLD ON THEIR LIFE AND TIMES. TODAY'S GUEST IS MRS. GERTRUDE MONGELLA. SHE'S SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN. SHE IS FROM AFRICA, FROM TANZANIA.

MRS. MONGELLA RECEIVED A DEGREE IN EDUCATION FROM THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE IN DAR ES SALAAM, TANZANIA, AND SPENT THE EARLY PART OF HER CAREER AS A TEACHER. IN 1975, MRS. MONGELLA BECAME A MEMBER OF THE EAST AFRICA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY. SINCE THEN, SHE HAS HELD SEVERAL MINISTERIAL POSITIONS, INCLUDING MINISTER OF STATE RESPONSIBLE FOR WOMEN'S AFFAIRS AND MINISTER OF LANDS, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND TOURISM.

MRS. MONGELLA HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL AND NATIONAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE RULING PARTY IN TANZANIA, AND FROM 1982 TO 1991 WAS HEAD OF THE SOCIAL SERVICES DEPARTMENT AT PARTY HEADQUARTERS. THROUGHOUT THIS PERIOD, MRS. MONGELLA REPRESENTED HER COUNTRY AT NUMEROUS INTERNATIONAL MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES. IN 1985 SHE SERVED AS CHAIR OF THE AFRICAN GROUP AND VICE CHAIR OF THE CONFERENCE FOR THE UNITED NATIONS THIRD WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN HELD IN NAIROBI, KENYA. IN DECEMBER OF 1992, MRS. MONGELLA WAS APPOINTED BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECRETARY-GENERAL BOUTROS BOUTROS-GHALI TO HEAD THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE U.N. FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN.

HERE TO TALK WITH GERTRUDE MONGELLA IS OUR HOST FOR "THE WORLD OF WOMEN," SHELLY CRYER.

CRYER: MRS. MONGELLA, WELCOME AND THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY. YOU BEGAN YOUR CAREER AS AN EDUCATOR. WHAT FIRST DREW YOU TO THIS PROFESSION?

MONGELLA: I liked teaching. I still like teaching, and I think this was one of the professions I dreamt of even when I was a kid, although it's true also that for many women, that was the only opening at that time. Most women would go into education.

CRYER: WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST JOB OUT OF COLLEGE?

MONGELLA: Out of college it was teaching in those teacher train -- in a teacher training college. So I enjoyed training people to be teachers, although sometimes they turned out to be better teachers than myself. So that gave me a lot of satisfaction, to see that people whom I had trained to be teachers had in fact excelled and had become the best of teachers.

And nowadays when I meet them, I really feel so satisfied when I meet the teachers I trained, I meet the teachers I worked with, and I meet the students of my teachers. So it is quite a noble career, a career which really gives you some practice on leadership because, you know, in order to be a teacher you must have the leadership qualities -- you must be patient, you must be

ready to share the knowledge you have. And I think -- I really admire teachers in the -- I really -- I'm a real teacher [inaudible].

CRYER: WERE TEACHERS RESPECTED IN TANZANIA AT THE TIME?

MONGELLA: Very much respected. That's why the first President of the United Republic of Tanzania, because he was a teacher by profession, maintained his name today, Mwalimu. You are always called Mwalimu, which means "teacher." In Tanzania when you are teachers, you don't refer to your names, if your colleagues and your fellow teachers used to call yourselves Mwalimu, Mwalimu, Mwalimu. And Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, actually -- some people think Mwalimu is his name, but it's his title of being a teacher. And I think that also gives us some pride in Tanzania that once you're a teacher, you're called -- it's the only profession where you refer to yourself in your titles as Mwalimu. Maybe with a doctor, but other professions you can't call yourself "Engineer" all the time, but in teaching, even your students do refer to you as Mwalimu.

CRYER: IN THE LATE 1960s AND EARLY 1970s, WHAT TYPE OF EDUCATION DID GIRLS RECEIVE IN TANZANIA?

MONGELLA: It was very much basically limited to primary school education and some secondary school. Very few opportunities were there for girls for secondary school.

For example, the secondary school I went to was one of the three secondary schools established by the Maryknoll Sisters from the United States in order to prepare the girls in participation in the development of the nation. And it has really proven that those secondary schools are the ones which trained girls who finally went to university and who finally got into political and decision-making positions.

So this time when I went to university in the '70s, it was a rare opportunity. Few people really -- few women went to the university. I think by that time we had in the population of the university, I mean less than three percent of the university were women. And incidentally, from the island I come from, I was the first woman to get to the university.

CRYER: INTERESTING. TODAY, TANZANIA HAS HIGH LITERACY RATES BUT THERE'S STILL A SIGNIFICANT GAP BETWEEN THE LITERACY RATES OF BOYS AND GIRLS. WHAT ARE SOME EXPLANATIONS FOR THIS GAP?

MONGELLA: The explanation is the point we started off, because during the colonial period the boys were the ones who were taken to school. So when we got independent, the government tried to bridge the gap by bringing universal primary education. But you still -- proportionately you had -- among the illiterate people, you had more women than men. So the closing of the gap was one of them.

But nowadays, that gap, the literal gap which we have, is not due to that discrimination because it's no longer there, that we have reached a level where all children, boys and girls, have to go to school by law up to -- they have to remain in school for seven years. So it only happens to those who drop out for some reason, either early pregnancy or lack of school fees or because they are mentally retarded and you have nothing to do about it, but otherwise we have reached a universal primary education, which has really done quite a lot to empower women, because I think people should really consider first of making sure that everybody goes to school, and that's the starting point.

CRYER: YOU MENTIONED THE PROBLEM OF EARLY PREGNANCIES. WHAT'S YOUR POSITION ON SEX EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS?

MONGELLA: Actually, in Africa we do have sex education traditionally. I'm just surprised when people talk about sex education, because in Africa the child grows, you are learning all the time, and at every stage of life you are told knowledge which you should be knowing. So when -- maybe when you talk about sex education in schools, that's a different thing, but in Africa you cannot claim not to have what we call sex education. Maybe we refer it more honorably "life -- family life education." That's how we call it in Tanzania, and this same education which really gives -- it's given at the right time with the right people. It's not supposed to be given by everybody. That's the qualification we give. And that makes people comfortable because even traditionally, not everybody marched in and started teaching this sex education.

So I think -- I have an opinion that if people could be assured, if parents could be assured, that their kids are being taught sex education by the right people, people who care about -- they're thinking of the parents, they care about the thinking of the children, they are sensitive about values, I think that would be not a hot debate, because that's what we are used to in Africa.

CRYER: MRS. MONGELLA, HOW HAS YOUR LIFE BEEN DIFFERENT FROM YOUR MOTHER'S LIFE?

MONGELLA: Very different. Very different. First of all, the fact that I went to school up to university. My mother is illiterate, unfortunately, and -- but she's just basically literate. And she lived an ordinary village life. I mean, she lives an ordinary village life searching for water, looking for firewood, a task which I've done, and am still doing, when I go home. I just came back from Tanzania and you cannot afford not to do it when you go to the village because you have to still look for water and look for firewood. So we share. I mean, she's different, but we still share some type of life when we are together.

But the other difference is my capacity to decide. I think I'm more in a position to make a decision within my family, to share decision-making, than she did, although my mother is quite a very strong woman. She -- I could see her since I was a kid making a lot of decisions. But I think the type of her power to make a decision and mine is completely different.

The similarity is also the the contribution to the family, the economic life of the family. My mother did contribute as a farmer and she did a lot of contribution. She worked all the time, maybe more than I do.

And the other difference is that maybe I'm in a different position when it comes to taking care of the family and the children because when I was born, I'm sure my mother didn't have the nappies and the diapers but I had an opportunity to take care of my children with nappies, and sometimes I used to say, "What did my mother do without her nappies? What did my mother do without electricity -- getting up at night, taking care of me?" I mean, sometimes I do wonder how she made us survive. How did she manage? How did she manage being clean when -- and then having to feed all these babies by growing food with the hand hoe, processing it, cooking it, having to do everything? I do admire her.

CRYER: YOU ARE THE MOTHER OF FOUR CHILDREN AND YOU HAVE ONE DAUGHTER?

MONGELLA: Yes.

CRYER: HOW DO YOU THINK YOUR DAUGHTER'S LIFE WILL BE DIFFERENT FROM YOURS?

MONGELLA: I'm not very sure. I think the next generation, the difference they're going to face is -- particularly in my own country is the breakdown of the social support system. My daughter, I wonder whether she's going to get the same support from the extended family, because I can see a lot of changes. People are moving into cities; they are no longer as close. I mean, the closeness is being reduced. But when I -- for example, when I got my -- just started having my babies, when I'm expecting, everybody's expecting -- my father-in-law, my mother-in-law, the neighbors and everything, and you get that social support and there you get the babies not all yours; it belongs to everybody. And I wonder if my daughter is going to get that type of social support. So she has to get a different life all together, a life where you depend on yourself more than the social network in the community in which you live.

MARLOW: A REMINDER NOW THAT YOU'RE LISTENING TO "THE WORLD OF WOMEN," A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS WITH INFLUENTIAL WOMEN FROM AROUND THE WORLD. WITH US TODAY IS THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN, MRS. GERTRUDE MONGELLA. HERE ONCE AGAIN IS OUR PROGRAM HOST, SHELLY CRYER.

CRYER: MRS. MONGELLA, WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISIONS THAT CAN BE MADE AT THE UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN?

MONGELLA: The most important decisions must take into consideration some principles. One, the principle that women are human beings with rights and responsibilities. And that's what has been lacking. We have never been considered as equal human beings, and that's why we are struggling, and Beijing is all about that.

The second principle is that women -- women's advancement must be taken in the life cycle, from childhood -- actually from before birth, because we do have cases where even fetuses, female fetuses, are being discriminated from the womb, so it's from the womb to old age, that whatever happens to the child from the earliest time can have a very great effect on the adult woman.

For example, if I take my own case, suppose I never went to school; would I ever have been Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference? So that decision at my early age of my parents to educate me really determines my -- determined my life. So this is why it's important to look at the life of a woman -- childhood, youth, adulthood, until old age.

And there's another section, I think -- I think one stage of life where people are not concentrating enough is the youth, because sometimes they skip it. They -- we tend to ignore the youth. We don't even take care of the statistics. We have the infant mortality rate. Who has recorded the youth death and the causes as much as we've recorded the children's death and the mother's death?

So these are some of the things, the connection. Now, if you lose so many people at that stage -- for example, now we are losing them out of accidents, drugs, AIDS. Now, if we lose them, how do you expect to have a strong group of adult women? So we need -- and if an adult woman is not employed and does not gain the pay and the pension which would allow her to enjoy the old age. It does also affect these old women. You cannot take care of the aging if you didn't take care of them when they were adult women. So these are things which -- this is another principle.

The other principle is that women are not homogeneous. We are not all the same, even in the same country. So this also must be taken into consideration, that even when we are negotiating in Beijing, we should respect each other's point of view.

For example, when I came to New York someone told me that -- "Mrs. Mongella, can you encourage the women of the north to breast feed?" But after I stayed here for a week, I said if I had been here, I wouldn't even dare produce one child, because, you see, your own problem, it becomes a problem of your own; how can I commute in the train when I have a baby? How can I continue working, because the social support system here does not guarantee a woman to really work and also to take care of the family?

So this, then -- if that -- I have to appreciate why people have maybe one child in this place. But at the same time, in Tanzania I do appreciate when women want to have more -- I mean, as many children as possible, because you can see sometimes that so many women die of diarrhea, so many women die of -- so many children die of measles and all these diseases, although UNICEF now has stepped in quite strongly to immunize children. But this woman, in order to convince her to have less children, you must guarantee the child's survival.

So if you -- these are just a few examples where I'm just taking a simple example of that women are not homogeneous, but they have the same problem. We just started from the beginning that the recognition of their rights as human beings who have rights and responsibilities. If that is done, then it will be done within the context of each nation.

CRYER: IS THERE A SPECIFIC MARK YOU HOPE TO LEAVE PERSONALLY ON THE CONFERENCE?

MONGELLA: Yes.

CRYER: AND WHAT IS THAT?

MONGELLA: A woman, a mother, a teacher, a diplomat, and a politician.

CRYER: YOU HAVE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS IN WOMEN'S ISSUES. HOW DO YOU COMPARE THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENTS TO THE ROLE OF NONGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS?

MONGELLA: Each of them has a responsibility and an accountability. The government has its own role in organizing society, in making sure that there is law and order, and making sure that there is enough infrastructure for survival of human beings, where the NGOs have a role of putting together people with the same interests, based on common interest, and they do also have a mechanism of enriching the people without much bureaucracy. So while the NGOs are really based on interest, the government is responsible for everybody and responsible of making sure that there is development in the country. And I think sometimes we should not confuse that governments can replace NGOs and NGOs can replace governments. I think they should have a complementary role.

CRYER: YOU HAVE ALSO SAID TO WOMEN, "WE MUST STOP TREATING OURSELVES AS INVITEES ON THIS PLANET." WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

MONGELLA: You know, when I particularly started getting into politics, that's when I started recognizing more and more the way we talked with a language for -- "let us -- women should be incorporated, women should participate, women" --

this language which seems as if a woman is at a certain corner or has just come in and must be accommodated. You see, everybody's trying to see how to accommodate women in formal employment, how to accommodate women in education, how to accommodate women -- as if we are being accommodated into a system which is not ours.

Worse still, when you come to employment. When I became Ambassador, the system was tailored for males, so when I went to India, then Ambassador, you could see the meetings of diplomats' wives, and they wondered where my husband is going to fit in. So I did influence them to say "spouses;" in case he wanted to go, he had the right to go into those meetings. So you could see that even in that diplomatic life I was an invitee.

And then when you come into the culture of management, we have so few women that it's become tokenism. You don't belong there; therefore, the few who can make it, you put them there and you watch them so carefully. We watch the presidents or the prime ministers who are women as if they have just dropped from the moon. But even the treatment -- there's just lot of rejection into these areas that you always feel that are we invitees, or do we belong here?

And I think now we must struggle to say, "We belong here." So we are setting things right. Things had gone wrong. They had marginalized us, they had discriminated us, and the rules, the cultures, have put us into a position that we look as if we are invitees and we have to be accommodated and we have to knock at the doors. And sometimes, for example, in politics you knock on the door, you get into the room; the question is, do you want to maintain that room the way it is because it was much tailored for women, or do you want to make sure that that room is changed and that you belong in that room?

CRYER: HOW HAVE YOU FELT DISCRIMINATION IN YOUR OWN LIFE?

MONGELLA: I felt it in many ways. As black, I felt it, and I still experience it. At airports you find that because I'm black, no one thinks I'm a Secretary-General even when I put out my passport and my identity. They look, at airports, just in case I'm just a black, and that's a fact we have to live with.

And then I'm discriminated as a woman. I mean, for someone who has had a lot of discrimination, at least the one on women I can fight it easier than the one on black because it's subtler. It's put in a way that you cannot sometimes see -- I cannot -- you cannot object to it. People pretend it's the rules, but you see how it's being applied. Why should I be stopped from the plane and demanded a passport where my colleagues, who are white, are not being demanded? And that's not an immigration policy, you see?

So you see these things happen in our lives, and for us, we are fighting -- sometimes I do fight double discrimination as a woman and as a black. But when I'm in Tanzania, fortunately I don't have to be suffering as a black. That's the only consolation. It's only when I'm outside Tanzania when I feel being discriminated as black.

CRYER: TANZANIA IS A LARGE AND VERY DIVERSE COUNTRY. CAN YOU DESCRIBE FOR US, THOUGH, AN AVERAGE DAY FOR A TYPICAL WOMAN IN TANZANIA?

MONGELLA: A day which I think most of the time has an average of 16 hours in the majority of women. It's getting a little lower, but not so much. The woman gets up early in the morning, runs to get water, and then comes to prepare the meal. For example, nowadays with the kids going to school, she must get up to make sure that the kids eat, who also have to run maybe a few kilometers to

get to their schools. And then she continues the farming, the work in the farm, which sometimes is about a few kilometers away from home.

So the woman in Tanzania in the rural -- especially in the rural area is basically a woman who works out of the house. So I have been wondering when people start debating about whether to work in the house or outside the house, and I say, "I wish the women in rural Tanzania would work in the house," because they are always working outside the house and way far away from the house, away from their children who are sometimes subjected to taking care of themselves quite early in life.

So this is no more a life of a Tanzanian woman. Fortunately, after independence there is so much political consciousness, the woman in Tanzania makes a decision of the votes and the person -- the people who go in for elections start by lobbying women's votes. Now, I hear -- this year we have elections -- and women have said they're going to vote for candidates who at least are conscious about the situation of women. That's their election manifesto.

CRYER: ARE THERE MANY WOMEN IN PUBLIC OFFICE?

MONGELLA: Yes, we do. Fortunately we do. And we did struggle to make it a point that in our constitution at least a minimum of 25 percent of leaders at local government are women and 15 percent at the National Assembly are women.

So we have made at least an advancement as far as that is concerned, and that's what brought me to the point when I started organizing the conference. What is development? Why does the development -- for example, if you look at the representation of women in Parliament around the world, you find that Tanzania, a recently developed country, has the same percentage of some big nations which have developed and therefore it calls again when we go to Beijing we must also address ourselves in our consciousness of what development means. It does not necessarily mean that it's the end of every problem of women. We have to continue struggling in a different struggle, that apart from that development, we also have to include other factors which will really bring about the advancement of women and rule out that fact of women being invitees on the planet.

CRYER: CERTAIN REGIONS OF TANZANIA HAVE BEEN DEVASTATED BY AIDS AND RIGHT NOW MORE WOMEN ARE INFECTED BY AIDS THAN MEN IN TANZANIA, I BELIEVE. WHAT'S THE HUMAN FACE OF AIDS IN TANZANIA?

MONGELLA: Actually, AIDS as we see it, not only in Tanzania actually; there are some other areas which have been more affected than even Tanzania, because in Tanzania quite early, according to our policies, we do take care of our people. We worked hard, and I participated very strongly in the mobilization of people towards AIDS.

But if we take the cases, the areas, some areas especially in the northwest on the lake zone, because I think it borders the other countries -- Uganda and Zaire and all these countries which also have the early spread of AIDS, you find that as we went along, like any other part of the world, you found that AIDS started to show us the inequalities between men and women, the victimization of women, the sexual harassment in women. So this way conditions which women experience all the time, but when AIDS came, it did demonstrate that we thought this was social phenomena but they also become -- I mean, they can affect the lives of women to the extent of even dying.

So AIDS in women is a result of marginalization, economic -- lack of economic power, and particularly poverty and ignorance which we are going to fight in Beijing, that we must make sure that women have education, enough education, _____ to allow them to get information.

CRYER: MRS. MONGELLA, THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR JOINING US.

MONGELLA: THANK YOU.

MARLOW: YOU HAVE BEEN LISTENING TO "THE WORLD OF WOMEN," A SERIES OF CONVERSATIONS WITH INFLUENTIAL WOMEN FROM AROUND THE WORLD. WITH US TODAY HAS BEEN THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN, MRS. GERTRUDE MONGELLA.

"THE WORLD OF WOMEN" WAS BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE POPULATION REFERENCE BUREAU IN WASHINGTON, DC. THE PROGRAM HOST FOR THIS PROGRAM IS SHELLY CRYER. THIS IS MIKE MARLOW. THANK YOU FOR JOINING US, AND WE LOOK FORWARD TO HAVING YOU WITH US FOR THE NEXT PROGRAM IN THIS SERIES, "THE WORLD OF WOMEN."

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PATRICIA B. LICUANAN

Dr. Patricia B. LICUANAN was appointed Philippine Representative to the United Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) in 1989. In 1990-1992, she served as Chair of the Asia Group and Vice Chairperson of the Commission. She also chaired task forces for the Group of 77. She has chaired a number of consultations at the Commission one of them being the consultation on the title and theme of the 1995 World Conference on Women resulting in a resolution which has since been implemented. At the UNCSW, Dr. Licuanan has played an active leadership role both formally and informally and has been involved in negotiating consensus for sensitive resolutions. *Chair of the Commission on Women*

Dr. Licuanan served as Chairperson (1987-1992) of the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women (NCRFW), the national machinery for women in the Philippines. During her term as Chair the NCRFW developed and launched the Philippine Development Plan for Women (PDPW) and set up the necessary mechanisms for implementation in government departments and agencies. She headed the Philippine delegation to the ASEAN Women's Programme (AWP) for many years and was Chair of the AWP from 1987 to 1990. As Philippine Representative to the AWP, she conceptualized and introduced major projects in such areas as family violence, statistics and indicators on women, gender sensitivity training for ASEAN and setting up and strengthening of national machineries on women. She also prepared guidelines for the implementation of the Declaration on the Advancement of Women in the ASEAN Region. Dr. Licuanan has represented her country at international meetings and is a member of several international meetings and is a member of several international networks. As a social scientist she has conducted research and written papers on Women in Development.

Dr. Licuanan is a highly respected social scientist and professional. She is Professor of Psychology at the Ateneo de Manila University where she is also currently Academic Vice President. A specialist in the field of Social Psychology, she does teaching, research and consultancy in the areas of Social Change, Human Factors in Development and Human Resource Development with a specific interest in Women in Development. Aside from academe and the education sector, she works closely with government, non-governmental organizations, and UN agencies.



Selected Delegation Leaders

Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women Beijing, 4-15 September 1995

Austria	Min. for Women's Affairs Helga Konrad
Australia	Min. for Human Services and Health Carmen Lawrence
Bahamas	Permanent Secretary Joshua Sears
Bangladesh	Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Ziaur Rahman Min. of State with Independent Charge for Women's Affairs Sarwari Rahman
Barbados	Min. of Foreign Affairs Billie Miller
Belarus	Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Rusakevich
Belgium	Min. of Labor Miet Smet
Bahrain	Undersecretary of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs Shaikh Ahmed bin Sager al-Khalifa
Bolivia	First Lady Ximena Iturralde de Sanchez de Lozada Min. of Human Development Enrique Ipina Melgar
Botswana	Min. of Labor and Home Affairs Bahiti Temane
Brazil	First Lady Ruth Correa Leite Cardoso
Bulgaria	Min. of Public Health Mimi Vitkova
Burma	Min. of Social Welfare and Resettlement, Maj. Gen. Soe Myint
Cambodia	Princess Norodom Marie Ranariddh
Cameroon	Min. of External Relations and Deputy Director for African and Asian Affairs Madelaine Sao
Canada	Min. of State for Multiculturalism and the Status of Women Sheila Finestone
Chile	Director of the National Women's Service Josefina Bilbao
China	National People's Congress Standing Committee Vice Chairwoman Chen Muhua
Colombia	Min. of Environment Cecilia Lopez Montano
Cuba	President of the Federation of Cuban Women Vilma Espain
Czech Republic	Min. of Labor and Social Affairs Jindrich Vodicka
Denmark	Min. of Social Affairs Karen Jespersen
Ecuador	Undersecretary for Multilateral Affairs Ximena Martinez de Perez
Egypt	First Lady Suzanne Mubarak
El Salvador	First Lady and National Secretary for Family Matters Elizabeth de Calderon Sol
Estonia	Min. of Social Affairs Siiri Oviir
European Commission	Social Affairs Commissioner Padraig Flynn
Finland	Foreign Minister Tarja Halonen
France	Min. of Solidarity among the Generations Colette Codaccioni
Georgia	Deputy Prime Minister Irakli Menagharishvili
Germany	Min. for Women, Youth, Family, and Pensioners Claudia Nolte
Greece	Deputy Minister to the Prime Minister's Office for Women's Affairs Maria Arseni (4-6 Sept) General Secretary of the Ministry to the Prime Minister for Women's Affairs Constantina Pantazi (7-15 Sept)
Guatemala	Permanent Representative to the UN Julio Armando Martini
Holy See	Harvard University Professor Mary Ann Glendon
Honduras	Third Vice President Guadalupe Jerezano
Hong Kong	Home Affairs Secretary Michael Suen
Hungary	Min. of Labor Magda Kovacs Kosa
Iceland	President Vigdís Finnbogadóttir
India	Min. of Human Resource Development Madhavrao Scindia
Indonesia	Min. of State for Women's Affairs Mein Sugandhi
Ireland	Min. for Equality and Law Reform Mervyn Taylor
Israel	Min. of Social Welfare Ora Namir
Italy	Min. of Foreign Affairs Susanna Agnelli

Ivory Coast	Min. of the Promotion of the Family and of Women Albertine Gnanazan Hepie
Jamaica	Min. of Labor, Social Security, and Sports Portia Simpson
Japan	Chief Cabinet Secretary Koken Nosaka
Jordan	Queen Noor al-Hussein al-Hashimi
Kazakhstan	First Lady Sara Nazarbayeva (September 12)
Korea, North	Min. of Finance Yun Ki-Chong
Korea, South	First Lady Son Myong-sun
Kyrgyzstan	Foreign Minister Roza Otunbayeva
Laos	Vice Foreign Minister Soubanh Srithrath
Luxembourg	Min. of Women's Affairs Marie-Josée Jacobs
Madagascar	Secretary General of the Ministry of Population, Youth, and Sports Denise Fischer
Malawi	Controller for Women and Children Affairs Linley Kamtengeni
Malaysia	First Lady Siti Hasmah Ali
Mexico	Secretary of Tourism Silvia Hernandez
Micronesia	Secretary of Health Services Eliuel Pretrick
Namibia	Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Netumbo Ndaitwah
Nauru	Head of the Women's National Council Pamela Scriven
Nicaragua	Director of the Nicaraguan Institute of Women Maria Auxiliadora Perez de Mateus
Nigeria	First Lady Maryam Abacha
Norway	Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland
Oman	Adviser to Min. of Social Affairs, Labor, and Women's and Children's Affairs Huda Bint Abdullah al-Ghazali
Pakistan	Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto
Panama	First Lady Dora Boyd de Perez Balladares
Paraguay	Secretary of Women's Affairs Cristina Munoz
Peru	President of the Peruvian Congress Martha Chavez
Philippines	Chairperson of the UN Commission on the Status of Women Patricia Licuanan
Poland	Deputy Prime Minister Aleksander Luczak
Portugal	Min. of Education Manuela Ferreira Leite
Romania	Min. of State for Labor and Social Protection Dan Mircea
Russia	Min. of Social Welfare of the Population Lyudmila Fedorovna Bezlepkina
Senegal	Min. of Women, Children, and Family Affairs Aminata Mbonque Ndiaye
Singapore	Senior Minister of State for Health and Education Aline Wong
Slovakia	Min. of Labor, Social Affairs, and Family Olga Keltsova
Slovenia	Chief of the Prime Minister's Office for Women's Issues Vera Kosmic
South Africa	Min. of Health Nkosazana Zuma
Spain	Min. of Social Affairs Cristina Alberdi Alonso
Suriname	First Lady Liesbeth Venetiaan
Swaziland	Min. for Home Affairs Prince Sobandla
Sweden	Deputy Prime Minister and Min. of Equality Mona Sahlin
Switzerland	Federal Councillor Ruth Dreifuss
Syria	Min. of Higher Education Salha Sanqar
Tajikistan	Deputy Prime Minister Bozqul Dodkhudoyeva
Trinidad and Tobago	Min. of Community Development, Culture, and Women's Affairs Joan Yuille-Williams
Turkey	Min. of State for Women's and Family Issues Aysel Baykal
Turkmenistan	Deputy Prime Minister Abad Rizayeva
Uganda	Vice-President and Minister for Gender and Community Development Specioza Wandira Kazidwe
Ukraine	Deputy Prime Minister of Humanitarian Affairs Ivan Kuras
United Kingdom	Under Secretary of State for Education and Employment Cheryl Gillan
Uruguay	Director of the National Institute for Women and the Family Alba Osores De Lanza
Uzbekistan	Deputy Prime Minister Dilbar Ghulomova
Venezuela	President of the National Women's Council Maria Bello Guzman
World Bank	President James D. Wolfensohn
Yemen	Min. of Social Security, Social Affairs and Labor Muhammad Abdallah al-Batani
Zambia	International Organizations Director Sheila Shankaya

31 August 1995

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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 012015

STATE FOR G/CS, IO AND EUR/WE
BEIJING FOR FWCW DELEGATION

FROM EMBASSY **VATICAN**/MESSAGE NO. 245/95

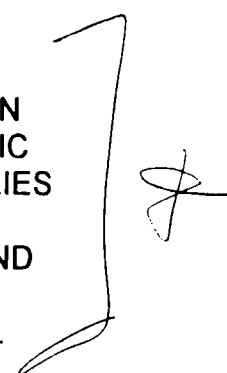
E.O.12356: N/A

TAGS: KWMN, PHUM, SOCI, PREL, PREF, UN, CH, VT
SUBJECT: POPE CALLS FOR SUCCESSFUL FWCW AND COMMITS
- CHURCH TO "SPECIAL OPTION" FOR GIRLS AND
- YOUNG WOMEN IN EDUCATION, BASIC HEALTH CARE

1. POPE JOHN PAUL II TOLD THE **VATICAN**'S DELEGATION TO THE FWCW AUG 29 THAT HE HOPED FOR A SUCCESSFUL CONFERENCE THAT WOULD "GUARANTEE ALL THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD 'EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE', THROUGH FULL RESPECT FOR THEIR EQUAL DIGNITY AND FOR THEIR INALIENABLE HUMAN RIGHTS, SO THAT THEY CAN MAKE THEIR FULL CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOOD OF SOCIETY." THE POPE ALSO RECALLED HIS RECENT PRONOUNCEMENTS FOCUSED HOLY SEE POSITIONS AND CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHING "ON THE DIGNITY, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMEN IN TODAY'S SOCIETY: IN THE FAMILY, IN THE WORKPLACE, IN PUBLIC LIFE."

2. RESPONDING TO THE UNSYG'S REQUEST FOR CONCRETE COMMITMENTS BY BEIJING PARTICIPANTS TO IMPROVE WOMEN'S CONDITIONS, THE POPE ANNOUNCED THAT THE **VATICAN** COMMITMENT WOULD TAKE THE FORM OF A SPECIAL "OPTION IN

COMMITMENT WOULD TAKE THE FORM OF A SPECIAL "OPTION IN FAVOR OF GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN" IN EDUCATION AND BASIC NUTRITION AND HEALTH CARE. THE POPE'S COMMITMENT IMPLIES CHANGES IN POLICY AND PRACTICE ON BEHALF OF GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN IN THE MANY THOUSANDS OF EDUCATIONAL AND BASIC HEALTH CARE FACILITIES THAT THE CHURCH OPERATES AROUND THE WORLD, ESPECIALLY IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.



4. THE COMPLETE TEXT OF THE POPE'S REMARKS IN THE ORIGINAL ENGLISH FOLLOWS:

(BEGIN TEXT OF POPE'S REMARKS)

AS YOU PREPARE TO LEAVE FOR BEIJING, I AM HAPPY TO MEET YOU, THE HEAD OF THE DELEGATION OF THE HOLY SEE TO THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN, AND THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE DELEGATION. THROUGH YOU, I EXTEND MY BEST WISHES AND PRAYERS TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE, TO THE PARTICIPANT NATIONS AND ORGANIZATIONS, AS WELL AS TO THE AUTHORITIES OF THE HOST COUNTRY, THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA.

MY WISHES ARE FOR THE SUCCESS OF THIS CONFERENCE IN ITS AIM TO GUARANTEE ALL THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD "EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE", THROUGH FULL RESPECT FOR THEIR EQUAL DIGNITY AND FOR THEIR INALIENABLE HUMAN RIGHTS, SO THAT THEY CAN MAKE THEIR FULL CONTRIBUTION TO THE GOOD OF SOCIETY.

OVER THE PAST MONTHS, ON VARIOUS OCCASIONS, I HAVE DRAWN ATTENTION TO THE POSITIONS OF THE HOLY SEE AND TO THE TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON THE DIGNITY, RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WOMEN IN TODAY'S SOCIETY: IN THE FAMILY, IN THE WORKPLACE, IN PUBLIC LIFE. I HAVE DRAWN INSPIRATION FROM THE LIFE AND WITNESS OF GREAT WOMEN WITHIN THE CHURCH THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES WHO HAVE BEEN PIONEERS WITHIN SOCIETY, AS MOTHERS, AS WORKERS, AS LEADERS IN THE SOCIAL AND POLITICAL FIELDS, IN THE CARING PROFESSIONS AND AS THINKERS AND SPIRITUAL LEADERS.

THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE UN HAS ASKED THE NATIONS PARTICIPATING IN THE BEIJING CONFERENCE TO ANNOUNCE CONCRETE COMMITMENTS FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF WOMEN. HAVING LOOKED AT THE VARIOUS NEEDS OF WOMEN IN TODAY'S WORLD, THE HOLY SEE WISHES TO MAKE A SPECIFIC OPTION REGARDING SUCH A COMMITMENT: AN OPTION IN FAVOR OF GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN. THEREFORE, I CALL ALL CATHOLIC CARING AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS TO ADOPT A CONCERTED AND PRIORITY STRATEGY DIRECTED TO GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN, ESPECIALLY TO THE POOREST, OVER THE COMING YEARS.

IT IS DISHEARTENING TO NOTE THAT IN TODAY'S WORLD, THE SIMPLE FACT OF BEING A FEMALE, RATHER THAN A MALE, CAN REDUCE THE LIKELIHOOD OF BEING BORN OR OF SURVIVING CHILDHOOD; IT CAN MEAN RECEIVING LESS ADEQUATE NUTRITION AND HEALTH CARE, AND IT CAN INCREASE THE CHANCE OF REMAINING ILLITERATE AND HAVING ONLY LIMITED ACCESS, OR NONE AT ALL, EVEN TO PRIMARY EDUCATION. INVESTMENT IN THE CARE AND EDUCATION OF GIRLS, AS AN EQUAL RIGHT, IS A FUNDAMENTAL KEY TO THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN. IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT TODAY:

-- I APPEAL TO ALL THE EDUCATIONAL SERVICES LINKED TO THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TO GUARANTEE EQUAL ACCESS FOR GIRLS, TO EDUCATE BOYS TO A SENSE OF WOMEN'S DIGNITY AND WORTH, TO PROVIDE MORE POSSIBILITIES FOR GIRLS WHO ARE DISADVANTAGED, AND TO IDENTIFY AND REMEDY THE REASONS WHY GIRLS DROP OUT OF EDUCATION AT AN EARLY STAGE;

-- I APPEAL TO THOSE INSTITUTIONS WHICH ARE INVOLVED IN HEALTH CARE, ESPECIALLY PRIMARY HEALTH CARE, TO MAKE IMPROVED BASIC HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION FOR GIRLS A UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 02 ROME 012015

STATE FOR G/CS, IO AND EUR/WE
BEIJING FOR FWCW DELEGATION

FROM EMBASSY **VATICAN**/MESSAGE NO. 245/95

E.O.12356: N/A

TAGS: KWMN, PHUM, SOCI, PREL, PREF, UN, CH, VT
SUBJECT: POPE CALLS FOR SUCCESSFUL FWCW AND COMMITS
-- CHURCH TO "SPECIAL OPTION" FOR GIRLS AND
-- YOUNG WOMEN IN EDUCATION, BASIC HEALTH CARE

HALLMARK OF THEIR SERVICE;

-- I APPEAL TO THE CHURCH'S CHARITABLE AND DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS TO GIVE PRIORITY IN THE ALLOCATION OF RESOURCES AND PERSONNEL TO THE SPECIAL NEEDS OF GIRLS;

-- I APPEAL TO CONGREGATIONS OF RELIGIOUS SISTERS, IN FIDELITY TO THE SPECIAL CHARISM AND MISSION GIVEN TO THEM BY THEIR FOUNDERS, TO IDENTIFY AND REACH OUT TO THOSE GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN WHO ARE MOST ON THE FRINGES OF SOCIETY, WHO HAVE SUFFERED MOST, PHYSICALLY AND MORALLY, WHO HAVE THE LEAST OPPORTUNITY. THEIR WORK OF HEALING, CARING AND EDUCATING, AND OF REACHING TO THE POOREST IS NEEDED IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD TODAY;

NEEDED IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD TODAY;

-- I APPEAL TO CATHOLIC UNIVERSITIES AND CENTERS OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO ENSURE THAT, IN THE PREPARATION OF FUTURE LEADERS IN SOCIETY, THEY ACQUIRE A SPECIAL SENSITIVITY TO THE CONCERNS OF YOUNG WOMEN;

-- I APPEAL TO WOMEN AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS WITHIN THE CHURCH AND ACTIVE IN SOCIETY TO ESTABLISH PATTERNS OF SOLIDARITY SO THAT THEIR LEADERSHIP AND GUIDANCE CAN BE PUT AT THE SERVICE OF GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN.

AS FOLLOWERS OF JESUS CHRIST, WHO IDENTIFIES HIMSELF WITH THE LEAST AMONG CHILDREN, WE CANNOT BE INSENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF DISADVANTAGED GIRLS, ESPECIALLY VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE AND A LACK OF RESPECT FOR THEIR DIGNITY.

IN THE SPIRIT OF THOSE GREAT CHRISTIAN WOMEN WHO HAVE ENLIGHTENED THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH THROUGHOUT THE CENTURIES AND WHO HAVE OFTEN CALLED THE CHURCH BACK TO HER ESSENTIAL MISSION AND SERVICE, I APPEAL TO THE WOMEN OF THE CHURCH TODAY TO ASSUME NEW FORMS OF LEADERSHIP IN SERVICE AND I APPEAL TO ALL THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CHURCH TO WELCOME THIS CONTRIBUTION OF WOMEN.

I APPEAL TO ALL MEN IN THE CHURCH TO UNDERGO, WHERE NECESSARY, A CHANGE OF HEART AND TO IMPLEMENT, AS A DEMAND OF THEIR FAITH, A POSITIVE VISION OF WOMEN. I ASK THEM TO BECOME MORE AND MORE AWARE OF THE DISADVANTAGES TO WHICH WOMEN, AND ESPECIALLY GIRLS, HAVE BEEN EXPOSED AND TO SEE WHERE THE ATTITUDE OF MEN, THEIR LACK OF SENSITIVITY OR LACK OF RESPONSIBILITY MAY BE AT THE ROOT.

ONCE AGAIN, THROUGH YOU, I WISH TO EXPRESS MY GOOD WISHES TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE BEIJING CONFERENCE AND TO ASSURE THEM OF MY SUPPORT, AS WELL AS THAT OF THE HOLY SEE AND THE INSTITUTIONS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, FOR A RENEWED COMMITMENT OF ALL TO THE GOOD OF THE WORLD'S WOMEN.

(END TEXT OF POPE'S REMARKS)

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DOCUMENT NO. AND TYPE	SUBJECT/TITLE	DATE	RESTRICTION
003. cable	re: Pragmatists vs. Purists in the Vatican Beijing Delegation (4 pages)	08/30/1995	P1/b(1)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
First Lady's Office
First Lady's Press Office - Lisa Caputo
OA/Box Number: 6059

FOLDER TITLE:

Briefing Book of the First Lady - U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women,
September 5-6, 1995 [binder] [3]

2012-0094-F
jp3674

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or
financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President
and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of
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C. Closed in accordance with restrictions contained in donor's deed
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2201(3).

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Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
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an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
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b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial
information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
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personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement
purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of
financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information
concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

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PRM/POP:E Marshall:EM
08/18/95 79718 SEPOP 001243 95 PRM 01068
G/CS:T LOAR

G/CS:M CURTIN, IO/ESA:K J MCGUIRE, L/HRR:D P STEWART,
EUR:K INGMANSON, G:D HARWOOD, USUN:S A GEORGE

PRIORITY ROME

Rome for Vatican; for usrep icao, nesco, fodag, unep

J. 12356: N/A

TAGS: KWMN, PHUM, SOCI, CH, UN, PREF

SUBJECT: UNITED NATIONS FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN
-- final request for demarche

REF: (A) 95 STATE 171929, (B) 95 STATE 158733

for USREP ICAO, NESCO, FODAG, UNEP

1. SUMMARY. DURING THE INFORMAL NEGOTIATING SESSION FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN (FWCW) IN NEW YORK, A SIDE DISCUSSION ON HEALTH ISSUES WAS CONDUCTED WITH MONSIGNOR MARTINSIDE. BOTH THE USG AND THE HOLY SEE REQUESTED ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION OR IDEAS FOR REMOVING BRACKETS BE EXCHANGED PRIOR TO ARRIVING IN BEIJING. THIS CABLE OUTLINES SEVERAL USG SUGGESTIONS ON HOW TO REMOVE BRACKETS IN THE HEALTH SECTION OF THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION (PFA) FOR THE FWCW. POST IS REQUESTED TO USE THIS GUIDANCE IN DISCUSSING HEALTH ISSUES WITH HOLY SEE REPRESENTATIVES. PARAGRAPH 16 OF S MESSAGE INCLUDES KEY POINTS FOR USE AS AN AIDE OIRE. END SUMMARY.

ACTION REQUESTED

2. EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO APPROACH HOST GOVERNMENTS AND

USE THE TALKING POINTS AT PARAGRAPH 7 TO ELICIT THE GOVERNMENT'S THINKING ON THE ISSUES IN THE PLATFORM FOR ACTION WHICH REMAIN TO BE NEGOTIATED. WE ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN FINDING AREAS OF COMMON AGREEMENT. PLEASE SLUG CABLE FOR G/CS AND INCLUDE USUN NEW YORK AND EMBASSY BEIJING AS ADDRESSEES. PLEASE ALSO REMEMBER TO USE THE KWMN TAG.

HEALTH

3. AS DESCRIBED REFTTEL B, THE PRIMARY USG OBJECTIVE IS TO PROMOTE THE ADVANCEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN, AND TO REAFFIRM AND BUILD ON THE COMMITMENTS MADE AT OTHER IMPORTANT UN CONFERENCES. WOMEN PLAYED VITAL, PARTICIPATORY ROLES IN THESE CONFERENCES, AND MANY ISSUES OF CONCERN TO WOMEN WERE ADDRESSED AT THESE CONFERENCES. ENSURING THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN IN EVERY SOCIETY IS ESSENTIAL TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.

4. ISSUES RELATED TO HEALTH ARE THE LEAST NEGOTIATED BECAUSE THEY WERE PUSHED TO THE END OF THE MARCH PREPCOM AND WERE NOT ADDRESSED DURING THE SUMMER INFORMALS. WE WERE SUCCESSFUL, HOWEVER, IN EXPANDING THE SECTION TO ADDRESS A LIFESPAN APPROACH TO WOMEN'S HEALTH AS WELL AS A WIDE RANGE OF HEALTH ISSUES. THE LANGUAGE IN BRACKETS IS PRIMARILY CONSENSUS LANGUAGE AGREED TO IN 1994 AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT (ICPD). DURING THE PREPCOM, IT SEEMED THAT GENERALLY THE G-77 WAS STANDING BEHIND THE AGREEMENTS ON ISSUES SUCH AS PRODUCTIVE AND SEXUAL HEALTH, REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, SAFE ABORTION AND CONDOMS, BUT THE HANDFUL OF COUNTRIES WHICH TOOK RESERVATIONS AT THE ICPD HAVE NOT YET BEEN WILLING TO ACCEPT THE LANGUAGE FOR THE FWCW. THE UNITED STATES DOES NOT INTEND TO PUSH FOR LANGUAGE ON WHICH WE WERE UNABLE TO AGREE AT THE ICPD, BUT PLACES A HIGH PRIORITY ON REAFFIRMING ITS COMMITMENT TO THE AGREEMENTS ACHIEVED AT THE ICPD, MANY OF WHICH ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT.

5. AT THE ICPD, A GREAT DEAL OF TIME WAS SPENT NEGOTIATING BROADLY ACCEPTED LANGUAGE ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT WITH ADOLESCENT HEALTH SERVICES. UNFORTUNATELY, THAT LANGUAGE IS NOT INCLUDED IN THE DRAFT PFA, AND INSTEAD MORE THAN 20 REFERENCES USING NON-CONSENSUS LANGUAGE ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT (SOME OF WHICH ARE ENTIRELY ILL-PLACED) ARE INCLUDED IN THE DRAFT PLATFORM. WE WOULD RECOMMEND THE INCLUSION OF THE ICPD CONSENSUS PARAGRAPH 7.45 IN THE SECTION ON HEALTH, AND REMOVING THE ADDITIONAL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT REFERENCES THAT ARE IN BRACKETS. FOR YOUR INFORMATION, THE ICPD LANGUAGE FOLLOWS:

"RECOGNIZING THE RIGHTS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS AND OTHER PERSONS LEGALLY RESPONSIBLE FOR ADOLESCENTS TO PROVIDE, IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE LIVING CAPACITIES OF THE ADOLESCENT, APPROPRIATE DIRECTION AND GUIDANCE IN SEXUAL AND REPRODUCTIVE MATTERS, COUNTRIES MUST ENSURE THAT PROGRAMS AND ATTITUDES OF HEALTH-CARE PROVIDERS DO NOT RESTRICT THE ACCESS OF ADOLESCENTS TO APPROPRIATE SERVICES AND THE INFORMATION THEY NEED, INCLUDING ON SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED DISEASES AND SEXUAL ABUSE. IN DOING SO, AND IN ORDER TO,

INTER ALIA, ADDRESS SEXUAL ABUSE, THESE SERVICES MUST SAFEGUARD THE RIGHTS OF ADOLESCENTS TO PRIVACY, CONFIDENTIALITY, RESPECT AND INFORMED CONSENT, RESPECTING CULTURAL VALUES AND RELIGIOUS BELIEFS. IN THIS CONTEXT, COUNTRIES, SHOULD, WHERE APPROPRIATE, REMOVE LEGAL, REGULATORY AND SOCIAL BARRIERS TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH INFORMATION AND CARE FOR ADOLESCENTS."

6. THE US SUPPORTS INCLUDING LANGUAGE OPPOSING COERCIVE REPRODUCTIVE PRACTICES, SUCH AS FORCED STERILIZATION OR FORCED ABORTION AND OBTRUSIVE MEDICAL INTERVENTIONS. THE DRAFT PLATFORM CURRENTLY INCLUDES THREE VERSIONS OF PARAGRAPH 107H, WHICH REFERS TO THESE ISSUES. THE US CAN ACCEPT EITHER OF THE FIRST TWO VERSIONS, BUT FEELS THAT THE THIRD VERSION, WHICH STATES THAT PHYSICIANS MUST BE PRESENT ANY TIME CONTRACEPTIVE DEVICES ARE PRESCRIBED AND MUST PROVIDE INFORMATION ON ONLY NEGATIVE SIDE EFFECTS AND NOT THE BENEFITS OF MEDICATION, IS UNREALISTIC AND INAPPROPRIATE.

TALKING POINTS

7. POSTS ARE ASKED TO DRAW ON THE ABOVE BACKGROUND INFORMATION AND TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING SPECIFIC POINTS. ANY INFORMATION ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS OR OTHER MATTERS OF CONCERN WHICH YOU CAN OBTAIN FROM THE HOST COUNTRY WILL GREATLY FACILITATE THE NEGOTIATIONS IN BEIJING.

- WE BELIEVE THAT WE MADE PROGRESS AT THE MARCH PREPCOM ADDRESSING A BROAD SET OF ISSUES RELEVANT TO WOMEN'S HEALTH. WE ARE INTERESTED IN KNOWING, HOWEVER, IF THERE ARE ISSUES THAT YOU BELIEVE HAVE NOT RECEIVED PROPER ATTENTION AND, IF SO, IF YOU HAVE PLANS TO TRY TO AMEND THE DRAFT PLATFORM TO REFLECT THOSE VIEWS.

-- THE US IS COMMITTED TO REAFFIRMING THE AGREEMENTS ACHIEVED AT THE ICPD, MANY OF WHICH ARE FUNDAMENTAL TO WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT. WE HOPE YOU WILL SUPPORT UNBRACKETING OF CURRENTLY BRACKETED ICPD LANGUAGE.

-- LANGUAGE IN BRACKETS WHICH SHOULD BE ACCEPTABLE BASED ON CONSENSUS LANGUAGE (AGREED IN THE PAST) RELATED TO REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH, SEXUAL HEALTH, REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS, UNSAFE ABORTION, CONDOMS AND OTHER CONTRACEPTIVES. WHILE WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE HOLY SEE TOOK RESERVATIONS ON THESE ISSUES DURING THE ICPD, WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT THE LIMITED TIME IN BEIJING WILL NOT BE DIVERTED TO RENEGOTIATING THE AGREEMENTS REACHED IN CAIRO, WHICH REPRESENTED THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY'S BEST EFFORT ON CONSENSUS.

-- THE CHAPEAU TO CHAPTER TWO RELATED TO IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PFA, SOVEREIGNTY, RELIGIOUS AND ETHICAL VALUES AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF THE ICPD PROGRAM OF ACTION IS VITALLY IMPORTANT TO A NUMBER OF COUNTRIES. WE BELIEVE THAT THAT CT LANGUAGE SHOULD BE USED IN PARAGRAPH 9 OF THE FWCW PFA.

-- ADDITIONAL NEGOTIATIONS ARE REQUIRED TO DETERMINE HOW TO REFER TO THE DOCUMENT FROM THE ICPD. WE WERE ENCOURAGED BY THE G-77 FORMULATION "AS AGREED IN THE REPORT OF THE ICPD," WHICH ENSURES THE INCLUSION OF THE

RESERVATIONS AND DECLARATIONS. WE ARE INTERESTED IN KNOWING THE PREFERRED LANGUAGE OF THE HOLY SEE AND WHERE THIS REFERENCE IS BEST INCLUDED.

-- THE RESTATING OF SEVERAL ISSUES FROM THE ICPD ARE RELEVANT TO THE PFA, AND HELP TO PROVIDE THE FULL PICTURE OF HEALTH CARE NEEDS OF WOMEN. THE PFA IS NOW SOMEWHAT OF A "COLLAGE" OF NEW IDEAS AND "PHOTOCOPIES" OF RELEVANT PREVIOUS DOCUMENTS. THIS APPROACH SEEMS TO BE ADEQUATELY BALANCED, AND ARE INTERESTED TO LEARN IF THE HOLY SEE DESIRES A DIFFERENT BALANCE.

-- THE US SUPPORTS USING ICPD LANGUAGE ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT WITH ADOLESCENT HEALTH SERVICES. WE WOULD RECOMMEND THE INCLUSION OF THE CAREFULLY AGREED ICPD CONSENSUS LANGUAGE 7.45 IN THE SECTION ON HEALTH, AND REMOVING THE ADDITIONAL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT REFERENCES THAT ARE IN BRACKETS. IF THIS DOES NOT SEEM APPROPRIATE, WE ARE INTERESTED IN BETTER UNDERSTANDING THE INTENTION OF INCLUDING THE OTHER LANGUAGE, "RECOGNIZING THE RIGHTS, DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS, CONSISTENT WITH THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD," TO BETTER DETERMINE HOW TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE.

-- THE USG HAS CONSIDERED POINTS MADE BY MOSIGNOR MARTIN REGARDING THE USE OF "PRENATAL SEX SELECTION" AND THE NEED TO ADDRESS THE CURRENT AND FUTURE CAPABILITIES OF CREATING SPECIFIC SEXES IN LABORATORIES. UPON FURTHER REFLECTION, THE USG DOES BELIEVE THAT THE TERM "PRENATAL SEX SELECTION" BEST DESCRIBES THE ACTIVITIES WHICH WE ARE TRYING TO ADDRESS. OUR POSITION REMAINS, HOWEVER, THAT SUCH BROADER SOCIAL ISSUES MUST BE ADDRESSED TO IMPROVE THE PERCEPTION OF GIRLS SO THAT THESE PRACTICES ARE NO LONGER UNDERTAKEN.

-- WE AGREE THAT THE REFERENCES TO FORCED PREGNANCY IN SITUATIONS OF VIOLENCE CAN BE UNBRACKETED BY USING THE EXACT VIENNA LANGUAGE IN PARAGRAPH 13 OF THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK.

-- REGARDING THE FAMILY, WE WOULD LIKE TO SEE PARAGRAPH 30, OR ANOTHER RELEVANT PARAGRAPH IN THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK, INCLUDE LANGUAGE FROM THE ICPD PRINCIPLE 9 AND THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT DECLARATION 26H. THIS SHOULD ENABLE EASY RESOLUTION OF ADDITIONAL REFERENCES TO FAMILIES IN THE DOCUMENT.

-- REGARDING PARAGRAPH 91, "THE MAJOR" COULD BE CHANGED TO "A MAJOR".

-- REGARDING PARAGRAPH 95, WE WOULD SUGGEST THAT THE WORD "AND" BE INSERTED BETWEEN "UNPROTECTED" AND "PREMATURE" AND REMOVE THE BRACKETS.

-- THE US SUPPORTS LANGUAGE CONDEMNING COERCIVE PRACTICES SUCH AS FORCED ABORTION OR FORCED STERILIZATION, AND VIOLATING CONSENT REGARDING CONTRACEPTIVES. WE COULD ADOPT EITHER OF THE FIRST TWO VERSIONS OF PARAGRAPH 107H CURRENTLY IN THE PLATFORM.

-- WE ARE CONTACTING THE RELEVANT USG LAWYERS REGARDING THE "CONSCIENCE CLAUSE" LANGUAGE TO EXPLORE POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVES. HOWEVER, REFERENCES TO "NOT REFERRING FOR SERVICES" IS IN VIOLATION OF US LAW AND CANNOT BE

ACCEPTED.

-- A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE FOR 108P IS "ENSURE THAT WOMEN'S HEALTH IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF MEDICAL SCHOOL CURRICULA AND OTHER HEALTH CARE TRAINING."

ON PARAGRAPH 108Q, THE BRACKETS AROUND "CHILDREN" SHOULD BE DROPPED AS THEY SHOULD BE PROTECTED FROM ABUSE.

-- A POSSIBLE ALTERNATIVE FOR 109I IS "GIVE ALL WOMEN AND HEALTH CARE WORKERS ALL THE ACCURATE INFORMATION ABOUT HIV/AIDS AND OTHER STDs AND PREGNANCY AND THE IMPLICATIONS FOR THE BABY, INCLUDING BREASTFEEDING, AND GIVE THEM THE WHO RECOMMENDATIONS ON HIV/AIDS AND BREASTFEEDING."

-- WE HOPE THAT REFERENCES TO EARLY MARRIAGE WILL REMAIN AS SUCH, WITHOUT THE INCLUSION OF "FORCED"

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Backgrounder

Summary of Positions of Holy See on Issues Likely to Arise in Beijing

(*This factsheet is arranged according to the three themes of the Beijing Conference: Equality, Development and Peace; it is a compilation of statements made by representatives from the Holy See at conferences preceding Beijing about matters likely to arise in Beijing. The statements have been arranged under topical headings in order to assist the press in understanding Holy See positions. It is not an official position paper of the Holy See).

EQUALITY

Women's Human Dignity

Woman's dignity derives from their creation in the image and likeness of God. (John Paul II, Letter to Women). Their relationship with men is one of complementarity, not sameness. Their human rights are an inalienable and integral part of universal human rights.

Women ought to have the opportunity for full and equal participation in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life at all levels.

There is needed a campaign for the promotion of women, beginning with a universal recognition of the dignity of women. The Church admires women who have fought for women's rights, even "at a time when this was considered...the sign of a lack of femininity, even a sin!" ((Letter to Women, John Paul II).

The Church condemns cultural forces which encourage men to see women as mere objects of pleasure or reproductive devices, instead of as human beings with innate dignity (Holy See press release, 22Aug 24).

Political Empowerment

The Church recognizes the right of women everywhere to full equality in public life and supports the use of legislative authority to promote such equality. It believes that the contribution of a female voice to the public debate, particularly as a link between the political and private spheres of life, not only will empower women, but will aid the development of more balanced, more humane, social, economic and political policies as well.

Societies should safeguard for women both the opportunities to advance in the workplace and women's vocations as mothers and educators. (Statement of Archbishop Martino at the 3rd Committee of the 49th Session of the UN General Assembly).

Economic Empowerment

There is an urgent need for real economic equality such as equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, and fairness in career advancements. The Church recommends larger portions of international and domestic aid budgets for fostering productive activities of low-income and poor populations. (Preparatory Meeting to fourth World Conference on Women, 11/94).

Church humanitarian agencies have witnessed first-hand how the lives of rural women, and their families and communities can be transformed with basic assistance, such as local self-sustaining economic initiatives, credit assistance and even small improvements in a community's infrastructure. The Church strongly supports allocating larger portions of international aid and domestic budgets to such projects. (Archbishop Martino, 3rd Committee of the 49th Session of the UN General Assembly).

Mass Media

The Church supports an "international code of ethics" in the media, to protect the rights and dignity of women. (Archbishop Renato Martino, Statement at Third Committee of 49th Session before UN General Assembly, 12/94).

Environmental Justice

Gender perspective in policy-setting
Environmental injustices (especially regarding rural poor)
Mass media attention to women

Areas likely to Engender Controversy:

"Reproductive Health"

Abortion proponents are seeking to include a right to abortion within this and related language by expanding language agreed to in Cairo, or by refusing to use Cairo language in its entirety or within context.

Sexual Rights

This is a concept that was debated and rejected in Cairo; some would apply this also to children and adolescents, and others wish to affirm a right to sexual orientation.

Family/Motherhood

Some wish to avoid mentioning in the document the importance and value of family or motherhood for women.

Conscience Protection for Health Care Providers

Some refuse to recognize that health care providers should not be required to provide and refer for those services to which they object on the basis of religious belief or moral convictions.

Forced Impregnation

This term has been used before in the very specific context of war and conflict situations. It appears that the draft Program of Action for Beijing is trying to extend the term to other situations and circumstances which may be a cause for concern.

General Information -- Beijing Conference (Fourth World Conf. on Women)

When: 4-15 September 1995

Where: Beijing, China

Head: Mrs. Gertrude Mongella from Tanzania (Secretary-General)

History:

First Conference--Mexico City, 1975

- adopted Plan of Action-led to UN declaration of UN Decade for Women (1976-1985)
- led to 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
- Holy See did not join the consensus; it expressed "reservations" over abortion-rights language and highly individualistic view of sexuality; but did note support for broad aspirations for equality, development and peace

Second Conference--Copenhagen, Denmark, 1980

- adopted "Program of action"
- emphasis on education, employment, health
- Holy See did not join consensus, noting document's insufficient valuation of the domestic work of women, flawed perspective on the family, and references to family planning which could lead to the violations of human dignity and responsible parenthood.

Third Conference--Nairobi, Kenya, 1985

- adopted Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000
- Strategies offered framework for national, regional, int'l effort for empowerment, human rights
- 1990 evaluation of Strategies revealed loss of momentum, need for Fourth Conf.
- Holy See did join the consensus and also registered reservations on paragraphs 29 and 156-59 concerning control of fertility, and family planning

Recent History of Related Conferences:

International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD)--Cairo, 1994

- adopted "Program of Action"
- focused on population growth as key connection to underdevelopment and injustice, advocating greater access to contraception and abortion in health care and family planning programs
- Holy See joined in a partial consensus but also refused to associate itself with chapters 7 and 8 of the document on the grounds that they tended to: (1) represent abortion as part of population policy and maternal health care; (2) sanction and promote artificial contraception; (3) sanction extramarital sex, particularly that between adolescents; general reservations were also taken on chapters 11-16.

World Summit on Social Development (WSSD)--Copenhagen, 1995

- summit with over 170 nations represented in delegations, including Holy See delegation, with relevance to Beijing in treatment of poverty, underdevelopment, and the special burdens on women
- 3 main goals: elimination of poverty, job creation, inclusion of peoples of all nations
- 2 Vatican proposals regarding women--(1) governments to include in GNP statistics of the value of unremunerated work performed by women at home; and (2) worldwide commitment to equal access to health care and education for women and young girls (protecting human dignity, esp. women and girls from objectification and abuse)
- Holy See joined the consensus on the document which recognizes parental rights in overseeing the sex education and health services of their children.

Participants:

UN organizations

Governments
(as represented by
delegates)

Non-Governmental Orgzns.

Some Accredited Pro-Life NGOs:

Alianza Latinoamericana para la Fam.

American Life League

Catholic League

Cath. Un. for Faith (CUF)
Family Res Council
Mass Citizens for Life
Nat. Inst. of Womanhood
The Rutherford Institute

Ecum. Coal on Women and Soc	
Fam. of Americas Found.	Feminists for Life
NCCB - USCC	Nat R to Life Comm.
Real Women of Canada	The Rockford Institute
Value of Life Comm	Women for Faith & Fam

Mission Statement of Draft Document for Beijing Conf. '95:

1. "The removal of all obstacles to women's active participation in all spheres of public and private life through a full and equal share in economic, social, cultural and political decision-making. This means also establishing the principle of shared power and responsibility between women and men at home, in the workplace, and in the wider national and international communities."
2. "To promote and protect [the full enjoyment of all universal] all human rights and the fundamental freedoms of all women throughout their life cycle."
3. "...[adequate] [new and additional]resources for the implementation of the agreements made; ...equal participation of women and men in all national, regional and international bodies and policy-making processes; and the establishment or strengthening of mechanisms at all levels for accountability to the world's women."

Outcome Sought:

Adoption of a Plan of Action for 1995 - 2005

Process:

- Regional meetings in 1994-95--provide input to development of Program of Action document
- PrepComm (Spring, 95) -all governments invited to discuss and edit Program of Action
- Concepts, phraseology, etc. not agreed upon at final PrepComm are placed in square brackets "[]".
- At the Conference in Beijing, delegates will resolve bracketed language; delegates will pursue "consensus" on entire document
- A delegation may opt out of the consensus, or be counted as part of the consensus but "reserve" its consent from a portion, or portions, of the document.

Status of the Final Document:

Carries no enforcement mechanism. However, it becomes a document by which nations assess their own progress or by which this progress can be or is assessed by others.

"Priority Themes":

Equality
Development
Peace

Subthemes in Draft Program of Action:

Human Rights
Developing countries--disproportionate impact on women of economic crisis, debt burden, poverty
Violence against women, including domestic violence, sexual harassment, armed conflict, victims of war
Migration and internal displacement
Political empowerment for women
Other public sphere empowerment--voice in economic & social policies, anti-poverty initiatives
Attitudinal changes
Health care, reproductive health
Remuneration for duties inside home
Family disintegration, female headed households
Reproductive Rights
Sexual Rights

The Church supports an increased emphasis on environmental justice. In particular, it supports increased efforts aimed at mitigating, curbing and preventing current levels of resource depletion, deforestation, pollution, war and wasteful consumption. Care should be taken in particular to ensure that the selection of sites for toxic wastes does not unjustly burden the poor, who already face disproportionate environmental hazards.

Given women's very direct bond with future generations, women should play an important role in developing an "environmental ethic."

Family Role

The family is the basic unit of society. The Church recognizes the value of motherhood in the lives of women and in the life of their communities, and sees efforts to demean this role as "false liberation" and disrespectful of women. (Vienna Regional Preparatory Meeting, 1994). The Church favors financial compensation for this role, declaring that a "mother's work in the home must be recognized and respected." (Holy See Report in Preparation for Beijing). Also advocated is a "family wage" that would provide a decent standard of living for a family, so that families would not require two full-time incomes, and one parent could choose to spend time raising children.

DEVELOPMENT

Poverty

Poverty is a formidable obstacle to women's full participation in social, economic and political life. Poverty also contributes to the problems of trafficking of women and girls, mistreatment and abuse of migrant women workers and domestic violence

Some erroneously believe that the solution to poverty is simply preventing the conception of more children or aborting already-conceived children. The Holy See recognizes that the solutions to poverty are far more complex and wide-ranging. Any solutions that address poverty, must remember that the "human being is at the center of sustainable development." (Statement of Archbishop Tauran, 5/95) The Church holds that the keys to development lie in economic reform, empowerment, peace and justice -- not easier access to abortion and contraception.

Health Care

The Church recognizes that access to health care is essential to women's well-being and to the possibility of their participating in public life or living their private life with dignity. It also recognizes that, in many parts of the world women and girls do not have access even to basic health care. The Church is quite active, internationally, in providing low cost or free health care for women, especially rural women. The Church stands strongly for "reproductive health," when such care focuses on both mother and child, and includes "efforts to eliminate sexual violence, to remove other abuses and mutilations, especially of women." (Msgr. Martin, PrepComm III statement, NYC, April 94). Health care for women should include extensive pre- and post-natal care, as well as instruction in natural family planning techniques (the latter involving male responsibility as well). The Church is concerned that the current draft of the Beijing document focuses on sexually related health problems at the expense of other health problems that afflict a vastly larger number of women.

Sexual Behavior - The Church teaches that sex is a holy union between a man and a woman in marriage, open to the miracle of life. In contrast to current trends, more attention needs to be given to teaching self-restraint and personal responsibility. Current efforts to debase the importance of this sexual union, as well as the importance of the family as the basis for moral education, are to be challenged. "It is really a question of behaviour that distorts the essential meaning of human sexuality, preventing it from being put at the service of the person, of communion and of life" (Pope John Paul II, before the Angelus, 26 June 94).

Literacy

The Church urges countries to fight female illiteracy by allocating a greater proportion of their domestic and international budgets to education, rather than to military spending or "security" measures. At a regional conference in Africa in preparation for Beijing, a representative for the Holy See stated: "At a time when Africa's women are confronted with high rates of female illiteracy, disease and premature mortality, some countries are spending more on their military sector than on the health and education sectors combined." (11/94).

Education

Education is a fundamental requirement for the true empowerment of women. The Church is committed to educating women around the world to help themselves and their families. In many countries, the Church is the single largest private educator of girls. "The Catholic Church . . . has experienced the positive impact that education can have not only on the well-being of women, but also on the family, community, and country." (Representative of the Holy See, Senegal Conference, 11/94).

PEACE

Generally - The advancement of women will further peace and the achievement of peace will advance women.

Arms Spending and Buildup

There is an excessive transfer and accumulation of conventional arms. Even when women are confronted with high rates of female illiteracy, disease and premature mortality, some countries spend more on their military sector than on health and education combined. (Representative of the Holy See, Fifth African Regional Conference on Women in Dakar, Senegal 11/ 94).

Violence Against Women

The Church deplores the level of violence and abuse facing women, and particularly that facing the girl-child. It condemns the "hedonistic and commercial culture which encourages the systematic exploitation of sexuality" (John Paul II, Letter to Women), sometimes through advertising. Efforts must be taken to eradicate domestic violence, child labor, son preference, female mutilation, prostitution and pornography. Such conditions are frustrated by deplorable levels of poverty and underdevelopment (John Paul II, World Day of Peace, 1/ 95). Effective measures against violence against women include improving their economic situations as well as reeducating men and cultures which allow, and even foster, such treatment.

Armed Conflict -- Effects

Today's society faces deadly ethnic conflict. Given the present nature of such warfare, noncombatants, particularly women and children, are most vulnerable to the effects of civil strife. Increased efforts need to be made to shelter these women and families. The Church continues to condemn modern methods of warfare, ethnic cleansing, and current levels of arms accumulation and transfer, and calls for nonviolent means to the ends of peace and justice.

Migrants/Refugees

The Church gives priority to female refugees displaced by civil strife or coercive political policies. International organizations and countries need to place more emphasis on the needs of this migrant population, a growing reality in light of global situations facing all corners of the globe. Equally important are measures allowing families to reunite with those members forced to flee. "It is also necessary to set up means to facilitate women's integration and cultural and professional training, as well as a fair share of the social benefits, such as the provision of housing, schooling for children, and adequate tax reductions." (John Paul II, Migration Day, 8/ 94).

Summary of *Letter to Women*
from His Holiness Pope John Paul II
June 29, 1995

1. Goals of the document

- Reflect on the problems and prospects of women in our time
- Focus on the dignity and rights of women, as seen in the light of Scripture
- In anticipation of the Fourth World Conference on Women, in Beijing

2. Thank you to women

- To mothers, wives, daughters, sisters, and consecrated
- To women who work:

“You are present and active in every area of life--social, economic, cultural, artistic and political. In this way you make an indispensable contribution to the growth of a culture which unites reason and feeling, to a model of life ever open to the sense of ‘mystery’, to the establishment of economic and political structures ever more worthy of humanity.” (Para. 2)

3. Gospel message can transform historically conditioned view of women’s dignity

- Societal views of women have been and are obstacles to the progress of women
- Church apologizes:

“And if objective blame, especially in particular historical contexts, has belonged to not just a few members of the Church, for this I am truly sorry.” (Para. 3)
- History has failed to “register” the scope of women’s achievements
- Despite cultural norms, Jesus respected women’s dignity by being open and respectful:

“When it comes to setting women free from every kind of exploitation and domination, the Gospel contains an ever relevant message which goes back to the *attitude of Jesus Christ himself*. Transcending the established norms of his own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. In this way he honoured the dignity which women have always possessed according to God’s plan and in his love.” (Para. 3)

4. Social, political and economic rights

- Recognizes that wives and mothers suffer discrimination
- Supports equality with regard to pay and career advancement:

“As far as personal rights are concerned, there is an urgent need to achieve *real equality* in every area: equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with regard to family rights and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic State” (Para. 4)

5. Condemns sexual violence against women

- Condemns “hedonistic and commercial culture which encourages the systematic exploitation of sexuality”
- Praises women who continue with a pregnancy resulting from rape:

“...[G]reat appreciation must be shown to those women who, with a heroic love

for the child they have conceived, proceed with a pregnancy resulting from the injustice of rape.” (Para. 5)

- Addresses others’ culpability in abortion:

“In these cases the choice to have an abortion always remains a grave sin. But before being something to blame on the woman, it is a crime for which guilt needs to be attributed to men and to the complicity of the general social environment.” (Para. 5)

6. Appeals for respect for women:

“Here I cannot fail to express my admiration for those women...who have devoted [themselves] to...fighting for [women’s] basic social, economic, and political rights,...at a time when this was considered...the sign of a lack of femininity...!” (Para. 6)

- More is needed than the condemnation of discrimination and injustices
- Need for “an effective and intelligent campaign for the promotion of women”

7. The dignity and mission of women as described in Genesis

- Dignity derives from creation “in the image and likeness of God” (Gen 1:26)
- Woman’s mission and being is complementary to man’s:
“Womanhood expresses the ‘human’ as much as manhood does, but in a different and complementary way.” (Para. 7)

8. Progress

- More important to measure according to the social and ethical dimension, which women influence through their role in the family, than by scientific and technical standards
- Special appreciation for women involved in areas of education and health care

9. Mary as a model

- Vocation as wife and mother
- At the service of God and others:
“*For her, ‘to reign’ is to serve! Her service is ‘to reign’!*”(italics original)

10. Diversity of roles is not prejudicial to women, if it is not arbitrary

- All members of the Church “share equally in the dignity proper to the ‘common priesthood’ based on Baptism” (Para. 11)
- The ministerial priesthood is only male as a sign pointing to Christ the Bridegroom:
“These role distinctions should not be viewed in accordance with the criteria of functionality typical in human societies. Rather they must be understood according to the particular criteria of the sacramental economy, i.e. the economy of ‘signs’ which God freely chooses in order to become present in the midst of humanity.” (Para. 11)
- “...[T]he ministerial priesthood, according to Christ’s plan, ‘is an expression not of domination but of service’(quoting from Holy Thursday Letter, No. 7)” (Para. 11)
- Praises women in the Church who are martyrs, saints, mystics, and Doctors of the Church

11. Expresses hope that the Beijing Conference will bring out the “full truth about women” (Para. 12)

A Profile of the Catholic Church in the United States and Worldwide 1994*

	<u>United States</u>	<u>International</u>
Adult Catholic Baptisms	73,332	2,029,952
Catholic Schools	<u>Number of Students¹</u>	<u>Number of Students</u>
Elementary	2,023,976	24,312,914
Secondary	652,054	12,477,229
Post Secondary	656,905	2,935,668 ²
Non-Residential Schools for the Disabled	11,241	
Catholic Health Care	<u>Number of US Patients</u>	<u>Number of Facilities</u>
Hospitals	53,856,637	605
Health Care Centers	2,002,142	5,478
		14,806 ³
Catholic Child Care	<u>Number of US Children</u>	<u>Number of Facilities</u>
Day Care	124,718	1,003
Orphanages	75,277	9,293 ⁴
		7,102
Catholic Social Services	<u>Individuals Assisted</u>	
Special Centers for Social Services	18,344,087	
Catholic Charities USA	12,000,000 (1991 statistics)	
Society of St. Vincent de Paul	(\$160,000,000 in assistance to the poor in 1990-91 fiscal year)	
Overseas Missionaries	5,467 (1992 statistics)	2,950 ⁵

*Unless otherwise noted, US figures are from The Official Catholic Directory 1995 in which case they include US territories and reflect statistics from 1994. The International figures, which reflect 1992, as well as US figures from 1990-1992 are from the 1995 Catholic Almanac.

¹These Elementary and High School figures are the total of diocesan, parish, and private Catholic schools. ²Includes students in Higher Institutions, Universities for Ecclesiastical Studies, and other Universities. ³Referred to as Dispensaries. ⁴Referred to as Nurseries. ⁵Reflects only Lay Missionaries.

FACT SHEET

THE "GENDER GAP" IN ABORTION VIEWS

Over the past twenty years, numerous public opinion polls have shown a "gender gap" on abortion: Women are more strongly opposed to abortion than men, and more in favor of protective legislation for the unborn. Some recent examples:

- The Tarrance Group's A Survey of Voter Attitudes in the United States of May 1995 indicates that 47% of women (compared to 44% of men) believe that abortion should be "illegal and prohibited under all circumstances" or "illegal except in cases such as rape, incest or to save the life of the mother".

- CBS/ New York Times poll of March 1993 asked, "Should abortion for women who want it be covered as part of a basic health care plan or should it be paid for directly by the women who want it?" Only 22% of women (compared to 24% of men) think abortion should be covered.

- Gallup poll published in the June 1992 Life magazine: 46% of women (compared to 54% of men) thought abortion should be legal "always" or "in most circumstances." 52% of women (but only 44% of men) thought it should be legal "never" or "in only a few specific circumstances." 74% of women (compared to 70% of men) favored requiring parental consent for minors' abortions.

- Gallup poll of January 1992 (published in USA Today, 1/23/92) asked registered voters if they would be "more likely" or "less likely" to vote for a presidential candidate "who favors making abortion illegal, except in cases of rape, incest or when the mother's life is in danger." Men: 42% more likely, 48% less likely. Women: 45% more likely, 45% less likely.

- 73% of women (compared to 65% of men) answered yes to the question, "Should the lives of unborn babies be protected?" (Wirthlin poll, October 1989)

- The Wirthlin poll of July 1990 asked: "At what point do you personally feel that the unborn's right to live outweighs the right of a woman to choose whether she wants to have an abortion?" 44% of women (compared to 38% of men) said this occurs "at the moment of conception"; only 9% of women (compared to 14% of men) said it occurs at "the moment of birth".

- A 1983 Los Angeles Times poll concluded that 47% of women (compared to 51% of men) favor the general availability of abortion. In this same poll, 28% of women said the NOW speaks for most American women; 56% said it speaks only for a "small minority." ("Poll: 'Gender Gap' Not Based on Sexual Issues," Philadelphia Inquirer, Sept. 27, 1983)

- The gender gap on abortion goes back twenty years. See: "Women Lead Opposition to Abortion," Washington Evening Star and Daily News, April 17, 1973 (citing the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research).

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Statement by
Vatican spokesman
Joaquin Navarro Valls

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BRIEFING HELD TODAY ON UN CONFERENCE ON WOMEN IN BEIJING

VATICAN CITY, JUN 20, 1995 (VIS) - Holy See Press Office Director Joaquin Navarro-Valls this morning held the first briefing on the UN-sponsored 4th World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing from September 4-15. He spoke on the Draft Platform for Action and outlined the themes that will be discussed. Following are excerpts from the briefing:

"This 4th conference will deal with topics such as dignity, the rights and the roles of women in every aspect of social life, equality and human development. The point of departure for every other consideration for the Holy See is the human dignity of women, which is the foundation for the concept of universal human rights recognized by the United Nations Charter."

"The document that will be discussed in Beijing - 'Proposals for Consideration in the Preparation of a Draft Declaration and the Draft Platform for Action' - favors the operative aspects of the diverse topics. The Holy See shares this definition: the dignity of women in too many social and geographical contexts is far from being fully recognized."

"At the same time, the Holy See sees in this document pressure of an ideological character which seems to want to impose on women all over the world a particular social philosophy belonging to some sectors of western countries."

"If, on the one hand, the document wishes to liberate women from certain cultural conditioning, on the other hand it seems to wish to impose a western model of female advancement which does not take into account the values of women in the majority of countries of the world."

"THE DIGNITY OF WOMEN AND UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS. One has the right to think that the unanimous goal in Beijing will be to attain a common operative effort for the defense of the dignity of women and the promotion of their universal human rights. Incidentally, it becomes paradoxical and incomprehensible that the word 'dignity' - referring to women - appears systematically within brackets throughout the document. In the same way the term 'universal' is placed in parentheses when referring to the human rights of women."

"One reason among many for which the Holy See has insisted that the Platform for Action include some reference to the universality of human rights is that women in many countries do not enjoy the human rights recognized by the International Declarations. We think that it is not possible to promote and defend that which has not been defined. If every country limits itself to promoting generic rights of women not defined on an international level, then this conference will not represent any progress in the area of human rights for the majority of the world's women."

"LACK OF CONTINUITY WITH RESPECT TO PREVIOUS INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS. In many places the Document does not respect continuity with precedents and often with United Nations Declarations. For example, paragraph 12, whose inclusion was proposed by the Holy See Delegation, appears in parentheses, even though its contents come from the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna 1993). We retain that when one speaks of Human Rights there should be a general consensus on their content and, possibly, reference to international documents."

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"A similar reservation should be expressed on paragraph 107 j which, as it is formulated, intends to suppress the affirmation 'In no case will abortion be promoted as a method of family planning,' an affirmation adopted by consensus at the International Conferences in Mexico City (1984) and Cairo (1994).

IDEOLOGICAL UNBALANCE. The recurrence of some concepts illustrates in some way the tacit social philosophy of the Draft Document. One can cite as an example that the term 'gender' appears around 300 times; 'mother/motherhood' appear fewer than 10 times, while the terms 'sex/sexual/sexuality' appear about one hundred times. From this point of view the document appears to be extraordinarily unbalanced.

This ideological unbalance is more evident, for example, in the section that proposes the defense of women's right to health. While the document talks 40 times of health problems related to sexual life (AIDS, reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases, fertility control, etc.), only in two cases are tropical diseases mentioned. Still, the World Health Organization estimates, for example, 4 million cases of HIV infection in 1994, while the same World Health Organization estimates the cases of tropical diseases during the same period as hovering between 650 and 850 million."

LINGUISTIC AMBIGUITY. The ambiguities of international language are often a way to avoid a concrete will to carry out what is expressed.

"Some terms in the document are often vaguely defined: 'sexual orientation' and 'lifestyle' lack a precise definition, and moreover, no juridical recognition in an international document exists for either one. This semantic and conceptual ambiguity could lead one to consider, for example, pedophilia as simply a mode of 'sexual orientation,' thus easily acceptable as a 'right.' The term 'sexual orientation,' proposed by some western countries, was not accepted by developing countries.

SOME ASPECTS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN. The Holy See shares the emphasis that the Platform for Action places on physical, sexual, psychological and moral violence against women. For the Holy See this topic is a priority."

"The Holy See would like, however, a more decisive and radical condemnation of every kind of violence, also psychological, perpetrated against women, including forced sterilization, forced use of birth control or inducement to abortion. The Holy See has always expressed its deep worry regarding the number of women made objects of systematic sterilization plans which take place especially in developing countries."

"The Holy See Delegation proposed that these practices be included in paragraph 115 among the violations of the rights of women. Some delegations have wanted to put this proposal in brackets."

"In paragraph 40, the Holy See Delegation would like to have added to the list of attacks against young girls - limits to access to food, to education and to health care - also the denial of the very access to life (and even life itself)."

FAMILY. Surprisingly the theme of family and motherhood receives scarce attention and little space in a document of nearly 20 pages on women. Already in Chapter II the concept of the family as 'the fundamental unit of society...' is placed within brackets, in contrast with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, art. 16.3. In fact, all of paragraph 30 goes to Beijing in brackets.

"On the topic of the advancement of women, the Holy See certainly shares the emphasis on the importance of their full participation in all the activities of social life. Nevertheless, it goes against all evidence to think that this emphasis should cancel the unique role of women in the family: a role that does not exhaust all the personal resources of femininity but that however is specific to women. Obviously this point of view is shared by the immense majority of women all over the world and by the societies to which they belong.

"Juridical regulations on the family should guarantee to women also the fundamental right to be mothers. Indeed laws should create conditions - environmental, legal, economic, etc. - favorable to the practice of motherhood. Perhaps the moment has come to affirm that the struggle for equal dignity between men and women implies also recognizing for women their being different and their being treated in a different way."

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It is the conviction of the Holy See, as has been recognized already in Copenhagen, that the work of women, today not remunerated, should be recognized adequately; work that nevertheless holds a particular social value. None of this is mentioned in the Beijing document.

IMMIGRATION. The Holy See attributes great importance to the rights of migrant women. This topic has already gathered ample consensus at the Conference in Cairo.

The Document addresses this theme in various places. It is nevertheless the opinion of the Holy See that the attention is insufficient, as are also insufficient the proposals suggested, which seem to represent a step backward with respect to Cairo."

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PARENTS. In all cultures parents are particularly interested in the education of their children and the exercise of their duty especially with respect to minors. The Holy See, making these worries its own, maintains that in Beijing no formula should be accepted that goes against the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which establishes the right of parents to choose the type of education they desire for their own children. Along the same lines of incomprehensible negation of some universal rights, in the document that goes to Beijing the proposal to guarantee the rights of women and girls to freedom of conscience and of religion in educational institutions has been refused.

"Even more serious is the attempt to deprive parents of their responsibility in the confrontation of the offer of programs and public services in the area of sexuality, including abortion."

The question and answer period with journalists, which followed the briefing, concluded in the afternoon and will be transmitted tomorrow.

OP/UN CONFERENCE WOMEN/NAVARRO-VALLS

VIS 950620 (1500)

PONTIFICAL COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA HOLDS 4TH MEETING

VATICAN CITY, JUN 20, 1995 (VIS) - The 4th plenary meeting of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America is being held in the Vatican from June 19 to 23 on "Evangelizers: Priests, Religious Men and Women, Laity."

Following the introductory greeting by commission president Cardinal Bernardin Gantin, vice president Bishop Cipriano Calderon presented yesterday a report on the activities and programs of his body as it faces current problems and challenges of the new evangelization in Latin America.

Bishop Calderon spoke at length about the agenda of the plenary meeting and introduced the different speakers of these days. He also stressed some of the initiatives of the commission, such as holding a symposium in the Vatican in 1997 or 1998 to mark the 1st Latin American Plenary Council, held in Rome in 1899 and called for by Pope Leo XIII. The symposium would be devoted to a study, from a historical point of view, of the last hundred years of the life of the Church in America and would serve as a preparation for the Synod of America.

The commission is preparing, in cooperation with the Pontifical Council for the Family, added the vice president, a meeting on "The Evangelical Activity of the Family Facing Sects," to be held in Petropolis, Brazil, at the end of August 1995.

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VIS 950620 (220)

CARDINAL ORTEGA Y ALAMINO TO TAKE POSSESSION OF TITLE SUNDAY

VATICAN CITY, JUN 20, 1995 (VIS) - Cardinal Jaime Lucas Ortega y Alamino, archbishop of San Cristobal de La Habana, Cuba, will take possession of the Title of Saints Aquilla and Priscilla on Sunday, June 25 at 7:00 p.m.

OP/TITLE/ORTEGA Y ALAMINO

VIS 950620 (50)

"It is significant," he went on, "that in Rome, the center of Christianity and see of the successor of Peter, the Muslims have their own place of worship in the full respect of their freedom of conscience. In a significant circumstance such as this, one must, unfortunately, note how in several Islamic countries, equivalent signs of the recognition of religious freedom are missing. Yet the world, on the threshold of the third millennium, is waiting for these signs!"

John Paul II pointed out that "religious freedom is by now part of numerous international documents and represents one of the pillars of contemporary civilization." He concluded: "I truly hope the right to freely express one's own faith will be allowed to Christians and to all believers, in every corner of the earth."

AG/MOSQUE/RELIGIOUS FREEDOM/...

VIS 950621 (180)

BRIEFING ON BEIJING

VATICAN CITY, JUN 21, 1995 (VIS) - After outlining the Holy See position for the September 4-15 UN-sponsored 4th World Conference on Women in Beijing, Holy See Press Office Director Joaquin Navarro-Valls made additional remarks and answered questions asked by journalists.

He noted that, in its contacts with other countries and institutions in recent months, the Holy See has discovered that "the consensus is growing daily" on its position for the conference on women. "We want Beijing to be a big success," he stated.

The first question concerned the issue of "gender," a term whose meaning was questioned by several member States at the Beijing PrepCom (Preparatory Committee) held in New York from March 15 to April 7. This term, the director explained, has traditionally been used in UN documents to mean "sex," that is, "masculine" and "feminine," man or woman. In fact, when the English word "gender" is translated into French or Spanish, it becomes the equivalent of "sex," "man" or "woman." A special committee was set up by the UN to study this term, following the request of some who wished to expand its definition to include, for example, transsexuals and homosexuals. Navarro-Valls reported on the results of that study and said that the meaning of the word "gender" remains unchanged from traditional UN use.

Asked about the composition of the Holy See delegation to Beijing, he responded that there would be 20 members, that the Holy Father was evaluating the possibilities, and that women would form, as they have in the past for international conferences, a great part of the delegation. Names will be announced at a later date.

To a question on what these international conferences mean on a practical level, Joaquin Navarro-Valls replied: "These conferences offer a Final Document on a specific theme which is proposed to the international community but which is not binding on the single nations. They are not laws. The UN is not a legislative organ. Every country has its parliament. The fact that these documents - from Cairo, Copenhagen, and from Nairobi 10 years ago - are not binding does not mean they do not have a value. They are a collective reflection which has a supranational level. These documents can have an influence, can be important, for example, when the nations of the world come to agree on one, two or ten points of action set forth in that specific document and then act on a national level."

"Why does the Holy See participate in these conferences?" he added, in answer to the same question. "It participates because the beautiful part of these conferences is that they are, in some way, an appeal to consciences." He quoted a member from another delegation at the Cairo conference who said he felt the fundamental contribution of the Holy See was its proposing to the international community an ethical dimension to the problems that everyone would be discussing. Navarro-Valls said "this is useful, this serves a purpose."

"What are the indispensable principles for the Holy See in view of the Beijing document and conference?" asked a reporter. The press office director responded: "The Holy See will insist on two things: the human dignity of the woman and the universal human rights of the woman."

The Holy See will not reach a "holy alliance" with Islam to form a united front in the face of the topics that will be discussed at the Beijing conference, said Navarro-Valls, who rejected the allegation made regarding the Holy See delegation at the Cairo conference. "Some Muslim representatives have wanted to present their concerns about some of the themes of the Peking document through international organizations. We have agreed to speak with them. However, although there are some areas of general interest for both them and us, there are some substantial differences between Christianity and Islam on themes such as women, family, etc., that do not permit us to arrive at any type of operative agreement."

One journalist asked about the practice of aborting female fetuses, as occurs for example in China. Joaquin Navarro-Valls went back to the issue of human rights: "The important thing is to recognize that human rights are universal, and that consequently, it is not up to each country to decide what they are, because otherwise, we enter the realm of arbitrariness."

OP/CONFERENCE WOMEN/NAVARRO-VALLS

VIS 950621 (730)

COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA: THE PROTAGONISTS OF EVANGELIZATION

VATICAN CITY, JUN 21, 1995 (VIS) - Yesterday, in the plenary assembly of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, which is taking place in the Vatican, the participants reflected on the protagonists of evangelization from the perspective of the third millennium of the Church.

In the morning, Cardinal Jose T. Sanchez spoke about priests; Cardinal Eduardo Martinez Somalo presented the role of religious in the work of the new evangelization of Latin America facing the third millennium; Cardinal Eduardo F. Pironio spoke on the apostolate of the laity as craftsmen of evangelization in the third millennium, with a special emphasis on the young. Lastly, Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo referred to the role of the family in the new evangelization of Latin America.

In the afternoon the ideas and proposals presented by the speakers were summed-up, underlining especially the problem of sects and the preferential option for the poor.

Cardinal Jan P. Schotte, C.I.C.M., secretary general of the Synod of Bishops, spoke this morning on the Synod for America. Later, time was given for observations, suggestions, and comments before reaching the final propositions, which will be presented this afternoon.

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VIS 950621 (200)

HOLY SEE ATTENDS CONFERENCE ON EUROPE-ISLAM RELATIONS

VATICAN CITY, JUN 21, 1995 (VIS) - Bishop Joseph Khoury, apostolic visitor for the Maronite faithful in Europe, and president of the Holy See delegation to the European Conference on Europe-Islam Relations, held in Stockholm, Sweden, from June 15-17, addressed the assemblage on "Europe in the face of the co-existence of religions."

He said that, in the process of building a great Europe, importance must be given to religious freedom and to the intermingling and peaceful co-existence in each country of believers of different faiths. Europe must "further become a common house, whose tenants belong to different ethnic groups and denominations: along with the Reformed Churches, Latin Catholics and Orthodox Christians live Oriental Catholics and Orthodox of the Middle East."



LETTER
OF POPE JOHN PAUL II
TO WOMEN

LIBRERIA EDITRICE VATICANA
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*I greet you all most cordially,
women throughout the world!*

1. I AM WRITING THIS LETTER to each one of you as a sign of solidarity and gratitude on the eve of the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing this coming September.

Before all else, I wish to express my deep appreciation to the United Nations Organization for having sponsored this very significant event. The Church desires for her part to contribute to upholding the dignity, role and rights of women, not only by the specific work of the Holy See's official Delegation to the Conference in Beijing, but also by speaking directly to the heart and mind of every woman. Recently, when Mrs Gertrude Mongella, the Secretary General of the Conference, visited me in connection with the Peking meeting, I gave her a written Message which stated some basic points of the Church's teaching with regard to women's issues. That message, apart from the specific circumstances of its origin, was concerned with a broader vision of the situation and problems of women in general, in an attempt to promote the cause of women in the Church and in today's world. For this reason, I arranged to have

it forwarded to every Conference of Bishops, so that it could be circulated as widely as possible.

Taking up the themes I addressed in that document, I would now like to *speak directly to every woman*, to reflect with her on the problems and the prospects of what it means to be a woman in our time. In particular I wish to consider the essential issue of the *dignity and rights* of women, as seen in the light of the word of God.

This "dialogue" really needs to begin with a word of thanks. As I wrote in my Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem*, the Church "desires to give thanks to the Most Holy Trinity for the 'mystery of woman' and for every woman—for all that constitutes the eternal measure of her feminine dignity, for the 'great works of God', which throughout human history have been accomplished in and through her" (No. 31).

2. This word of thanks to the Lord for his mysterious plan regarding the vocation and mission of women in the world is at the same time a concrete and direct word of thanks to women, to every woman, for all that they represent in the life of humanity.

Thank you, *women who are mothers*! You have sheltered human beings within yourselves in a unique experience of joy and travail. This experience makes you become God's own smile upon the newborn child, the one who guides your child's first steps, who helps it to grow, and who is the anchor as the child makes its way along the journey of life.

Thank you, *women who are wives*! You irrevocably join your future to that of your husbands, in a relationship of mutual giving, at the service of love and life.

Thank you, *women who are daughters and women who are sisters*! Into the heart of the family, and then of all society, you bring the richness of your sensitivity, your intuitiveness, your generosity and fidelity.

Thank you, *women who work*! You are present and active in every area of life—social, economic, cultural, artistic and political. In this way you make an indispensable contribution to the growth of a culture which unites reason and feeling, to a model of life ever open to the sense of "mystery", to the establishment of economic and political structures ever more worthy of humanity.

Thank you, *consecrated women*! Following the example of the greatest of women, the Mother of Jesus Christ, the Incarnate Word, you open yourselves with obedience and fidelity to the gift of God's love. You help the Church and all mankind to experience a "spousal" relationship to God, one which magnificently expresses the fellowship which God wishes to establish with his creatures.

Thank you, *every woman*, for the simple fact of being a *woman*! Through the insight which is so much a part of your womanhood you enrich the world's understanding and help to make human relations more honest and authentic.

3. I know of course that simply saying thank you is not enough. Unfortunately, we are heirs to

a history which has conditioned us to a remarkable extent. In every time and place, this conditioning has been an obstacle to the progress of women. Women's dignity has often been unacknowledged and their prerogatives misrepresented; they have often been relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude. This has prevented women from truly being themselves and it has resulted in a spiritual impoverishment of humanity. Certainly it is no easy task to assign the blame for this, considering the many kinds of cultural conditioning which down the centuries have shaped ways of thinking and acting. And if objective blame, especially in particular historical contexts, has belonged to not just a few members of the Church, for this I am truly sorry. May this regret be transformed, on the part of the whole Church, into a renewed commitment of fidelity to the Gospel vision. When it comes to setting women free from every kind of exploitation and domination, the Gospel contains an ever relevant message which goes back to the *attitude of Jesus Christ himself*. Transcending the established norms of his own culture, Jesus treated women with openness, respect, acceptance and tenderness. In this way he honoured the dignity which women have always possessed according to God's plan and in his love. As we look to Christ at the end of this Second Millennium, it is natural to ask ourselves: how much of his message has been heard and acted upon?

Yes, it is time to *examine the past with courage*, to assign responsibility where it is due in a review

of the long history of humanity. Women have contributed to that history as much as men and, more often than not, they did so in much more difficult conditions. I think particularly of those women who loved culture and art, and devoted their lives to them in spite of the fact that they were frequently at a disadvantage from the start, excluded from equal educational opportunities, underestimated, ignored and not given credit for their intellectual contributions. Sadly, very little of women's achievements in history can be registered by the science of history. But even though time may have buried the documentary evidence of those achievements, their beneficent influence can be felt as a force which has shaped the lives of successive generations, right up to our own. To this great, immense feminine "tradition" humanity owes a debt which can never be repaid. Yet how many women have been and continue to be valued more for their physical appearance than for their skill, their professionalism, their intellectual abilities, their deep sensitivity; in a word, the very dignity of their being.

4. And what shall we say of the obstacles which in so many parts of the world still keep women from being fully integrated into social, political and economic life? We need only think of how the gift of motherhood is often penalized rather than rewarded, even though humanity owes its very survival to this gift. Certainly, much remains to be done to prevent discrimination against those who have chosen to be wives and

mothers. As far as personal rights are concerned, there is an urgent need to achieve *real equality* in every area: equal pay for equal work, protection for working mothers, fairness in career advancements, equality of spouses with regard to family rights and the recognition of everything that is part of the rights and duties of citizens in a democratic State.

This is a matter of justice but also of necessity. Women will increasingly play a part in the solution of the serious problems of the future: leisure time, the quality of life, migration, social services, euthanasia, drugs, health care, the ecology, etc. In all these areas a greater presence of women in society will prove most valuable, for it will help to manifest the contradictions present when society is organized solely according to the criteria of efficiency and productivity, and it will force systems to be redesigned in a way which favours the processes of humanization which mark the "civilization of love".

5. Then too, when we look at one of the most sensitive aspects of the situation of women in the world, how can we not mention the long and degrading history, albeit often an "underground" history, of violence against women in the area of sexuality? At the threshold of the Third Millennium we cannot remain indifferent and resigned before this phenomenon. The time has come to condemn vigorously the types of *sexual violence* which frequently have women for their object and to pass laws which effectively defend them from

such violence. Nor can we fail, in the name of the respect due to the human person, to condemn the widespread hedonistic and commercial culture which encourages the systematic exploitation of sexuality and corrupts even very young girls into letting their bodies be used for profit.

In contrast to these sorts of perversion, what great appreciation must be shown to those women who, with a heroic love for the child they have conceived, proceed with a pregnancy resulting from the injustice of rape. Here we are thinking of atrocities perpetrated not only in situations of war, still so common in the world, but also in societies which are blessed by prosperity and peace and yet are often corrupted by a culture of hedonistic permissiveness which aggravates tendencies to aggressive male behaviour. In these cases the choice to have an abortion always remains a grave sin. But before being something to blame on the woman, it is a crime for which guilt needs to be attributed to men and to the complicity of the general social environment.

6. My word of thanks to women thus becomes a *heartfelt appeal* that everyone, and in a special way States and International Institutions, should make every effort to ensure that women regain full respect for their dignity and role. Here I cannot fail to express my admiration for those women of good will who have devoted their lives to defending the dignity of womanhood by fighting for their basic social, economic and political rights, demonstrating courageous initiative at a time

when this was considered extremely inappropriate, the sign of a lack of femininity, a manifestation of exhibitionism, and even a sin!

In this year's *World Day of Peace Message*, I noted that when one looks at the great process of women's liberation, "the journey has been a difficult and complicated one and, at times, not without its share of mistakes. But it has been substantially a positive one, even if it is still unfinished, due to the many obstacles which in various parts of the world, still prevent women from being acknowledged, respected, and appreciated in their own special dignity" (No. 4).

This journey must go on! But I am convinced that the secret of making speedy progress in achieving full respect for women and their identity involves more than simply the condemnation of discrimination and injustices, necessary though this may be. Such respect must first and foremost be won through an effective and intelligent *campaign for the promotion of women*, concentrating on all areas of women's life and beginning with a *universal recognition of the dignity of women*. Our ability to recognize this dignity, in spite of historical conditioning, comes from the use of reason itself, which is able to understand the law of God written in the heart of every human being. More than anything else, the word of God enables us to grasp clearly the ultimate *anthropological basis* of the dignity of women, making it evident as a part of God's plan for humanity.

7. Dear sisters, together let us reflect anew on the magnificent passage in Scripture which describes the creation of the human race and which has so much to say about your dignity and mission in the world.

The Book of Genesis speaks of creation in summary fashion, in language which is poetic and symbolic, yet profoundly true: "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; *male and female he created them*" (*Gen 1:27*). The creative act of God takes place according to a precise plan. First of all, we are told that the human being is created "in the image and likeness of God" (cf. *Gen 1:26*). This expression immediately makes clear *what is distinct about the human being with regard to the rest of creation*.

We are then told that, from the very beginning, man has been created "male and female" (*Gen 1:27*). Scripture itself provides the interpretation of this fact: even though man is surrounded by the innumerable creatures of the created world, he realizes that *he is alone* (cf. *Gen 2:20*). God intervenes in order to help him escape from this situation of solitude: "*It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him*" (*Gen 2:18*). The creation of woman is thus marked from the outset by *the principle of help*: a help which is not one-sided but *mutual*. Woman complements man, just as man complements woman: men and women are *complementary*. Womanhood expresses the "human" as much as manhood does, but in a different and complementary way.

When the Book of Genesis speaks of "help", it is not referring merely to *acting*, but also to *being*. Womanhood and manhood are complementary *not only from the physical and psychological points of view*, but also from the *ontological*. It is only through the duality of the "masculine" and the "feminine" that the "human" finds full realization.

8. After creating man male and female, God says to both: "*Fill the earth and subdue it*" (Gen 1:28). Not only does he give them the power to procreate as a means of perpetuating the human species throughout time, *he also gives them the earth, charging them with the responsible use of its resources*. As a rational and free being, man is called to transform the face of the earth. In this task, which is essentially that of culture, *man and woman alike* share equal responsibility from the start. In their fruitful relationship as husband and wife, in their common task of exercising dominion over the earth, woman and man are marked neither by a static and undifferentiated equality nor by an irreconcilable and inexorably conflictual difference. Their most natural relationship, which corresponds to the plan of God, is the "unity of the two", a relational "uni-duality", which enables each to experience their interpersonal and reciprocal relationship as a gift which enriches and which confers responsibility.

To this "unity of the two" God has entrusted not only the work of procreation and family life, but the creation of history itself. *While the 1994*

International Year of the Family focused attention on *women as mothers*, the Beijing Conference, which has as its theme "Action for Equality, Development and Peace", provides an auspicious occasion for heightening awareness of *the many contributions made by women to the life of whole societies and nations*. This contribution is primarily spiritual and cultural in nature, but socio-political and economic as well. The various sectors of society, nations and states, and the progress of all humanity, are certainly deeply indebted to the contribution of women!

9. Progress usually tends to be measured according to the criteria of science and technology. Nor from this point of view has the contribution of women been negligible. Even so, this is not the only measure of progress, nor in fact is it the principal one. Much more important is *the social and ethical dimension*, which deals with human relations and spiritual values. In this area, which often develops in an inconspicuous way beginning with the daily relationships between people, especially within the family, society certainly owes much to the "*genius of women*".

Here I would like to express particular appreciation to those women who are involved in the various *areas of education* extending well beyond the family: nurseries, schools, universities, social service agencies, parishes, associations and movements. Wherever the work of education is called for, we can note that women are ever ready and willing to give themselves generously to others,

especially in serving the weakest and most defenceless. In this work they exhibit a kind of *affective, cultural and spiritual motherhood* which has inestimable value for the development of individuals and the future of society. At this point how can I fail to mention the witness of so many Catholic women and Religious Congregations of women from every continent who have made education, particularly the education of boys and girls, their principal apostolate? How can I not think with gratitude of all the women who have worked and continue to work in the area of health care, not only in highly organized institutions, but also in very precarious circumstances, in the poorest countries of the world, thus demonstrating a spirit of service which not infrequently borders on martyrdom?

10. It is thus my hope, dear sisters, that you will reflect carefully on what it means to speak of the "*genius of women*", not only in order to be able to see in this phrase a specific part of God's plan which needs to be accepted and appreciated, but also in order to let this genius be more fully expressed in the life of society as a whole, as well as in the life of the Church. This subject came up frequently during *the Marian Year* and I myself dwelt on it at length in my Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* (1988). In addition, this year in the Letter which I customarily send to priests for Holy Thursday, I invited them to reread *Mulieris Dignitatem* and reflect on the important roles which women have played in their

lives as mothers, sisters and co-workers in the apostolate. This is another aspect—different from the conjugal aspect, but also important—of that "help" which women, according to the Book of Genesis, are called to give to men.

The Church sees in Mary the highest expression of the "feminine genius" and she finds in her a source of constant inspiration. Mary called herself the "handmaid of the Lord" (Lk 1:38). Through obedience to the Word of God she accepted her lofty yet not easy vocation as wife and mother in the family of Nazareth. Putting herself at God's service, she also put herself at the service of others: a *service of love*. Precisely through this service Mary was able to experience in her life a mysterious, but authentic "reign". It is not by chance that she is invoked as "Queen of heaven and earth". The entire community of believers thus invokes her; many nations and peoples call upon her as their "Queen". *For her, "to reign" is to serve! Her service is "to reign"!*

This is the way in which authority needs to be understood, both in the family and in society and the Church. Each person's fundamental vocation is revealed in this "reigning", for each person has been created in the "image" of the One who is Lord of heaven and earth and called to be his adopted son or daughter in Christ. Man is the only creature on earth "which God willed for its own sake", as the Second Vatican Council teaches; it significantly adds that man "cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of self" (*Gaudium et Spes*, 24).

The maternal "reign" of Mary consists in this. She who was, in all her being, a gift for her Son, *has also become a gift for the sons and daughters of the whole human race*, awakening profound trust in those who seek her guidance along the difficult paths of life on the way to their definitive and transcendent destiny. Each one reaches this *final goal* by fidelity to his or her own vocation; this goal provides meaning and direction for the earthly labours of men and women alike.

11. In this perspective of "service"—which, when it is carried out with freedom, reciprocity and love, expresses the truly "royal" nature of mankind—one can also appreciate that the presence of *a certain diversity of roles* is in no way prejudicial to women, provided that this diversity is not the result of an arbitrary imposition, but is rather an expression of what is specific to being male and female. This issue also has a particular application within the Church. If Christ—by his free and sovereign choice, clearly attested to by the Gospel and by the Church's constant Tradition—entrusted only to men the task of being an "icon" of his countenance as "shepherd" and "bridegroom" of the Church through the exercise of the ministerial priesthood, this in no way detracts from the role of women, or for that matter from the role of the other members of the Church who are not ordained to the sacred ministry, since *all* share equally in the dignity proper to the "common priesthood" based on Baptism. These role distinctions should not be viewed in accordance with the

criteria of functionality typical in human societies. Rather they must be understood according to the particular criteria of the *sacramental economy*, i.e. the economy of "signs" which God freely chooses in order to become present in the midst of humanity.

Furthermore, precisely in line with this economy of signs, even if apart from the sacramental sphere, there is great significance to that "womanhood" which was lived in such a sublime way by Mary. In fact, there is present in the "womanhood" of a woman who believes, and especially in a woman who is "consecrated", a kind of inherent "prophecy" (cf. *Mulieris Dignitatem*, 29), a powerfully evocative symbolism, a highly significant "iconic character", which finds its full realization in Mary and which also aptly expresses the very essence of the Church as a community consecrated with the integrity of a "virgin" heart to become the "bride" of Christ and "mother" of believers. When we consider the "iconic" complementarity of male and female roles, two of the Church's essential dimensions are seen in a clearer light: the "Marian" principle and the Apostolic-Petrine principle (cf. *ibid.*, 27).

On the other hand—as I wrote to priests in this year's Holy Thursday Letter—the ministerial priesthood, according to Christ's plan, "is an expression not of domination but of service" (No. 7). The Church urgently needs, in her daily self-renewal in the light of the Word of God, to emphasize this fact ever more clearly, both by developing the spirit of communion and by carefully

fostering all those means of participation which are properly hers, and also by showing respect for and promoting the diverse personal and communal charisms which the Spirit of God bestows for the building up of the Christian community and the service of humanity.

In this vast domain of service, the Church's two-thousand-year history, for all its historical conditioning, has truly experienced the "genius of woman"; from the heart of the Church there have emerged women of the highest calibre who have left an impressive and beneficial mark in history. I think of the great line of woman martyrs, saints and famous mystics. In a particular way I think of Saint Catherine of Siena and of Saint Teresa of Avila, whom Pope Paul VI of happy memory granted the title of Doctors of the Church. And how can we overlook the many women, inspired by faith, who were responsible for initiatives of extraordinary social importance, especially in serving the poorest of the poor? The life of the Church in the Third Millennium will certainly not be lacking in new and surprising manifestations of "the feminine genius".

12. You can see then, dear sisters, that the Church has many reasons for hoping that the forthcoming United Nations Conference in Beijing will bring out the full truth about women. Necessary emphasis should be placed on the "genius of women", not only by considering great and famous women of the past or present; but also those ordinary women who reveal the gift of

their womanhood by placing themselves at the service of others in their everyday lives. For in giving themselves to others each day women fulfil their deepest vocation. Perhaps more than men, women *acknowledge the person*, because they see persons with their hearts. They see them independently of various ideological or political systems. They see others in their greatness and limitations; they try to go out to them and *help them*. In this way the basic plan of the Creator takes flesh in the history of humanity and there is constantly revealed, in the variety of vocations, that *beauty*—not merely physical, but above all spiritual—which God bestowed from the very beginning on all, and in a particular way on women.

While I commend to the Lord in prayer the success of the important meeting in Beijing, I invite *Ecclesial Communities* to make this year an occasion of heartfelt thanksgiving to the Creator and Redeemer of the world for the gift of *this great treasure* which is womanhood. In all its expressions, womanhood is part of the essential heritage of mankind and of the Church herself.

May Mary, Queen of Love, watch over women and their mission in service of humanity, of peace, of the spread of God's Kingdom.

With my Blessing.

From the Vatican, 29 June 1995, the Solemnity of Saints Peter and Paul.

Joannes Paulus II