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United States Department of State

Bureau of Oceans and International
Environmental and Scientific Affairs

Washington, D.C. 20520

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RAPIDFAX

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Date: 2/9

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Population Conf

FROM:

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MESSAGE

Katie - Per your earlier inquiry, I thought you
might find the attached of interest - R/S
Pg 2 the first CSD info will now be 2/24-26
No resolution yet in ECOSOC, neither the EC
nor NGO issues. Congrats to you on your new
office! You'll need the staff! Best regards,
Stephanie

Call
ed
memo!

file - ^{VP} Population
Conference.

cc: K McGINTY
N CARTER

Statement by Dr. Nafis Sadik,
Secretary-General of the International
Conference on Population and Development
to the Organizational Session of the
Economic and Social Council,
Tuesday 2 February 1993

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Allow me, Mr. President, to congratulate you on your election to this important position. Your work in the areas of social and economic development is very well known to us and much appreciated. I know that the Council is in very good hands as it tackles its important responsibilities this year. I also congratulate the other members of your bureau.

Seven weeks ago today, the General Assembly adopted by consensus its resolution 47/176 on the subject of the International Conference on Population and Development. This marked an important stage in preparations for the 1994 Conference. The debate and negotiation which preceded that decision highlighted the growing interest of the international community in the International Conference on Population and Development, which, it is worth reminding ourselves, is to take place little more than 18 months from now. In addition to focussing attention on the Conference, delegates at the General Assembly understood the need to clarify, at the earliest opportunity, several key aspects of the preparatory process. As Secretary-General of the Conference, I am grateful that this Council at its organizational session, is able to address these issues.

You have before you the Note of the Secretary-General on the Conference and its preparatory process (E/1993/13). I will limit my remarks to the two issues on which ECOSOC has been asked to take decisions.

Timing and Duration of Preparatory Committee Sessions

It is now almost two years since the first session of the Preparatory Committee took place. At that session the mandate for the 1994 Conference was established. This Council adopted it in its resolution 1991/93 of 26 July 1991. Over the last two years Conference preparations have been gathering pace. The six expert group meetings mandated by resolution 1991/93 have now been completed, the last only ten days ago. We are working to ensure that the reports and recommendations from these meetings are made available as soon as possible and are widely distributed. Similarly, the results of the two regional population conferences held thus far - those for Asia and the Pacific and for Africa - are also being made available.

Activity of this type at the expert and regional levels is a very important part of the preparatory process. We are also very conscious of the importance of the full intergovernmental community focussing on the issues to be addressed by the Conference. It is for this reason that we have welcomed proposals to bring forward the Second Preparatory Committee session. I appreciate that 1993 is shaping up to be a very busy year for those dealing with social and economic development issues. Similarly, we have heard very clearly the wish of many for early clarification of a number of key aspects of the preparatory process. I share the concern of those who see the timing of the second session as it is now scheduled - barely one year before the Conference - as too late to wait for a resolution on key aspects of the Conference's preparations. There is a very great deal to be done and the earlier we can all get started, the better it will be.

In the Secretary-General's Note, the suggested starting date for the second session is 17 May. Since that was prepared it has been discovered that a two week session would overlay by a full week the first substantive session of the Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Convention on Desertification which will start on 24 May in Nairobi. As both our session and the desertification negotiations are of major importance to many delegations such an overlap must be avoided at all cost. Accordingly it is now proposed to bring the Preparatory Committee session forward a further week - starting on 10 May.

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It is my hope that a full two weeks can be allocated for this meeting. There is, as I have said, a great deal to be done - not least to get very clear instructions from delegations on the required outcome for the Cairo Conference, agreement on the interrelationship of the issues being addressed and clear guidance on how the final documentation is to be drafted by the Secretariat.

In similar fashion I fully support the proposal that the third session of the Preparatory Committee be scheduled for two weeks in April 1994.

There are some who are asking whether two weeks at that time will be sufficient to negotiate all aspects of the Conference's outcome. I believe that this merits your careful attention, as does the related issue of a fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, possibly in June or early July of 1994.

Participation of non-governmental organizations

We are working to prepare for the International Conference on Population and Development at a time when there is a clear understanding of the role which non-governmental organizations can and should have in international activities of this type. Agenda 21 of UNCED and especially Chapter 27 on "Strengthening the Role of NGOs" is an important indication of this new relationship. During the UNCED process, as you well know, NGOs were given the opportunity to participate fully in the work of the Preparatory Committee but were not involved in the intergovernmental negotiating process. A similar approach could be taken in this instance. If this were to occur I am confident that the ICPD process will further enhance cooperation between governmental and non-governmental communities. Each has a distinct contribution to make. Equally it is important that we do not confuse these roles or see them as interchangeable.

General Assembly resolution 47/176 provides very clear guidance on non-governmental organizations and their involvement with our Conference. Most appropriately it refers not only to the experience of UNCED but also to other United Nations population conferences. At both the 1974 and 1984 population conferences a quite flexible approach was adopted for the relatively small number of NGOs which sought to be involved. The UNCED process and the interest it generated has certainly

changed the scale of NGO involvement in the 1994 conference. I like to think that perhaps the subject of population is now being seen as more relevant and topical. It would thus seem that a larger number of NGOs wish to be part of the ICPD process than was the case at earlier population conferences. I welcome this and am confident that the same spirit of cooperation and partnership which has characterized earlier population conferences and UNCED will be a feature of the Cairo Conference and its preparatory process.

Throughout this organizational session and the months ahead my colleagues in the Conference Secretariat and I stand ready to work closely with all delegations, groups and organizations. We are committed to ensuring that all those interested in this Conference are fully informed about all aspects of preparations for it. In the relatively brief time we have until September 1994 and particularly given a very modest allocation of time for a full intergovernmental preparatory process, we must all make sure we take full advantage of opportunities such as this to carry our work forward. I am sure we will manage to do so.

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PRESS RELEASE

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USUN Press Release 74-(93)

Statement by ~~The Honorable~~ Timothy E. Wirth United States Representative
to the Second Session Preparatory Committee for the International
Conference on Population and Development, Closing Statement, May 21, 1993

Mr. Chairman, thank you for allowing me this opportunity to make a few concluding remarks. On behalf of my delegation, I must start by saying how privileged we feel to have been able to participate in this preparatory meeting. We would like to express our particular thanks to the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Boutros-Ghali, for providing such a welcoming framework for the conference. We must also express our appreciation to you, Dr. Sai, to Secretary-General Nafis Sadik, to the chairman of the working groups, Mr. Biegman and Mr. Kaaria, and to all who have worked to make this a successful PrepCom.

I want to congratulate the Chairman on the excellent draft summary he has prepared of our proceedings. It reveals that much has been accomplished over the past two weeks by all delegations and by the assemblage of NGO representatives who have so enriched our deliberations. We have clearly recognized the importance of providing family planning services in the context of reproductive health and rights. Together, I believe we have developed a new appreciation for the close and complex interrelationships of population, the environment, consumption, development, and migration.

We have also been reminded of the need to consider these broad societal issues from the standpoint of individuals -- especially women -- as the particular group most affected. In addition, participants have affirmed the need to better understand families, in all their diversity, and to find ways to strengthen them as they face new pressures. They have recognized:

That men and women must be responsible to one another and give each other mutual support;

The basic human right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children to have access to the necessary education, information, and quality family planning and reproductive health services;

And that all of us must share responsibility for nurturing the next generation and caring for the ageing -- those who gave birth to us.

Since the first international population conference in Bucharest 20 years ago, we have achieved significant and remarkable changes. Even before then, many in this room had already emerged as leaders on these issues. We salute your efforts and your example. Family planning and other reproductive health services are now much more widely available around the world, and both birth and death rates have come down in most regions. We who are assembled here are now ready to take the next steps, and to demonstrate again that by working together we can make a difference. And we must.

Twenty years from now, another generation will take our seats in this hall to prepare for the Fifth World Conference on Population. Delegates to that PrepCom will be asking what we did and how well we met the goals established in Cairo.

They will be asking whether we have undertaken the hard work and careful planning required to translate our good intentions into real changes in programs. They will be asking whether all of us -- developed and developing country governments, international agencies, and NGOs -- have made the long-term commitment of resources necessary to increase the reproductive choices and quality of life for people around the world -- and whether we did so in time to make a difference.

The United States believes that the Cairo Conference will be a milestone. The key will be to engage people -- both women and men -- from all walks of life, within our countries and across the globe. To help maintain momentum and participation, we strongly support recommendations for a systematic program of intersessional consultations. For its part, the United States intends to continue the momentum from here.

During this time, to support our words with deeds, we will accelerate work with our legislative branch to fulfill President Clinton's commitment to broaden our support for reproductive health, family planning and other population programs in our foreign assistance budget. The United States is proud to contribute to meeting this challenge as a global partner, as a willing student, and with a sense of urgency. Together we have much to learn and much to do if we are to successfully translate our vision into concrete programmatic strategies.

In closing, Mr. Chairman, let me reiterate my thanks and appreciation to you and to all participants in this constructive dialogue. Together, we will write a new history for our world. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

* * * * *

Clinton Administration Can Put U.S. Back in Forefront of Population Control

WASHINGTON INSIGHT

By TIM CARRINGTON

Staff Reporter of THE WALL STREET JOURNAL

WASHINGTON — Amid the horrors of Bosnia and the numbing problems of the Russian economy, one of the best chances for the Clinton administration to score a success on the global stage may be in helping stabilize the world's population.

Reclaiming leadership in population control won't bring immediate results — or get even all that much notice. But long after Bill Clinton settles into retirement, people around the world might thank him for taking steps that improved the quality of their lives.

In contrast to many of the world's economic and ethnic problems, there's nothing mysterious about population programs, which essentially amount to giving people the wherewithal to control their reproduction. The payoff is simple. Dozens of studies show that children in smaller families are healthier and more secure economically. People in rich countries know this and plan accordingly. Increasingly, people in poor countries know it, too, but don't have the same access to birth control. A World Bank study found that as many as 40% of married women in the developing world want to avoid further childbearing but don't have contraceptives.

Timothy Wirth, the State Department's top official on population matters, officially closed a sour, divisive decade for Washington on population matters when he told the United Nations last week that the administration would resume support for the U.N. Population Fund. He also said abortion is a necessary part of any global population effort.

Snagged in the abortion question, the Reagan and Bush administrations stopped funding the U.N. Population Fund and International Planned Parenthood Federation — two of the main players in population programs. In general, the U.S. became a surly bystander in international efforts to give more families around the world a measure of control over their fertility. Ironically, experts say abortions actually may have increased during the period because the loss of funds left family-planning services less able to help women avoid unwanted pregnancies.

At the outset, the Clinton team must free global population programs from the ideological furor that enflames the domestic debate over abortion rights. "Family planning is simply a basic element in a poverty-reduction program," argues Rodolfo Bulatao, a senior demographic specialist at the World Bank. That doesn't mean the U.S. should fund coercive, state-run abortion policies like those reported in China. Indeed, the U.N. Population Fund

may pull out of China because of these practices.

Joseph Speidel, president of Population Action International, estimates that top-quality family-planning services cost an average of \$16 a couple a year. The payoff should have appeal to big-picture economists and grass-roots activists alike. Right now, 77% of the world's population lives in developing countries; at current growth rates, that would rise to 83% by 2025, and 86% in 2050. Associated problems of migration, environmental damage and economic hardship are massive.

One problem lies in what experts call "population momentum." In many poor countries, the population is concentrated in childbearing ages. These demographics, together with lower mortality, mean the population would grow for a while even if women had only two children apiece.

There has been some good news on the population front. Despite the U.S. funding cutoffs, the 1980s saw lower fertility in parts of the world where population planners had been frustrated, such as Bangladesh and sub-Saharan Africa. And overall, average fertility in developing countries has fallen from six children per mother in the 1960s to four children today.

Moreover, experts say family-planning catches on much faster than was assumed, even in countries where large families are preferred. The World Bank reports that with well-designed family-planning programs, it takes only 20 years to move from a situation where the average mother bears eight children to one where she bears only two.

These successes don't eliminate the problem, but they do mean that international family-planning efforts have an effect, and that if the U.S. and others summon the political will to support them, they will show further results.

Today, \$4.6 billion is spent on population planning in developing countries, but only \$1 billion of that comes from the rich donor countries.

Mr. Wirth's biggest problem may be the Clintonesque tendency to overload the agenda. In early talks, administration officials have proposed combining family-planning programs with a variety of other health projects. "Certainly everything they're calling for is desirable," says Mr. Speidel, "but with limited resources, you've got to pick and choose."

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Playing Politics with Population

On one issue, at least, the Clinton administration is succeeding in turning U.S. policy around. No longer will population policy be held hostage by a noisy domestic constituency. One of President Clinton's earliest moves was his announcement that the United States would resume a leadership role in international family planning efforts. Last week, when State Department Counselor Timothy E. Wirth spelled out the administration's views to a United Nations committee, the audience cheered.

The Reagan-Bush policy of using U.S. population assistance as an extension of this country's divisive abortion debate was truly over.

The change is overdue. The most recent figures from the Population Reference Bureau in Washington, D.C. show that world population is increasing by 90 million people each year, a number equivalent to the entire population of Mexico. Third World countries account for 95 percent of that increase.

But those countries are straining to feed, house, educate and employ the people they already have. A glance at their circumstances indicates why an enlightened population policy is important to Americans. Burgeoning population growth in poor countries creates political and economic strains that eventually spill over into the developed world. Terrorism, ethnic fighting, uncontrolled immigration — rapid, unsustainable population growth contributes to all these ills.

But statistics gloss over a painful contradiction: Excessive population growth kills people. About 40

million people die each year in developing countries; 9.6 million of them are infants who never reach their first birthday. Another nine or 10 million children die before the age of 5. Their mothers' lives are equally precarious. Maternal mortality rates in these countries are 15 times higher than in the industrialized world.

Family planning programs provide the only health care many women have. They also save lives by enabling families to space their children, thus increasing their odds of survival and saving a mother's strength from depletion by yearly childbearing. As the industrialized world demonstrates, population rates stabilize when people are given a fighting chance to climb out of poverty. Family planning helps them do that.

The Reagan-Bush attack on family planning in effect depicted these efforts as vehicles for promoting abortion. Citing reports of coercive abortions in China, the Reagan administration denied U.S. funding to the United Nations Population Fund and the International Planned Parenthood Federation, the world's two largest international family planning agencies. The move glossed over the inconvenient fact that the abortion problem in most countries is the high death rate from illegal abortions sought out by desperate women.

It suited previous administrations to play politics with population programs. But those policies took an awful toll on real lives. No wonder Mr. Wirth's speech last week met such a joyous response.

U.S. SET TO CHANGE ABORTION POLICIES

State Dept. Official Declares
Clinton Is Ready to Back
Global Birth Controls

By STEVEN A. HOLMES

Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, May 11 — Declaring that it wanted to help lead a new global effort to address the issue of overpopulation, the Clinton Administration said today that efforts to stabilize world population growth must concentrate on providing more opportunities and rights for women, including abortions.

In a speech to a United Nations committee that is planning a major conference on population in Cairo next year, Timothy E. Wirth, the State Department Counselor, said the Administration intended to reverse policies on population growth that had been adopted under Presidents Reagan and Bush.

Under the two Republican Presidents the United States refused to finance international population programs that provided women with counseling on abortion. In addition, in Mr. Reagan's term, the United States took the position that population growth was a "neutral phenomenon" — neither harmful nor beneficial to the environment — and that the important issue was economic development.

A Question of Choice

In a previous United Nations population conference held in 1974 in Bucharest, Romania, and in 1984 in Mexico City, the issue of abortion was played down. Some population experts say that out of deference to Catholic countries and some Muslim nations, they do not expect next year's gathering to approve a strongly worded statement asserting a woman's right to an abortion. Still Mr. Wirth said the United States would push for it.

"The U.S. Government would be remiss if it did not develop recommendations and guidance with regard to abortion," Mr. Wirth said. "Our position is to support reproductive choice, including access to safe abortion."

Population experts say about 125,000 women die each year — about one-fourth of all maternal deaths — as a result of improperly performed abortions. Almost all of these deaths occur in developing countries.

In outlining Administration policy for the first time in a forum devoted to population issues, Mr. Wirth made clear how dramatic a change the Clinton Administration was making in the area of population stabilization.

President 'Deeply Committed'

"President Clinton is deeply committed to moving population to the forefront of America's international priorities," Mr. Wirth said. "He understands the cost of excessive population growth to the health of women, to the natural environment and to our hopes for alleviating poverty. He believes that America cannot stand aside as the world confronts one of the largest challenges of this century and the next."

Mr. Wirth also put the Clinton Administration on record endorsing other ideas in the population and development field that were anathema to the Reagan and Bush Administrations, like agreeing with developing countries that that Western nations should limit their consumption.

For the first time, Mr. Wirth officially confirmed that the Administration would resume financing for the United Nations Population Fund. Congress cut off funds to the organization after reports that it financed family planning efforts in China that entailed coercive abortions and forced sterilization.

The American official did not say how much the Administration would seek for the United Nations Population Fund, though he did mention that the Administration has asked for a \$100 million increase for population programs in the Federal budget for the year ending Sept. 30, 1994.

A Tumultuous Response

Mr. Wirth's speech received a tumultuous response from some of the delegations, and from many of the representatives of non-governmental organizations — women's groups, and environmental and population specialists — who listened from the gallery as he addressed the delegations to the Preparatory Committee. "As one of those who had to struggle within the old U.S. policy it is like a breath of fresh air," Fred Sai of Ghana, chairman of the Preparatory Committee, said.

But anti-abortion groups, denounced the Administration's reversal of American policy. "It's outrageous, in a word," said Representative Chris Smith, a New Jersey Republican who heads the Congressional Pro-Life Caucus. "The U.N. Population Plan of Action of 1984 that was adopted in Mexico City made it very clear that abortion was not to be construed as a method of family planning."

Public Financing Weighed

Published reports have said Mr. Clinton is considering public financing of abortions as part of his health care package. The Administration has overturned the Reagan Administration's policy that barred United States funds from international population groups involved in providing women with information on abortions.

Archbishop Renato R. Martino, the head of the delegation from the Vatican, declined to comment on the American delegate's speech.

The representatives of the nongovernmental organizations who generally occupy the liberal end of the political spectrum and who opposed the Reagan-Bush policies, erupted into applause at the end of Mr. Wirth's address, a marked contrast to the polite silence that often greeted the remarks by delegates from other countries.

After the speech some women in the gallery punched their fists into the air, and some wept.

What the World's Women Want

The staple image of overpopulation is a ravaged landscape: rivers thick with pollutants, land on which there is no topsoil, forests denuded of trees, and sad migrations of people looking for more space, more food, more chances.

What you won't see — unless she's starving, and thus a cynosure for cameras — is a woman whose life consists of bearing child after child to live, or die, in this wasted landscape. During the years of debate over whether unbridled population growth is a boon or a disaster, nobody's talked much about her. And, tragically, she cannot speak for herself.

Last week, however, at a United Nations meeting planning the once-a-decade International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo next year, voices from all over the world spoke on her behalf. Perhaps the strongest was that of Timothy Wirth, the State Department Counselor. "As we prepare for Cairo," he said, "we must recognize that women know . . . what they need, and they must be equal partners in programs and policies."

Therefore, he continued, the Clinton Administration intends to reverse the family-planning poli-

cies announced at the Mexico City conference in 1984 by President Reagan and embraced by President Bush. In banning Federal aid to international family-planning agencies that condoned abortion in any way, they held women in poor countries hostage to the messy abortion politics of this rich one.

For these women, pregnancy can be a killer: at least 500,000 die of pregnancy-related causes every year — 25 percent of them because of an illegal, botched abortion. Furthermore, they'll go on dying if they can't get contraceptives and safe abortions. The Clinton Administration, Mr. Wirth said, is committed to supporting their access to both.

A woman who cannot control her reproductive life has little control over much else in her life. She will be poor — and powerless. Population control, then, will not only ease pressures on an endangered environment, it will enhance the lives of women who in all too many cruel instances are treated as second class.

As the 21st century approaches, the earth's nations must pay more profound attention to the earth's health. They can start by paying profound attention to women's health.