



WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



United Nations
Department of Public Information

PRESS CLIPPINGS

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According to Timpson, the acting director UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Program Support, the structural adjustment policies of the IMF and World Bank have gone largely unchallenged in the Summit drafts.

Countries implementing IMF and World Bank economic adjustment programmes have had to cut public expenditure to reduce budget deficits and meet debt repayment obligations, she said. This has resulted in hardships for the people, mainly declining income per person and real wages, rising unemployment and under-employment, deteriorating social services such as education and health, and worsening nutritional standards.

Timpson acknowledged that the draft declaration had made history by calling for the inclusion of social objectives as part of any future structural adjustment program designed by the IMF or World Bank.

But, despite the link spelled out in the draft between economic and social policies, "if there was an attempt to move the United Nations into the economic area, it hasn't happened," Timpson said.

Most non-governmental organizations preparing for the Summit have focused their advocacy work around economic issues like trade, debt and transnational corporations (TNCs).

According to a 12-point declaration prepared jointly by more than 50 development and women's NGOs from developing and industrialized countries, "unless the structural causes of poverty, unemployment and social exclusion are adequately defined and properly addressed, the Summit will be judged a failure."

For NGOs like Development Alternatives by Women for a New Era (DAWN), Third World Network and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO), the "causes" of poverty and inequality are largely unaccountable structures like TNCs, trade regimes and international financial institutions.

Devaki Jain, of the women's international network DAWN, argues the Summit draft has a "built-in contradiction between reaching the goals of employment, social security and elimination of poverty, and the current impulses that direct economic growth."

She says that this contradiction is largely evident in the draft's failure to discuss limits to economic growth and demands on industrialized countries' consumption and production patterns.

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Jain says that while the Summit urges greater monitoring and collection of data related to the social impacts of economic and political decisions, it fails to call for similar monitoring on political and economic participation.

"Social development can not be trivialized or limited to literacy and education, health, or expenditure on social services alone," Jain says. Rather, "the unrepresentative character of the institutions associated with political and economic management should be considered indicators of social decay."

She added that monitoring the removal of these characteristics should be included as part of the process of stimulating social progress.

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