



The determination to advance the cause of development

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Vision into reality
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THE INDEPENDENT DAILY OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

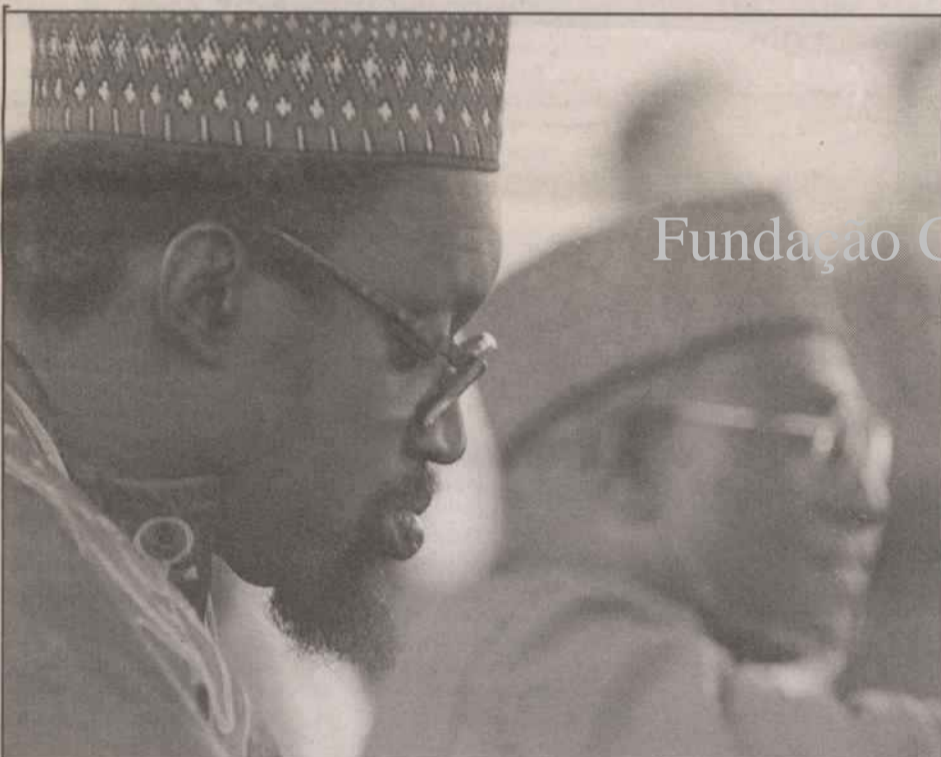
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Priorities are the priority at Social Summit A strong cry of alarm



Fundação Centro

Against the odds:

Delegates at the NGO forum Sunday, where despite numerous cancellations and non-appearances by, the forum secretariat yesterday unhesitatingly awarded themselves a thumbs-up.

"On Saturday we attained our target attendance figure of 10,000 people per day," Jan Birket-Smith, secretary-general of the forum told the press.

"One of the rather negative aspects we acknowledge is the cancellation of several meetings," said Birket-Smith. "It is difficult to explain why they were cancelled but perhaps some have not yet arrived or have not been able to cope with their plans."

The NGO forum, based on the windswept former naval base of Holmen, began on Friday and by Sunday had attracted

By Gumisai Mutume

more than 2,000 organisations out of a pre-registered 4,500.

"One has to acknowledge that it has not been possible yet to reach some level of common understanding but there are NGOs of varied diversity here and one cannot expect them to have a common approach," Birket-Smith maintained.

Meanwhile, NGOs approach the opening today of the Social Summit with mixed perceptions.

"Although we have had some misunderstandings in the camp we are still working towards a common approach," said Bawa Jain, co-chairman of the coalition of caucuses.

Dire warnings on the consequences of failure were issued on the eve of the Social Summit, but in a measured way reflecting the dilemma of how to balance poor nations' cry for urgent action with the reality of Northern apathy.

"This summit is a strong cry of alarm," said Juan Somavia, the preparatory committee chairman. "There is an urgent need to deal with people's issues now."

But Somavia, Chile's Permanent Ambassador to the United Nations and the main inspiration behind the gathering of world leaders, immediately hinted at the difficulties ahead by adding that the problem was not one of finding sufficient resources.

"Don't let anybody tell you that there are no resources," he said. "The problem is not resources, which are abundant, but priorities. But this summit is the highest priority."

Teeming

The only NGO speaker at yesterday's U.N. organised press briefing was Bella Abzug, co-Chair of the Women's Environment and Development Organisation. "The world is having a nervous breakdown, and this Summit is a chance to set things right," said Abzug.

At briefings inside a suddenly teeming Bella Centre, Somavia was joined by Nitin Desai, UN First Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, and Denmark's Minister for Development

By Luis Cordova and Johanna Son

Cooperation, Poul Nielson.

The three were the main architects of the summit - the first at which global human security is the main theme.

Foreign aid

Summits organised by the United Nations in this decade - this is the fourth - have all had "a common focus behind them" said Desai. One aim was "to define a role for public policy in a fast changing world."

And Nielson pointed out that "there is more than the square brackets" in the documents prepared for the summit. He stressed that a large number of paragraphs had been approved and represented a common position on social development.

Nielson said Denmark aimed not only to be a good host but also to participate actively in

follow-up mechanisms. "This summit will not end on the 12th," he stressed.

At the same time, he highlighted one of the issues expected to dominate the meeting - the idea that industrialised nations must try to make concessions in areas like aid, debt and trade.

Aid - how much is enough, and whether existing flows are sufficient - will be debated in great detail at this summit, although the pervasive realism of the times preclude any attempt to set big-figure targets for increasing aid flows.

Even before coming to Copenhagen, developing countries had felt the chill winds of change resulting in tightening of aid budgets.

At the same time debate had accelerated on another aspect of foreign aid: the perception that foreign assistance is used as a club to whip recipient

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'The world is having a nervous breakdown'



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A strong cry of alarm

cent of GNP for aid, development activists are looking, for example, at imposing international taxes for the using global resources like air, sea and fishing areas.

Some experts also propose a change in the very concept of aid. Instead of being a benefit withheld by rich countries from those nations failing to follow structural adjustment programmes, aid should be a reward for good performance in the area of social development or international obligations, they say.

Inge Kaul, head of the U.N. Development Programme's Office of Development Studies, said the international community could one day perhaps consider the idea of granting tax holidays for "countries who did something right".

Kaul cited Uganda as an example of a country given extra aid to pay debt as a reward for good progress on its military conversion efforts.

The issue of finding new sources of funding, is one of several unresolved issues in the social summit. NGOs have criticised rich governments for shunning detailed commitments and favoring 'targets' that they will merely strive to achieve.

Rejecting

Developing countries want all debts owed by the world's 47 least developed countries (LDCs) cancelled. But the West is rejecting this on the ground that it can be done only on a case-by-case basis.

The West is, in effect, saying: "If you are of strategic importance to us, we will help you. If not, don't count on us".

But as one Asian delegate said: "After the end of the Cold War, no Third World nation is of strategic importance to anyone—let alone the West".

Most U.N. conferences stretch over two weeks. The Copenhagen summit has less than a week to finalize a four part draft declaration and a five chapter draft programme of action replete with square brackets signifying North-South disagreements.

Both documents have to be unanimously adopted by some 120 world political leaders on Sunday evening.

Fund

The draft programme of action lists a proposal for an 'International Fund for Social Development' to be funded by "new and innovative sources of financing" to generate new resources for social development, but remains bracketed for discussion.

These ideas may not see fruition immediately, but discussing novel concepts are good because "when it comes to financing we squeak like little mice," remarked Kaul.

Aid given by industrialised countries fell markedly in 1993 after remaining stable for the past 20 years, declining from 61 billion dollars disbursed in 1992 to 56 billion dollars in 1993.



Kandyan Dancers at the NGO forum. Picture by Klaus Holsting

Looking to the day after next week

What happens after Copenhagen?

'The summit may die from political indifference'

By Anacleto Rwegayura

What happens after the Social Summit packs up and the participants go home? For sure, the more than one billion people living in abject poverty will not suddenly become rich nor will the world's 2.8 billion unemployed land jobs.

But the question of follow up mechanisms is one that heads of state and government need to answer as the week-long summit kicks off today.

The deliberations here could set the stage for what happens after the summit on attacking poverty, building solidarity and creating jobs - the main issues on the agenda.

Drawing a lesson from the previous U.N. summits on children and the environment, some observers have suggested an institutional mechanism that could be inter-agency or inter-governmental to follow up the programmes of action to be adopted.

According to a senior official of the U.N. Development Programme, Mahub ul Haq, "the summit represents the aspirations of the poor, the unemployed, the marginalised and the forgotten." But, "the summit may well die from political indifference," ul Haq, a Special Adviser to the Administrator of the UNDP, pointed out.

He told journalists at the Bella Centre, the summit venue, that without the political commitment of governments, carefully drafted declarations by the U.N. bureaucrats could not produce practical solutions to the world-wide problems of poverty and jobless growth.

"Let leaders of the world decide that the work to eradicate the problems of poverty and unemployment begins at once, based on equality in access to global opportunities," he said.

Poverty-related social problems are seen by some experts to revolve around the uncertainty in the security of

peoples' lives.

Although social development is primarily a national responsibility, international cooperation is central to finding solutions to prevailing social problems in developing regions of the world, particularly in Africa.

In sub-Saharan Africa, not one country has had single-digit unemployment since the 1970s. Currently, urban employment rates range between 15 percent and 20 percent, according to the UNDP.

Analysts agree that the obstacle to eradicating absolute poverty, even in developing countries, was not the question of resources rather the problem of setting priorities.

Poverty and unemployment are at the heart of problems in almost every country. But, their solution needs a mix of measures that is realistic to each society.

ATI wants a solution

Rural. Small. Should such words spell marginalisation?

Not if the Appropriate Technology International (ATI) and other NGO's have their way.

As ministers and technocrats from more than 100 countries prepared for the opening of the World Summit these NGOs continued shouting yesterday to make sure their voices are heard above the din of varied interest groups all trumpeting their own causes.

Their message? Improve the welfare of the world's rural producers and entrepreneurs!

ATI says the lot of these groups can only improve if sustainable development program-

Overall solutions are envisaged in investment in human development through education and provision of health services.

Developing countries which, on average spend around 150 billion dollars a year on the military and overlook basic social services for the poor, have to reconsider their priorities in order to get cooperation of industrialised nations.

If poverty has to be tackled, said ul Haq, each nation has to ensure a restructuring of its budget and developing nations would need boosted trade and increased investment flows from industrialised countries.

The UNDP official explained that the opening up of economies of the South would require a reciprocal action from the North in order to "build a new edifice of development cooperation."

mes are designed and appropriate solutions worked out.

It wants alternative financing mechanisms. Commercialisation of hard and soft technologies which small producers need. It wants to increase their productivity. Allow them to gain access to new markets.

Only then will they get meaningful earnings of income from the sale of goods.

"Our aim is to bolster the creativity and know-how of millions of small-scale farmers and entrepreneurs with specialised technical, business and marketing skills," said ATI president Andrew Maguire.

Nielson's aid pledge

After the party Danish support will go on

By Gumisai Mutume

Denmark will not cut its commitment to development aid and believes debt relief for Africa should be a major issue at the Social Summit, minister for development cooperation, Poul Nielson, said yesterday in an exclusive interview with Terra Viva.

"In fact, we will increase the level of our overseas assistance which is currently one percent of the gross national programme as our economy grows," Nielson pledged.

Denmark donates 10 billion kroner (about 1.6 billion dollars) each year to development projects. Sixty five percent of the country's bilateral aid goes to some 20 countries in Africa.

Nielson also called for urgent attention to Africa's debt crisis. "If we do not do anything to deal with the debt burden it will continue to erode the benefits of aid," he said. "And that means we are shooting ourselves in the leg."

However, the development minister said the same initiative should not be extended to Latin America because most of its economies are diverse enough to deal with their debt problems.

Denmark will be lobbying

for the inclusion in the summit document of the '20/20 compact'. The proposal calls for donor countries to target 20 percent of their development aid for spending on social services, matched by 20 percent from the national budgets of developing countries. "There is a growing interest towards having this as the basis for future aid relationships," said Nielson.

As the host country of the biggest gathering of world leaders, Denmark hopes "to awaken the world's social consciousness and will help to put pressure on governments to give first priority to fighting poverty," the minister said.

He stressed that in order to make the summit a milestone in the fight against poverty, a clear mechanism of evaluation of progress in each country must be developed as a follow up measure.

"Perhaps something like UNICEF's report on the state of the world's children which would provide statistics and generate global debate," he said.

Northern poverty gap ignored?

By Mahesh Uniyal

The world's first summit to find a solution to global poverty is ignoring growing islands of deprivation within rich nations, charge northern civil society activists.

"We are not saying Europe first. We do not want to be misunderstood. But, it looks as if the problem of poverty in the industrialised world is very much sidelined at the summit," says Marie-Francoise Wilkinson, of the European Anti-Poverty Network.

"We would like the rich nations at the summit to realise that their economies should be at the service of the people and not the other way round."

The network brings together thousands of European NGOs trying to help the increasing number of poor and socially marginalised in the 12 countries of the European Union.

Set up six years ago, it is lobbying to get initiatives combating poverty and social exclusion on the political agenda of the Union.

According to official EU figures, Europe has 53 million people below the poverty line.

However, activists point out that these statistics are six years out of date. They fail to take account of the rising levels of destitution, despite state welfare spending. "Some people get through the net, it is not tight enough," says Wilkinson.

Ireland, Greece, Spain and Portugal do not have state

welfare programmes for the impoverished. And, weak family structures make it all the harder for the poor to cope.

"European societies are less and less based on family ties and so people out of jobs have no one to fall back on," points out Ruth Brand of the Network.

The anti-poverty group urges European governments to link economic and social policies and to assess the impact of their decisions on people's lives.

Network

A sore point for the Network is the lack of a coherent approach to business migration within the region, where factories can close in one country to open in another as entrepreneurs take advantage of state subsidies on offer.

The European Network has close contacts with similar anti-poverty groups in the developing world where several of its members run programmes.

At the social summit, it is supporting all the demands being made by southern NGO organisations on debt-reduction, increased northern aid flows and more open markets in industrialised nations for developing world products.

The determination to advance the cause

From Boutros Boutros-Ghali
Secretary-General of the United Nations

As this issue of Terra Viva is being prepared for publication, heads of state and government from 138 countries, ministerial delegations and representatives of more than 2,500 non-governmental organisations are preparing for the World Summit on Social Development.

Here, in Copenhagen, the global community will come together to discuss issues which are important not only for the development of individual societies, but also to shape policies concerning issues which cut across national borders.

Not since the Earth Summit of June 1992 has there been such a clear determination to advance the cause of development through the generation of ideas, consensus and specific commitments.

International conferences at the summit level are rare occurrences. Indeed, among the large number of conferences held by the United Nations in its fifty years, summit conferences can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Such major efforts require long and careful planning. They are, in themselves, a demonstration of shared international concern and cooperation.

In 1990, we held the World Summit for Children, which stimulated action in all parts of the world. Over 93 countries have prepared National Programmes of Action, translating the goals for women and children agreed

at the Summit into country level policies in health, education, nutrition, water and sanitation. Progress has been dramatic.

In January 1992, the Security Council Summit brought together Heads of State and Government from fifteen countries in a one-day meeting. At this meeting, the Secretary-General was requested to prepare a report on preventive diplomacy, peace-keeping and peace-making, to which I added the concept of peace-building. The result was An Agenda for Peace, which set markers for a new generation of peace operations.

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) was held in Rio de Janeiro. The Earth Summit was attended by over 100 heads of state and government and a large number of non-governmental organisations. The Earth Summit raised awareness of the need for sustainable development. The Plan of Action adopted at the summit, Agenda 21, remains the fundamental internationally-agreed document for a development path respectful of the environment and future generations.

In Copenhagen, we meet mindful of the tremendous impact of summit conferences. We are fully conscious of our part in the continuum of conferences and summits from the World Summit for Children, to UNCED, to the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna in 1993, to the Cairo International Conference on Population and Development held in September 1994, to this

World Summit for Social Development, to the Fourth World Conference on Women next September in Beijing, and to the Second World Conference on Human Settlements, to be held in Istanbul in 1996. This cycle of conferences and summits seeks to redefine an approach to the welfare of the human person and human communities in a rapidly changing world.

Conference diplomacy is certainly not new. Yet summit meetings on such a scale have become a feature of the work of the United Nations in the post-cold war world. Global conferences and summits are emerging as the United Nations contribution to the invention of a new world, where global issues can be discussed in an atmosphere of respect for the historical and cultural specificity of each society. The continuum of conferences is evolving a wholly new kind of mechanism for international action. They are becoming indispensable because they involve not only governments, but business people, trade unionists, women's groups, professional associations and non-governmental organisations of every kind.

The United Nations was created, half a century ago, through an international conference. Today, in its fiftieth anniversary, the United Nations organises conferences to create a new and better world for our children.

Boutros Boutros-Ghali

Juan Somavia

Summit, a symbol of the post-war era

Ambassador Juan Somavia spent the last few hours in a state of anxiety belied by his outward calm. Four years after he began working full time as chair of the Preparatory Committee, the activities of the Social Development Summit, are about to begin.

Somavia, Chile's Permanent Representative at the United Nations, is doubtless the person who has the clearest idea of the significance and expectations of this summit.

He spoke with Terra Viva's Luis Cordova.

Q: You have referred to this summit as a post-Cold war event? Some people think it is a step along the path of North-South confrontation...

A: First of all, what I said is that I think that this summit is a symbol of the end of the Cold War, for the reason that we have been able to agree on a vision of what social development is about, and how social development in all our societies should be approached. That would have been impossible ten years ago, because then the same conference with the same issues would have been purely ideological debates between competing social systems, while today, a sort of values and objectives have already been approved, because about 97% of the declaration has been approved.

But the question is, where is the conflict in this Summit? I think that the conflict is between what the Summit says and the reality of the world. The Summit is saying that if we continue along the same road that we are going today, we will increase the uncertainty of the life of people and the

People can make a difference, and that's where the strength of the Summit is going to lie.

by Luis Cordova

insecurity of our society, and that we have to change direction. But the world is moving in another direction, we are moving in a direction that in the last 30 years has made it possible for the gap between 20% of the people with the highest level of income, that had 30 times more than the lowest 20%, to increase to 60 times.

And there is also the South and the North, and we have to acknowledge that as a social reality of the world today.

Q: But will a gap between the South and the North emerge over the following days?

R: The gap is there, but we have to accustom ourselves to looking at the gap in terms of people, not only in term of countries. And if we look at the gap between people, it is growing in every country, because there is more polarisation today in Europe than 15 years ago, and there is more polarisation in the United States than 15 years ago. And this is the real human tragedy today, that we have forgotten a basic lesson of history, that for us to be able to develop, we have to integrate society and not polarise it. In that context, there are obviously different interests between the North and South that have to be resolved, but the big problem of the world is that we have forgotten the people's talent, we have for-

gotten to put people first, and to put the people into the picture, and this is what the Summit is trying to do.

Q: There seems to be a lot of skepticism about the results of this summit. How do you feel about it?

A: I think that skepticism is part of society. Skepticism is one of the issues of an intellectual attitude. You simply assume that you sort of lay back, you do not have personal responsibilities, you are an observer of reality and you point your finger at others and you say that the things they are doing are not right. That intellectual attitude is the intellectual attitude of someone who is not going to be part of the process. You can have another approach, you could say that these are extremely difficult problems, but fortunately you have decided to discuss them, to say that these are the problems of the future, to give some sort of orientation and direction, and to hopefully influence reality.

Yes, you will always find in a society people who say that the ideas and the dreams and the value objectives of others are unpractical, and unreal, and that they will never happen. Fortunately, most people, throughout history, have not been skeptics, and that's why changes have taken place.

Q: You say the resources are there, but not the priorities. Does this summit have the challenge to generate resources?

A: I insist on what I said. The real issue is to put those resources at the service of social priorities. What this summit is saying is let's not fall into the trap of believing that only because you put money on to the table, changes are possible. That's a purely materialistic view, that doesn't take into account the force of social forces and, to be very frank, I think that for those who believe in changes - because skeptics don't believe in changes and they are not that important - but for those who do believe, much more important than asking for resources is to say that there is a commitment to eliminating absolute poverty.

Those who look exclusively at the resources are missing the point. I put my expectations on people. People can make a difference, and that's where the strength of the Summit is going to lie.

Q: Some people seem worried about what will happen after this summit, arguing that nothing happened after other similar meetings...

A: I think they are right. But UN follow up has been successful in the children's and population summits. Both had organisations like UNICEF or UNFPA working at the ground level and we want the Secretary-General to say who is going to be responsible for the follow up of the Social Summit on the ground. We need to have the UN as an activist.

The doors open for some

Who's coming to the big party, and who's not

By Ruby Ofori

At last count, a total of 69 kings were expected at the Copenhagen summit, including King Mswathi III of Swaziland and King Hussein of Jordan.

Fidel Castro, the Cuban president, is expected. And Yasser Arafat the Palestinian leader. President Joaquim Alberto Chissano of Mozambique, among the world's poorest nations, is also expected. Albania's Head of State is slated to be here. His name is Sali Berisha and his country is regarded as the poorest in Europe.

Eritrea's Isaias Afwerki, a new and hopeful country in Africa with pressing problems.

Do not expect to see John Major, the British prime minister. Nor will Boris Yeltsin of Russia be here. Britain's position will be adequately put by the delegation of the European Union, said Poul Nielson, the Danish cooperation minister.

Haiti, one of the poorest nations in the Americas, will not be represented, according to the latest available list of participants. Nicaragua, another country whose name has become a byword for poverty, will be represented by its president, Violeta Barrios de Chamorro.

Al Gore, vice president of the United States, which is rich, is expected to attend.

And Hilary Clinton, the wife of the U.S. president, arrives on Tuesday. Bella Abzug, co-chair of the Women in Environment and Development Organisation, says she advised Mrs Clinton to make an impact before Beijing. Otherwise, she would be "just another First lady" at the 4th world women's conference in September.

The Danish foreign ministry has made elaborate arrangements for this summit. An army of 150 men and women in red jackets has been kitted out. They will be attached to each delegation. The Danes call these escorts "problem solvers".

Who will guard these already heavily guarded people?

As is normal for such U.N. events, the Bella centre venue has been designated U.N. territory. The United Nations is responsible for security. Still the casually dressed security people around are Danish policemen.

Queen Margrethe plans to host all 116 heads of state for a jamboree at the Christiansborg Palace on Saturday. It is a strictly a black suit affair though ethnic dress will be allowed. On that same day, foreign minister Poul Nielson will host delegations at

TERRA VIVA

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The opinions expressed in Terra Viva do not necessarily reflect the official



End the fragmentation of the human person

Opinion

There is a person at this conference who needs shelter, food, health and education; she needs a job, and a safe and clean environment; she was once a child, and, sooner than she would like, she will be old; she demands that her human rights be respected. She has many other wants, and many things to contribute. Her brother is exactly the same. And the rest of humanity is not so very different.

Why then is the response to human development fragmented into a multitude of ministries and agencies - both nationally and internationally? The former claim to coordinate in cabinet meetings and the latter at fora like the United Nations' inoffensively-named Administrative Committee on Coordination.

But who are we kidding? Polite platitudes mask the fierce competition for resources between ministers and agency heads. They pledge to work together. And then they go their separate ways, to make the case to the world at large that their fragment of the human person is most worthy of attention, their slice the key to progress. Turf is all - whether their work is still relevant to development or not. This sectoral approach to civilisation has been regularly spotlighted at international conferences - at considerable expense.

At lower levels, harassed civil servants are very aware that coordination across depart-

ments and agencies creates more work, multiplying the number of people that will need to be copied memos and the documentation to be generated. Only the most dedicated rise to the challenge and try to bring their specific area into the big picture.

When development experts travel to the South to introduce some newly discovered "concern", they find a more holistic view - especially if they travel outside the capital, which is dominated by sectoral ministries. At the community level, the response is often, "But we don't see ourselves like that. We are not either children, or women, or elderly, or sick, or job-seekers. We are all of these things, some of the time, in our families and communities." This is a view worthy of respect.

Of course, it is important to focus on specific issues in order to understand them. But once understood, they must be integrated. In recent years, there has been growing awareness that sectoral questions cannot be resolved without cross-cutting approaches. A health problem may really be a water issue, or a question of women's human rights. An education question may really be one of nutrition or of labour.

The international conferences of the 1990s have helped to broaden the approach to devel-

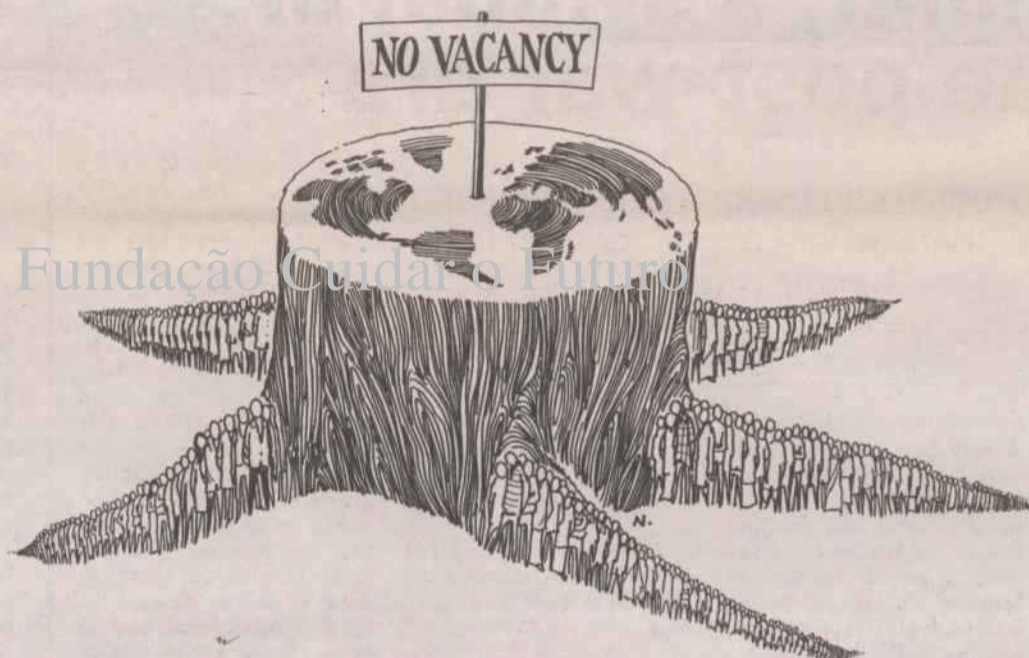
opment beyond each sector's specific purview. Jomtien called for linking basic needs, education and employment. Rio looked at environment, the economy, poverty and people's participation.

But the world is still a long way from a holistic vision of development that can guide national and international efforts. This Summit provides a key opportunity to integrate development in the service of the human person. The Declaration and Programme of Action are already the most integrative of documents. Key issues are inter-related throughout the text, and not just in special issue chapters.

There is a need to go further, to find innovative ways to promote integration all the way through the development system and down to the community level. There have been calls to follow this Summit by an Economic Summit and by other special issue fora. Don't do it.

The Programme of Action proposes a special session in the year 2000 for an overall review and appraisal of the Social Summit. Why not start today towards a truly integrated vision of human development - backed by one unified paper by all the United Nations system agencies, and integrated reports from the country level.

It will take time, and there will be problems. After all, even delegates are only human.



A guide to human rights [and other brackets]

Analysis by Nadia Hijab

Negotiations on the Declaration and Programme of Action begin today. As United Nations conference documents go, there are a minimal number of brackets for consideration. Delegates have tried to carry forward the consensus of earlier gatherings on education, children and population. But earlier confrontations are also here, and hard-won battles seem in danger of being re-fought. As usual, the text is so subtle that the point can only be understood by seasoned conference goers.

First, take the right to development. After countries like the United States and some Scandinavian countries had blocked it for years, this was finally accepted as a human right at the Vienna World Conference on Human Rights in June 1993.

Just two years later, the right to development finds itself trapped in brackets in some parts of the text - incongru-

ously, at a Summit on Social Development. See especially paragraphs 15 and 17. The Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights - agreed nearly 30 years ago - is also in brackets! Refer to paragraph 26/f.

After the Vienna Conference, colleagues at the Geneva-based Centre for Human Rights were jubilant that these rights were at last being accorded the same importance as civil and political rights. Henceforth, their documents would no longer use the style "civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights", but would list these rights in alphabetical order to indicate that all had equal importance. But the Social Summit document has reverted back to the old style, as in Commitment 4/c.

Another of the Vienna gains was the reaffirmation of the universality of human rights, which some countries in the

South had tried to call into question. Yet here it is called into question again, in bracketed text suggesting that the heads of state could "provide a stable legal framework [in accordance with our constitutions and national laws and procedures]" as in Commitment 1/a or Commitment 4/n.

Human rights NGOs are lobbying against both attempts. Human Rights Caucus Co-Chair at the NGO Forum Julia Hausserman told Terra Viva, "The Caucus believes that the Right to Development is central to social development", and described it as an "inalienable right". They also called for removal of all brackets around the International Covenant on Social and Economic Rights and for deletion of the references to "national legislation" or "national sove-

reignty".

The Cairo Population Conference just seven months ago was meant to have resolved outstanding issues. But the brackets in Commitment 5/d suggest otherwise "[programmes for which should provide the widest range of services, without any form of coercion]". Even a reference to principle 9 of that conference finds itself between brackets.

The fears of the South on the reduction and redirection of foreign aid are reflected in the frequent brackets around the "economies in transition", the now-traditional reference to the countries of central and eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict can be found in the brackets around the "realisation of the right to self-determination of people under colonial or foreign occupation". Efforts to repeal the sanctions

against Iraq are bracketed in Commitment 8/d "[Abstain from implementing coercive measures of a unilateral character which violate international law and put obstacles in the economic and social development of states]".

Other seriously bracketed issues highlight the North-South struggle over debt, how far to go on structural adjustment, refugees, migrants, and the perennial question of new and additional financial resources.

But all be resolved by Saturday. How can one be so sure? Perhaps the document has become too long to be manageable, but it is striking to note that almost all of the issues bracketed in some one section are fully agreed in others. It is best not to draw the attention of delegates to these as not to prolong the debates (and to maintain the achievements of previous conferences).



Five young people, among 400 young activists from more than 80 countries participating in a Youth Caucus. The youth leaders are demanding a voice at the Social Summit.

"We also want a situation in which youth are more actively consulted on national issues, not only on matters that directly affect us," a spokesman said. Of the world's 5.7 billion people, 1.5 billion are aged between 15 and 29.

Six days to go

Mad rush for consensus

"No Third World country is of strategic importance"

by Thalif Deen

The social summit opening today is involved in a race against time. Delegates have only six days within which to resolve contentious issues still deadlocked after three long preparatory meetings in New York.

The disputes revolve around several socio-economic issues. Debt cancellation, for example. New sources of development funding. Demilitarization. The right to development. The use of child

labour. Reproductive health. Revision of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs).

While most U.N. conferences extend over two weeks, the Copenhagen summit has less than a week to finalize a four part draft declaration. Delegates must also wrangle over a five chapter draft pro-

gramme of action replete with square brackets signifying North-South disagreements.

Both documents have to be unanimously adopted by some 120 world political leaders on Sunday evening.

The 132-member Group of

77 - the largest single grouping of developing nations - has proposed the creation of an international fund for social development. But Western nations are opposing it because the money has to eventually come out of their pockets.

The concept of "new and additional resources" no longer exist, say the West, renegeing on a promise made at the June 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

The West argues it is mired in economic recession and has also to channel some of its funds to the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.

The Third World, is, therefore, one of its least political and economic priorities.

Ambassador Razali Ismail of Malaysia told Terra Viva it is important to ensure there is no back-peddling on commitments already on the table.

"The question of resources was an important issue, which might be the basis for some to judge the outcome of the summit," he said.

The Vatican argues that some of the "new and additional resources" can be generated by reducing excessive military expenditures and slashing investments in arms production.

But the world's major arms exporters - along with some security-conscious developing nations - are poised to shoot it down.

The right to military spending is a sovereign right of each nation state, argue the heavy military spenders, and there can be no compromise on it.

The West is also renegeing on "the right to development" - a concept it voluntarily agreed to at the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993.

The Western states realize that the "right to development" is also linked to a commitment to provide the necessary funds for developing nations to exercise that right.

All references to "the right to development" are in square brackets in the summit's programme of action. The 15-member European Union (EU) wants an explicit commitment to protect workers' rights and also to outlaw child labour.

But developing nations want only a general commitment to respect the relevant conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) without singling them out.

The Third World's fear is that once it makes specific commitments, industrial states will use them as protectionist measures to ban goods coming from countries that do not adhere to these pledges.

The North and the South are also in dispute over family reunification rights and reproductive health, the latter opening up the festering issue of abortion and family planning.

The West and the Middle East nations - the temporary home of most migrant workers - oppose any right to family reunification. At present, most labour-importing Middle East nations such as Kuwait and Saudi Arabia do not permit workers to bring their families along with them.

The migrant issue has brought about a realignment of forces: the developing countries of the Middle East implicitly joining hands with the West against labour-exporting developing nations of Asia.

At one of the preparatory committee meetings in New York, one Western delegate opposed any discussion of issues relating to debt, development aid or the policies of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"These are economic, not social issues. And therefore they have no place in a social summit", he said.

Something that they can all agree on?

New initiative seeks to pull NGOs together

By Yvette Collymore

An initiative launched yesterday is seeking to rally disparate groups of non-governmental groups behind a single position: that the world's prevailing market system has failed and must be fixed.

Called the 'Oslofjord Declaration', the initiative emerged from a meeting last month in Oslo of seven government representatives, and a number of people's groups as well as prominent citizens from some 20 countries.

The document examines alternatives for equitable development since its backers strongly oppose the draft documents to be agreed on by heads of government when they meet in a matter of days for the world's first summit on poor people.

The Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development, which organised the Oslo meeting, presented its document to NGOs in an effort to forge unity among culturally and ideologically diverse groups from around the world.

The document has as a central concern the exclusion of people and communities in rich and poor countries, and

for this it largely blames the neo-liberal market system supported widely by governments and multilateral institutions.

"The predominant neo-liberal market system as a universal model for development has failed. The evidence, both spectacular and systemic, shows that it does not work," says the declaration signed by government officials from Haiti, Eritrea, Cuba, South Africa, Vietnam, Palestine, and the Indian state of Kerala.

Many non-governmental organisations attending the Summit for Social Development here say the declaration and plan of action prepared at inter-governmental negotiations for world leaders contains no steps to redress a development model that has marginalised millions of people around the world.

The disappointment over the official conference papers is coupled with a concern over the lack of spirit which typifies much of the non-governmental response to the sum-

mit. Many wonder how it is that the world's civil society, which put on a major show at the 1992 environment and development conference in Rio de Janeiro has so far provided only a tepid reaction to a summit on poverty.

One supporter of Sunday's initiative says if NGOs taking part in the alternative forum here are at all concerned about the documents prepared for the summit, they are keeping it to themselves.

The Oslo statement has a number of recommendations. It says that government decisions must be taken after full consultation with the community to be affected, that no impoverished community can protect its environment. It says governments must make land reform the basis for healthy rural economies and ensure credit for poor people to create their own employment.

The document says "it is legitimate" for individual governments to protect their people, especially farmers and

young industries, from the effects of deregulated trade and to regulate the market.

It also calls for the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to be made fully transparent and accountable for their policies through monitoring mechanisms.

Signatories to the declaration include Salvadoran politician Ruben Zamora, senior advisor to the United Nations, Erskine Childers, and Peggy Antrobus, the leader of Development with Women for a New Era (DAWN).

But some NGOs say while the Oslo initiative does focus on key issues that have either received short shrift or have been neglected altogether in United Nations documents for the summit, the Oslo initiative needs concrete steps for NGO action.

Victoria Tauli, who represents both the Third World Network and the Asian Indigenous Women's Network says while there are many "beautiful declarations" around, many lack concrete programmes to turn them into action, therefore nothing gets done.

On the
Way Up By

Summiteer



Us summit-hopping sherpas are used to the elaborate security at these global jamborees. So when we have to wait for five hours just to get press passes as we did in Cairo, we grumbled a bit, but we drowned our sorrows in Egyptian wine. Brazilian security was tight, but with Ipanema nearby, who was complaining? In Vienna, the Austrians frisked us five times a day without violating our human rights.

But when summits are held in the dead of winter and we have to trek to the other side of the solar system in a howling blizzard just to find the East Gate of the Bella Center that's a bit much.

There we were, our free umbrellas turning into satellite dishes, our saris turning into sails and our ear lobes turning numb. Cold is a diuretic, but try finding a WC inside the BC. We came across many doors that were padlocked and sealed, ostensibly for security reasons. Then, when we finally spotted the familiar loo sign, we discovered to our horror that it was out of bounds and accessible only to those with All Areas passes. Just to finish this story, let me add that it has a happy ending.

WARNING: Security does not allow you to wait inside the lobby of East Gate for Bus 46. You have to freeze outside on the kerb.

Whose grand idea was it anyway to have a winter summit at 59 degrees north latitude? What will they think of next, a summit at the summit of Mt Everest?

It's all the fault of the French, we hear. They did not want this carnival to clash with their elections. And the hosts were keen to have it in the off-season so the hotels would get some business.

The ex-naval base at Holmen is a model of military-civilian conversion. One of us overheard two participants jabbering away in the number eight bus: First participant: It's a delicious irony that the NGO forum is being held at a naval base, isn't it?

Second participant: It's called reallocation of resources.

Even better: the Committee for World Governance held its meeting inside the cargo hold of a former military ferry where speakers suggested ways to turning swords into social spending.

US: no way on UNESCO

A U.S. administration official Sunday said while Washington wants to rejoin the U.N. Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO), it faces budgetary restrictions.

"Given the difficult budget situation (in the United States), I have no prediction on when we'll rejoin UNESCO," said Melinda Kimble, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State.

Kimble, who has headed the U.S. team in negotiations leading to the Mar. 6-12 World Summit for Social Development here, told reporters the Clinton administration had taken an early decision to rejoin the organisation but is not now in a position to fully fund its reentry.

Aides of President Bill Clinton at the

State Department reportedly assured UNESCO as recently as this year that the administration was ready to renew its membership of the organisation now headed by Federico Mayor.

But in a year that brought in a Republican-controlled Congress ready to cut U.S. foreign assistance and contributions to U.N. agencies, the Clinton administration has apparently discretely place its promises on a back-burner.

The United States under former President Ronald Reagan withdrew from UNESCO in 1984, charging that the Paris-based U.N. agency, then headed by Senegal's Amadou Mahtar M'Bow was mismanaged, and that its agenda was too politicised.

WHO blames World Bank policy Poor the casualty of health reform

By Jaya Dayal

A senior World Health Organisation (WHO) official yesterday accused the World Bank's health privatisation policies of causing untold misery and deepening poverty in developing countries.

"When we talk about privatisation, let's realise that health is different. Health is non-negotiable. It cannot be bought and sold at a commercial price," said Dr. Aleya Ham-

mad, special representative to the WHO's Director General for Health Policy.

The WHO representative made her remarks following a senior World Bank official's defense of structural adjustment as a means to better living standards and economic growth.

David de Ferranti, director of the Bank's Population, Health and Nutrition department, told reporters that where countries have taken "serious steps through structural adjustment, real progress has

been made."

But the World Bank-sponsored reforms, which call for cuts in public spending in the areas of health, education and other social sectors, have seen the dismantling of services supporting the poor.

NGOs argue that SAPs are directly responsible for worsening health conditions in countries undergoing economic reforms. The results of privatising health has included steep increases in the cost of medicines and treatment.

De Ferranti pointed out that the Bank invests five billion dollars each year in basic social services - "more than twice what goes to economic reform issues."

Human right

He observed that apart from making good social sense, investing in these areas like health and education is good for business, that is, in "cold, hard-headed economic terms."

But Hassan disagreed: "Health is a human right whether or not it contributes to economic development." She added that health indicators are "the mirror of what went wrong" with economic reforms.

A WHO position paper on the Social Summit argues meanwhile that women have been especially hard hit by the rising cost of health services.

Bella Abzug, co-chair of the New York-based Women's Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO) also challenged de Ferranti's positive outlook on structural adjustment.

"Women bear the brunt of structural adjustment and austerity policies as critical programmes are defunded - in effect, women become the shock absorbers of social change and SAPs."

Abzug added that as a result of these reforms, "in some parts of the world, women are losing whatever rights and benefits they gained." World Bank supports 20/20: Page 11

A leading British development agency is criticising the World Bank for persisting with "failed" Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), which the agency says are doing more harm than good to Third World countries, reports IPS in London.

Using Zambia and Zimbabwe as examples of where "failed Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), have worsened poverty, increased unemployment and undermined communities," Christian Aid urges reform that places the poor at the heart of development.

The charges are contained in a report published to coincide with today's opening of the Social Summit.

One of the main topics of discussion at the U.N.-sponsored gathering will be SAPs. Devised in the 1970s, SAPs are supposed to foster macro-economic stability, while at the same time leading to primary commodity export growth and sustainable development.

Critics however say the cumulative effect of these policies has been the pauperisation of the developing world amid a spiralling debt crisis which, for sub-Saharan Africa alone, stands at more than 250

By Susan Litherland

billion dollars.

"For millions of the world's poor it is the World Bank and IMF, rather than national governments, who will be the main players at the Summit," says Jessica Woodroffe, Christian Aid's campaign policy adviser.

"They have the power to shape economic policies in Third World countries because they hold the purse strings."

Now Christian Aid is saying a new understanding of the need for a mixed economy is required, where the public sector plays an important role.

Another British development charity, Oxfam, believes SAPs should take national conditions far more into account and give a bigger say to Third World governments.

One option, says Oxfam policy adviser Patricia Finney, would be to give them a chance to get second opinions from independent economists, and use their findings to back up an appeal if they felt the World Bank and IMF were not being fair in the conditions laid down. "It would democratise the process."

Homeless at the Poverty Summit

By Remi Oyo

It could be argued that Doris Garcia is in the right place at the right time: homeless in Copenhagen as Denmark hosts the World Summit for Social Development, a.k.a. the Poverty Summit.

Yet her plight is symbolic of the less than sanguine expectations critics have about the outcome of this World Summit - that this is a forum for talk - not action - about the problems of poverty.

So while world leaders slept in comfortable beds on the eve of the conference and aides polished up the speeches to be delivered at plenary sessions, Doris Garcia had nowhere to lay her head.

A 32-year-old mother of six, she came to Denmark from Nicaragua, one of Latin America's poorest nations. She wanted to talk about what it means to be poor. Instead Doris Garcia found herself as much a living example of deprivation in Copenhagen as she was illustrative of poverty in her homeland.

Back in Nicaragua, Doris Garcia worked on a banana plantation. She has worked there for 20 years.

From Copenhagen she was scheduled to go on to seminars in Norway, the Netherlands, Germany and Ireland. There she would talk about her plight, give Europeans a from-the-horse's-mouth account of what it feels like to be poor.

That's what was said in the invitation letter sent to her NGO - "Asociacion de Trabajadores del Campo" - by Farmers' Link, an organisation based in Norwich, the United Kingdom.

On her arrival in Copenhagen on Saturday, from Managua, Doris expected to meet Alistair Smith, a representative of Farmers' Link.

Smith was not at the airport. Spanish-speaking Doris spent the night in the home of an information guide she met at the airport. "I have no money...and everything is so expensive here," she told Terra Viva yesterday at the conference centre of the NGO forum in Holmen.

Doris had desperately wanted to share with other participants at the Forum the experiences of women farmers in her native land.

Her dilemma in Copenhagen epitomises the problems of some representatives of poor NGOs from the developing world.

Their voices are important in discussions on global issues, but not many have the chance to be heard. To reach Copenhagen, they have had to use personal contacts, and rely on a turn of luck.

Ozias Tinguwarara from Zimbabwe who is being sponsored by the British charity Oxfam, gave an indication of the extent of donor fatigue affecting participation in this conference.

He said some donor NGOs tended to ignore those Third World NGOs which they felt carried out functions unrelated to the issues at the conference. "They tend to deal with less contagious organisations," she said.

Joseph Oneka, a lawyer from Uganda, did not have to struggle to get to Copenhagen. He is at the NGO forum with the support of the four-year-old International Migrant Rights Watch Committee to which he belongs.

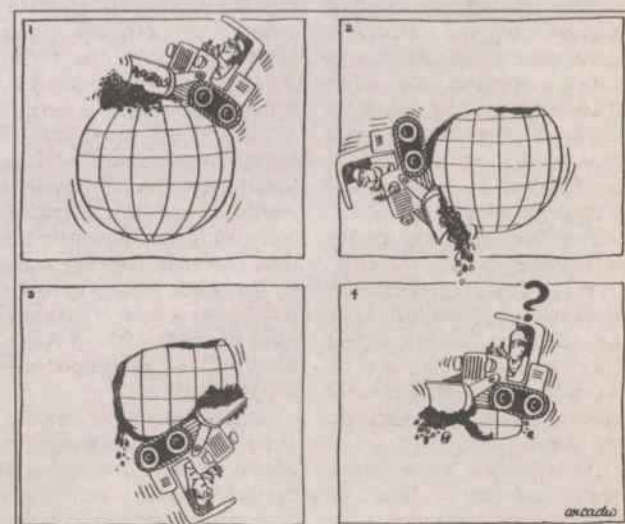
South

Oneka is one of four people sponsored by the Committee which was set up with support from the World Council of Churches. Wealthier NGOs are sponsoring as many as 14 participants drawn from different parts of the south.

Patrick Taran, spokesman of the Migrants Rights Watch Committee, said an estimated US\$10,000 was raised to sponsor the four participants. But he said: "It is quite difficult to raise funds on migrant issues."

Although the presence of migrants in countries was seen as "threatening and unpopular", the Committee intended to sensitise conference participants especially on the ratification of the 1990 U.N. Convention on the protection of the Rights of all migrants workers and their families.

World view



Arcadio, Costa Rica. © Cartoonists & Writers Syndicate.



First economic power agrees to 20/20 compact

Progress. Japanese Prime Minister, Tomiichi Murayama, agrees informally on the 20/20 aid concept

By Jens Jørgen Madsen

The Japanese government is ready to support the 20/20 proposal, which is currently only in square brackets in the summit's Programme of Action.

In a dialogue meeting with "Japanese NGO Forum for Social Development", the Japanese government surprisingly agreed on the 20/20 compact, earmarking at least 20 percent of their national budget for basic social development.

According to Yoko Kitazawa, copresident of the Pacific Asia Resource Center and president of the People to People Aid groups that are part of the Japanese NGO Forum the Japanese government agreed last month that the 20/20 concept should be implemented already by year 1996.

"Japan is one of the world's most influential economies

but is known to be very stubborn. Up until now, the government has even refused to tell how much aid it spends directly on basic needs. Probably only a few percent. But now the government is moving along quickly. We are in a very good process," Yoko Kitazawa tells NGO News.

Together with two other representatives from Japanese NGO Forum, president Kitazawa took part in the unusual dialogue meeting with the Japanese government.

At the same meeting, the Japanese government agreed to circa 67 percent debt relief plus reducing military spending but only in general terms and without mentioning the year and the amount. The government totally refused the proposal of introducing the Tobin tax.

New organization

The cooperation between Japanese NGO Forum and the Japanese government is all very new.

According to Yoko Kitazawa, Japanese NGO's have not been very outspoken until recently, and the coalition Japanese NGO Forum for Social Development was formed as late as last summer, just before the second UN PrepCom.

The Forum represents a wide range of Japanese NGOs and more than 20 million people, among them: academics, journalists, women's organizations, unions and parliamentarians.

The two main aims of the Forum are to popularize the main themes of the Social Summit and to negotiate with and put pressure on the Japanese government.

Yoko Kitazawa emphasizes that the dialogue meeting with the Japanese government shows that NGOs can have an important role to play. "We are very proud and owe very much to the United Nations. At the first UN PrepCom, the Japanese government was barely represented and there was little enthusiasm. After that, we formed the committee and since then, things have moved very quickly," she says.



Yoko Kitazawa, Japanese NGO Forum, who has influenced decisionmaking in the Japanese government. Photo: IKON/Flemming Andersen.

Partnership

On February 14th this year, the government formed the Government Coordination Committee on Social Development a delegation of about 60 members with all Japanese ministers represented, three

parliamentarians (including the opposition) and the three representatives of Japanese NGO Forum, among them Yoko Kitazawa.

She adds that this is the first time the civil society is in a partnership with the govern-

ment, but that she does not fear being used to legitimize government policies.

"Japanese NGO Forum does not justify the government's policies, we make the differences between them and us very clear and we are extremely critical. We also choose our own representatives," she stresses.

The next step for Japanese NGO Forum is to institutionalize the dialogue between the Forum and the government.

"We want to make our own national social compact with our government after the Social Summit, and the Japanese government has promised to continue working together. They know that the present situation is intolerable, and accept that mass production and mass waste are all wrong. They just don't know how to change it."

Japanese NGO Forum will have their first workshop today. On March 9th, the delegation from the Japanese ministry of foreign affairs will leave the Social Summit and go to Holmen to provide an open discussion on Japanese policy.

NGO OF THE DAY

The PacificAsia link

PacificAsia Resource Center (PARC) is a secular, non-profit, multifunctional organization. They work together with various popular movements in Japan to facilitate development of solidarity links with activist groups in Asian, Pacific and other countries.

PARC is currently doing studies of official development assistance (ODA), foreign workers in Japan, the IMF and World Bank, and the effects of resort development in the AsiaPacific region.

PARC, founded in 1973, believes that Japan should change so that Japanese people can live peacefully with other peoples without dominating them and without destroying the Earth's environment.

JJM



Vigorous dancing

Two drummers. That was all that was required to fill the exhibition hall at the Steelworks at Holmen with music. The drummers accompanied the Kandy Dancers of Sri Lanka. Dressed in white, red and silver they gave a vigorous performance for a large audience. If you missed them, they will be at the Global Village on Monday at 1800 and on Tuesday at 2100.

BNA

Photo: IKON/Henrik Christensen





An NGO Forum supplement

EVENTS

6th

MARCH

Please note that these pages contain only changes, cancellations and new meetings/events.

Please check with the posters "Today's Events" for the daily updates, furthermore check the "Flight Schedule" - this schedule contains the absolute latest updates.

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University
Spiritual Networking for solving problems
English
15:00
C,3,31*

Circle For spirituel healing
How to attract oneself to the universal healing force
English
11:00
B,1,03*

Danske Kvinders Nationalråd,

National Council of Women In DK
Womens Causus Daily Briefing
English, Danish
09:00
C,3,31*

Det Danske Baha'i Samfund, Danish Baha'i Community
Daily briefing
English
11:00
B,1,01*

International Council on Social Welfare

Information to East and Central Europeant Guests
English
15:00
C,3,29*

Justice and Peace Europe
Poverty in Europe
English
15:00

Justice and pease europe
Poverty in europe
English
15:00
C,3,19*

Lourdes Youth and Community Services, Ltd.
Unspoken Truths
11:00
C,3,23*

National support point of women on social assistance
Women Tribunal against the state
English
11:00
C,2,14*

Omran Group
Alternative Concepts to the development discourse Why we reject the developmet?
English
11:00
B,1,02*

Svenska Delegationen vid topmötet
Information
Svenska
13:00
C,3,31*

Vani Voluntary Action Network India
Networking for change
English
17:00
B,1,02*

Workers Democratic Trade Union Movement in the Iraq Republic
Trade Union Rights in Iraq, the situation in Iraq
English
09:00
C,3,27*

Changed events:

Arctic Indigenous Peoples
From:
Marine Mammals and Indigenous Peoples
06031995
13:00
H,1,42
To:
Nutrition in the arctic
06031995
13:00
H,1,42

Catholics for a Free Choice
From:
Catholic Social Justice and Social Development
06031995
11:00
C,3,26*
To:
Progressive catholics, social justice and social development
06031995
11:00
C,3,26*

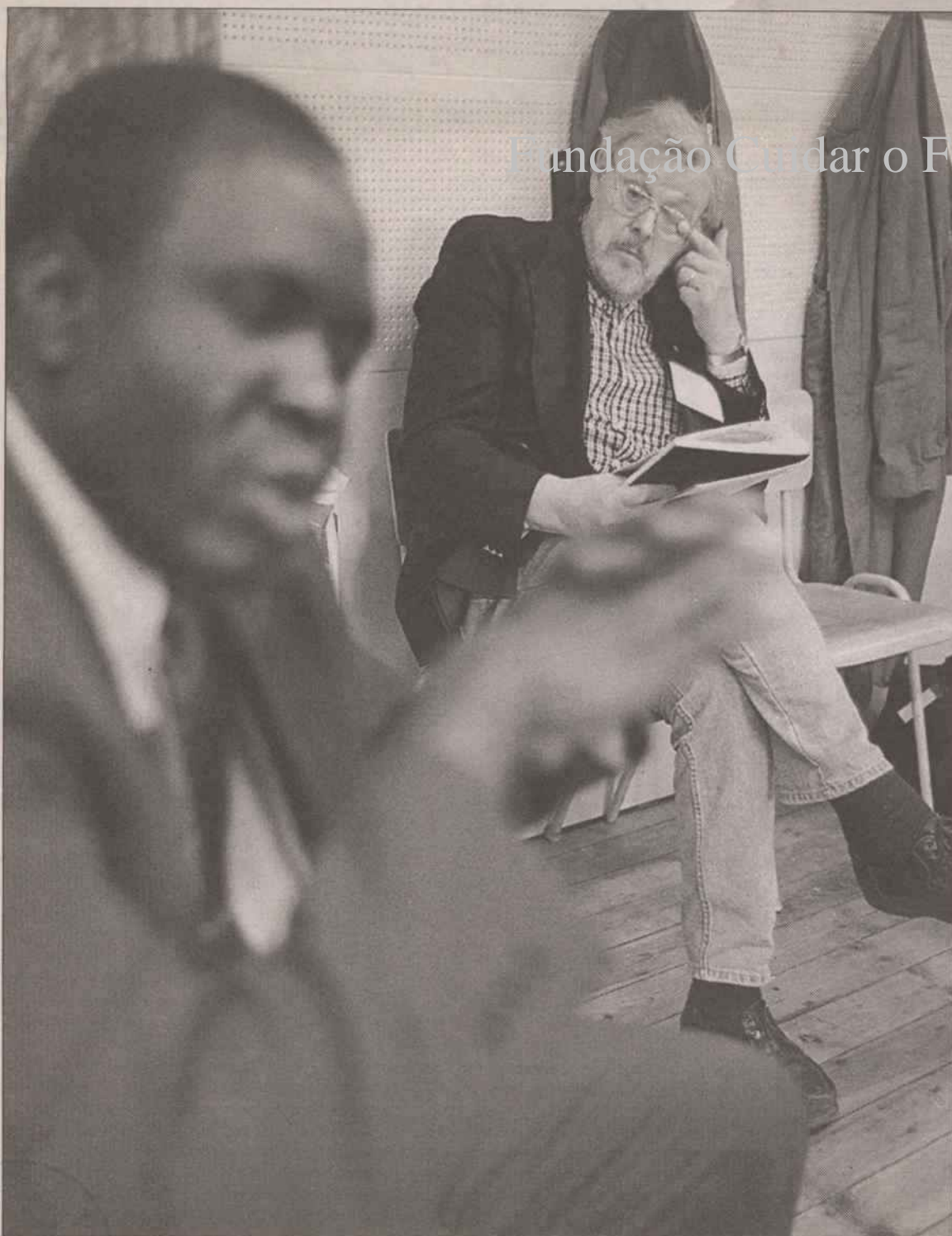
Det Danske Baha'i Samfund, Danish Baha'i Community
From:
Young Peoples views on social development
06031995
09:00
C,2,18*
To:
Children's Forum
06031995
09:00
C,2,18*

Ecologically Sustainable Development Foundation ECOFUND
From:
The Third World: A Factory of Slaves
06031995
13:00
C,2,17*
To:
The Third World: A Factory of Slaves
05031995
15:00
C,3,19*

El Taller
From:
Universalist Discourse in Human Rigths Conventions
06031995
11:00
H,1,41*
To:
Development in Arab countries and the new world order
06031995
11:00
H,1,41*

Københavns Kvindedaghsj-skole
From:
Sofar: Inner Goddesses
06031995
13:00
C,3,29*
To:
Sofar: Inner Goddesses
03031995
13:00
C,2,07*

Small Farmers, Producers, and Microentrepreneurs Caucus
From:
Caucus for small farmers, Producers, and Microentrepreneurs



Fundação Cuidar o F

A south Sudanese explaining the tragedy in his country

NGONNEWS



An NGO Forum supplement

06031995
11:00
C,3,27*
To:
Caucus for small farmers, Producers,
and Microentrepreneurs
04031995
09:00
C,3,30*

The Synergos Institute
From:
TBA after January PrepCom
06031995
13:00
C,4,32
To:
The People's Alliance for Social
Development
06031995
13:00
C,4,32

U.S. NGO Social Summit Working Group
From:
Discussion of advocacy strategy
06031995
11:00
C,2,09*
To:
U.S. NGO Caucus
06031995
11:00
C,2,09*

The World Bank Group
From:
World Bank NGO collaboration/-
participation
04031995
11:00
C,2,06*
To:
World Bank NGO collaboration/-
participation
06031995
11:00
C,3,31*

Twin Foundation
From:
The Twin Concept
03031995



Preparing for the Pekin Conference

17:00
C,2,14*
To:
The Twin Concept
06031995
17:00
C,3,21*

Canceled events:

Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
Popular Education Workshop: Cri-

tique of SAPs impact on Women
13:00
C,4,33

International Council on Social Welfare
The Issues Forum
11:00
C,2,14*

Klimaforum '95, Climate Forum'95
Presentation of NGO KlimaForum

'95 activities
17:00
C,3,22*

Academy for Educational Development, Inc.
Community Action to Meet the Goals of the Social Summit
15:00
C,2,14*

Ananda Marga Universal Relief Team AMURT
1) RAWA: Renaissance Artists, Writers Association
11:00
G,2,39

Det Kommunistiske Parti i Iran
Poverty, unemployment and war in the world
13:00
C,3,26*

Humanistische Bewegung
Humanism as a condition for Social Development
11:00
H,1,40*

United Nations Development Fund for Women.
Panel 1) Alternative Financial Mechanisms for MicroLending
09:00
C,3,31*



In the Global Village

The Danish Host Committee Daily briefing

The Keynote speaker, Monday 6th March 1995
Organizer: De Samvirkende Invalideorganisationer, Danish Council of Organisations of Disabled People
Subject: "Equal Opportunities for Minorities - A Human Rights Issue"

Speakers: Katarina Tomasevski, Det Danske Center for Menneskerettigheder, The Danish Centre for Human Rights
Bengt Linqvist, M.P., UN Special Rapporteur
Holger Kallehauge, Danish Council of Organisations of Disabled People



An NGO Forum supplement

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Christiania fights to live in nature

By Koen Greven

Environment. 25 years ago, a group of Copenhagen citizens took over the empty buildings of a military base located next to Holmen. They wanted a playground for their kids and something green for their eyes. The social experiment of Christiania is still alive in 1995, working on a new Green Plan.

If you walk down the mud paths towards the lake of Christiania you see beautifully constructed houses and dirty slums. The contrasts in the little village are big. Creative idealists and the lost of the

Danish society living together in their own world. From managers to freaks and from architects to hash pushers. They have one thing in common: the fight for the existence of Christiania.

Conditional

The 850 people who live nowadays in the self ruled society of Christiania have been permitted to stay in the area under special conditions. It is forbidden for them to build any new houses. The Danish ministry of Defense actually wants to remove 60 houses and close down another 30, in order to make the living quarters more compact. One of the ideas of the Christiania society is to live in the

nature all over the area. "The balance between the environment and the living zones is very important for us", says Karit Bakkevig, a Norwegian inhabitant of Christiania. "The government's local plan splits Christiania into a densely inhabited town and an empty park. It will be a long negotiation with the politicians, but we won't give up."

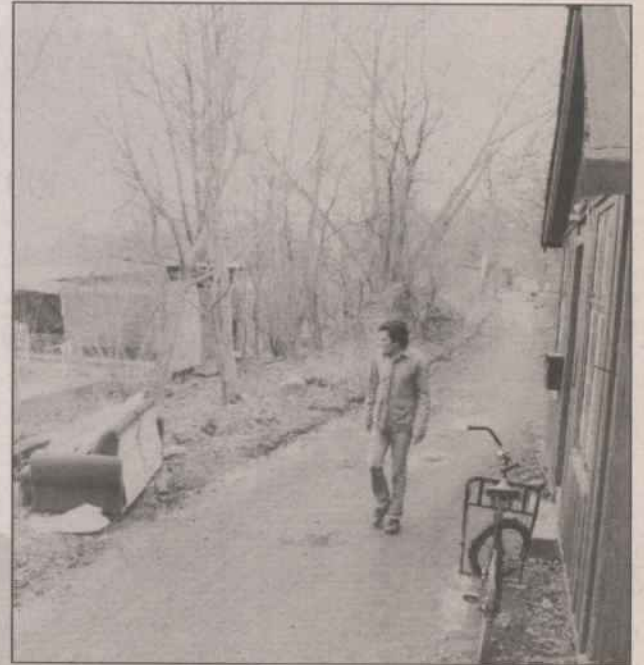
Green plan

All of the people of Christiania got together and drew up a green future plan. They want to clean and treat the waste water, plant new trees, place solar energy collectors and recycle 80 percent of their waste. Besides that, some new buildings, like a center

for trash, should be built. The plan should be financed from community funds, the building foundation, area savings and eventual trust funds.

On March 11th at 1700, representatives from Christiania will present their Green Plan in the Global Village at the NGO Forum.

The balance between nature and living zones is important for the people of Christiania.
 Photo: IKON/Flemming Andersen



Optimism about U'th FORum

By Peter te Lintel Hekkert

Youth. "It is like the whole world is in one room." Annie Musunga Chunga from Zambia could not have expressed the atmosphere at the UFO evaluation better. Around 400 youngsters from all over the world were gathered Sunday in a gymnasium near Holmen to discuss the outcome of U'th FORum '95. It was the conclusion of three weeks of local projects and workshops, which culminated in a major joint festival, called SUM'it Up.

The mixture of colourful, traditional outfits and casual jeans and sneakers is chara-

cteristic of one of the main goals of UFO: to bring together global youth and let them create a forum for the exchange of ideas about the themes of the Social Summit. To achieve that, there have been all kinds of activities in Copenhagen last week.

The organization is very optimistic about the outcome of the Forum. "It has been a big success", says Uffe Stolt Rasmussen. "Some people have already made regional links." His fellow UFO member Majbritt Langesen agrees: "Of course there have been some practical problems, but over all it has been great. Everybody participated enthusiastically in the projects

and the shows we did. The foreigners were not at all embarrassed to go out on the streets and talk to people or to do their acts."

The general opinion among the participants is also positive. Most of them agree that it has been an educating, encouraging and exciting experience. "We have shown we can cooperate, despite our different backgrounds", states Annie Musunga Chunga. "But", argues Patrick Muwaguzi from Uganda, "we should not forget about it when we go home. Everybody should take responsibility and put into action what we have achieved here."



UFO participants filling in their evaluation forms.
 Photo: IKON/Flemming Andersen

The Danish Way on Display

Promotion.

Ever heard of the Danish welfare state?

By Michael Bilde

Denmark is known world wide as a great society. Or is it? In case the word is not out, the Danish state wants to make the message loud and clear. Among the few authorities present at NGO Forum are five Danish ministries, four agencies of the municipality of Copenhagen, and the Danish Tourist Board. They have come together on the ferry Kronborg in an effort to show the many foreign visitors the Danish way of living,

acting and attracting.

One of the exhibitors is the Ministry of Social Affairs, handing out reports and answering questions.

"Here, NGOs and journalists from abroad can find out how we deal with social issues in Denmark and how to get in touch with the right people, if they want to know more," says Karen Pøder Pedersen of the Ministry.

Among the publications available at the stand, is Denmark's official national report on social welfare to the Social Summit. A paper that has been criticised for in many

ways having overlooked the social problems of the hostcountry.

Looking good

Even though foreigners are the prime target of the stand, only few of them have visited it so far. One of them is Mr. Maiza, an Algerian activist who deals with social development in his home country. "I'm very surprised by the high standard of living here. The Danish way of carrying out social policies looks very interesting," he says, while collecting a bunch of brochures.

Among the other exhibitors at Kronborg are the Ministry of Environment & Energy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which also manages Denmark's development aid), the Ministry of Labour, and the planning organisation Copenhagen European Cultural Capital 1996.

They also do it in Aarhus

By Koen Greven

Startup. Denmark's second biggest city, Aarhus, had its own NGO Forum on social development. From March 2nd until March 4th, more than 40 organisations met each other in Jutland. Both local and global social development were discussed. "The NGO forum in Aarhus showed that people all over Denmark are interested in social affairs. It is not a Copenhagen event only," argues Kirsten Marie Møller-Sørensen, one of the members of the organi-

sation committee.

The central themes of the NGO Forum, poverty and social integration, were treated in many different ways. For the schoolchildren of Aarhus, special educational materials had been made. On the morning of March 2nd and March 3rd they painted flags, wrote poems, danced salsa and played third world games. The older children also discussed social norms and values of society. The afternoon programme provided debates between different NGOs and cultural events. The Forum was concluded with an international panel discussion,

which was called 'If the world was mine'.

The main perspective of the Aarhus NGO forum is that people from different cultures get to know each other and learn to cooperate better. "It is time that people open their minds towards others. Communication is very important to achieve social development. Danish and international organisations will get together now. It is hard to compare the Forum of Aarhus with the one in Copenhagen. It was more locally based here. The Aarhus municipality must take advantage of this event. The different organisations should continue working together. We have to organize followup conferences, that is one of the goals of the Forum. If we don't do anything, we might create a world in which it is not worth to living", states Møller-Sørensen.

World Bank doubts on 20/20 eased

By Ruby Ofori

World Bank Vice President Armeane Choksi says the bank no longer has reservations about the UN proposal for governments to allocate a full 20 per cent of their overseas development aid to social sector programmes matched by Third World government allocations.

He told Terra Viva that "the Bank had reservations but now UNICEF has spelled it out and we support it. It's a flexible, practical proposal," adding it would not apply to every government. "However, this proposal could have gone further. We want to see greater emphasis not only on quantity but on quality of investments."

He insisted that without economic liberalisation there could be no improvement in social sectors. Maintaining that there was a lot of wasteful social sector expenditure, he cited a Bank statistic that developing country governments waste 30 per cent of education budgets.

Success

The Bank would also want to a greater role for the private sector in provision of social services such as health.

In response to the position that structural adjustment has failed, an idea echoed in the draft Declaration of the summit, Choksi cited Chile, Argentina, Korea and Malaysia as success stories. "People think that SAP must be all things to all men," he said, but it was essentially confined to economic reform.

Choksi agreed that Africa was a worst case example of SAP. "In Africa the adjustment process is far from complete," he said. There was still need for reforms in trade, and the financial sectors and for greater liberalisation of the state sector.

"The Bank is not perfect," he admitted.

Don't forget women's health

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), the world's largest voluntary family planning and reproductive health organisation, is here to keep an eye on rich and poor nations' commitment to women's health.

"In the field of social development, IPPF is working to ensure that women, men and young people can freely exercise their fundamental right to sexual and reproductive health," said Sunetra Puri, director of IPPF public affairs.

IPPF believes improved health and children-by-choice allow women to take advantage of other opportunities and participate more fully in economic and social decision-making in their communities.

IPPF, together with the International Women's Health Coalition (IWHC), are part of a group of influential NGOs here to oversee the incorporation of goals adopted at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) into the Summit programme of action.

At the September 1994 Cairo meeting, more than 160 countries agreed to invest more resources and programmes in women's health, education and income-generating opportunities.

"The Social Summit is about putting people at the centre of development," Puri said. She said the kinds of programmes pursued by

IPPF - like the elimination of unsafe abortion and the provision of sexual and health services and education to teenagers - could help realise that goal.

In addition, IPPF will launch a poster-signing campaign on Mar. 8, International Women's Day. The campaign will see IPPF-family planning associations in some 140 countries asking women to answer the question "What is one thing that which would make your life better?"

The campaign, which will end on Sept. 6, is intended to ensure that the voices of grassroots women are taken to September's World Conference on Women in Beijing.

Domestic matters preoccupy parliamentarians

No subject off limits for the deputies

By Andrew Radolf

Parliamentarians meeting here to discuss population issues quickly found themselves discussing poverty and women's rights and empowerment at the end of their two-day session at the Danish parliament.

Even so, some participants felt they had focused too much on domestic social policies and not enough on political factors at the two-day meeting on Population and Social Development sponsored by the UN Population

Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF).

"Everyone is analysing the internal situation, but they are not looking at the external factors, like the effects of colonisation," Chedlia Boukchina, an MP from Tunisia, told Terra Viva. "Countries were exploited of their riches, their environments degraded. They are not looking at the

conflicts, which produce refugees and migrations of populations."

She added that unless the effects of currency devaluations, structural adjustment programmes and unequal trade were also considered, population programmes would just mean families would have less children but still be poor.

"It's not just sociology, it's

politics," said Yaal Dayan, Labour MP from Israel. "We also have to look at the problems that exist under occupations, under dictatorships. What are we going to say about the status of women in Iran - that the GNP is low? We are talking about a regime that a priori regards women as unequal."

Dayan, daughter of late general Moshe Dayan, wanted a more far-reaching discussion on religions "as political institutions depriving women of every right in the book." She said that as long as Israel is a country with "generals at its head and rabbis who control its value system," all the laws and policies to give women equal rights and status will never be effective.

In Brazil, the opposition of the Catholic Church to sex education and family programmes "is very strong right now," said MP Marta Suplicy. She explained that Church pressure on the government has kept anti-AIDS campaigns off television and blocked the provision of family planning services. Instead, women are turning to sterilisation, and this was the primary factor in the country's population growth rate falling to 1.8 percent.

The Church is playing a more positive role in efforts to reduce poverty and combat social exclusion, Suplicy said, adding that income redistribution, agrarian reform and a more equitable tax structure are what is needed most to end poverty in Brazil.

The Philippines government has started a campaign to promote family planning through both "artificial and natural means," but it too is also encountering strong opposition from the Church, said Senator Freddie Webb. Half a million people recently attended a rally where Cardinal Sin spoke out against the use of contraceptives.

"He sees it as the route to abortion. But abortion is against our constitution, so it's out of the question," Webb said. The result of the ban is that women go to "backyard doctors." He also said many senators feel the government shouldn't spend any money on family planning and want the work left to non-governmental organisations.

Mexico: A bitter lesson

By Marcela Valente

Mexican NGO leaders have come here with a clear mission: warning their colleagues from the rest of Latin America of the risks of the neoliberal adjustment programmes that hold sway in most of their region.

"The Mexican crisis that broke in December showed that, in our countries, structural adjustment is not the path to economic growth with social development," warned Clara Brugueta, of the Equipo Pueblo organisation. "Despite this, the Mexican government insists on using a medicine that is killing the patient instead of curing him."

Worst affected by the medicine are Mexico's poor - 42 million, according to a study Equipo Pueblo, which also found that about 18 million Mexicans live in extreme poverty.

NGO

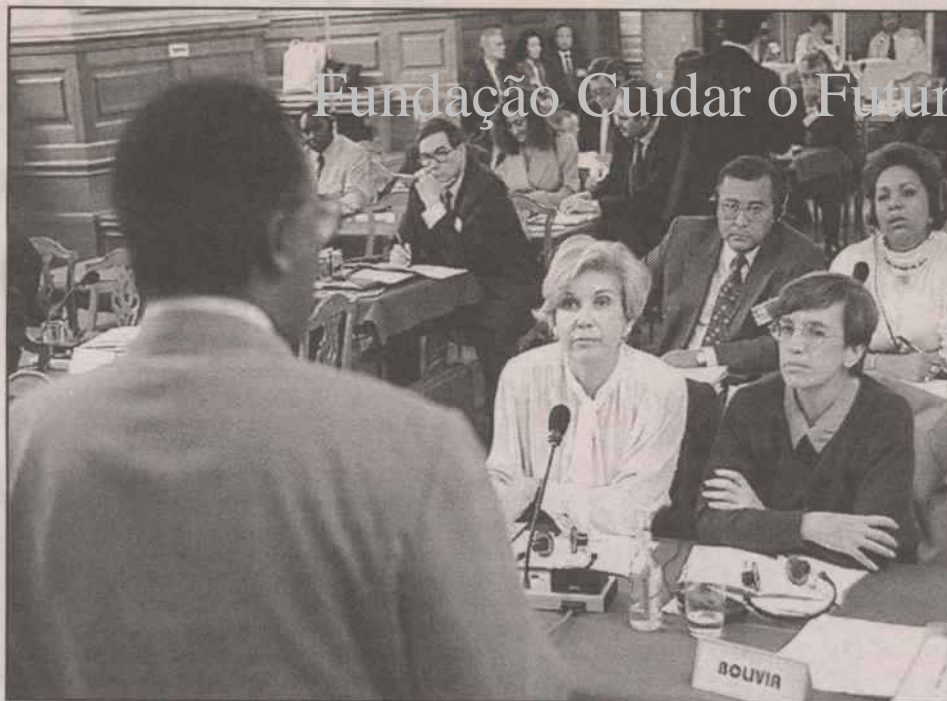
About 20 Latin American presidents are expected to attend the official Summit, but Mexico's Ernesto Zedillo has announced that he will not be among them.

However, according to Brugueta, the figures quoted in the study, which was presented to the World Bank, were compiled before the December crisis.

"Since then, the social situation has deteriorated dramatically due to the high cost of living, massive layoffs and the closure of thousands of small enterprises," the Mexican NGO leader said.

Brugueta, whose organisation is part of a Forum of Civic Organisations Towards Copenhagen 95 that has been working on an alternative social development policy, said "our work as NGOs will be to no avail if an adjustment that creates new waves of poor people is continued."

Before December, Mexico was considered one of a group of developing nations whose economic growth had propelled them onto the threshold of the First World. Equipo Pueblo and other Mexican NGOs plan to expose the other side of the 'Mexican miracle'.



Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

To Denmark with Love

Teenage mothers in the village of Akim-Swedru in Ghana's eastern region certainly benefited from the 10-year relationship between farmer George Asiedu-Arthur and his Danish penpal.

The Danish lady in question is an official of a Danish NGO. And she would like to remain anonymous. Over time, through letters, she inspired Asiedu-Arthur, then a student, to form the Society for the Protection of Animal and Human Life which was set up in 1978.

They never met in person and were not in love: it was an exchange of information and a sharing of ideas - an informal North-South transfer. Now Asiedu-Arthur is in Copenhagen braving the cold - and with a success story to tell.

With a membership of over 30, mostly students, the group he formed carried out community work. They filled potholes, did other repairs on roads long neglected by the government. When bush fires and cholera struck in 1983, they started public education programmes.

By then Ghana's economy had gone into a slump. Asiedu-Arthur recalls that Ghana's economic restructuring

programme had an immediate and radical effect on the society when it was first introduced. Asiedu-Arthur was himself affected in a personal way.

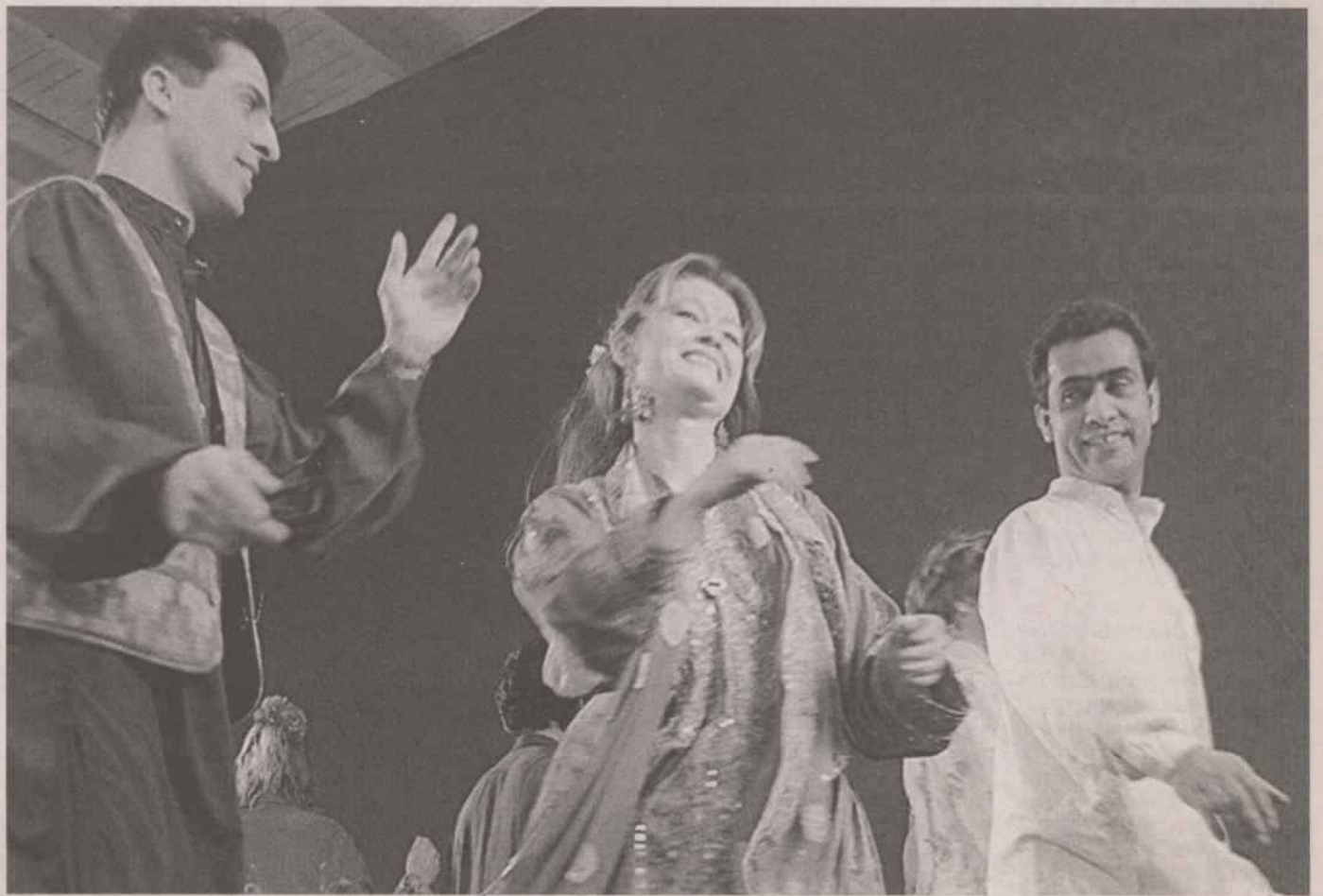
In the following years he gave up teaching - of mathematics and agriculture - and bought a 170-acre farm to grow oranges, lime and maize.

The society was soon transformed into a community organisation geared to training both male and female youths in skills that would help them earn a living. Funding for this came from money generated by a 50-acre farm which Asiedu-Arthur donated to the society.

Timber contractor Philip Agyekum whose company fells 1000 cubic metres of round logs a year, is a member of the society. He contributes his skills in agro forestry and is acutely aware of the environmental costs of traditional and modern economic practices.

"The rate we fell the trees is higher than the rate the trees grow so if we don't educate people on the effects on the environment the consequences could be disastrous", he said.

Photographs
by Klaus Holsting



Baluchistan dancers in full display at the steelworks



Around and about at the NGO Forum in Holmen

Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

Getting to know You

Discussing UN reform is no joking matter



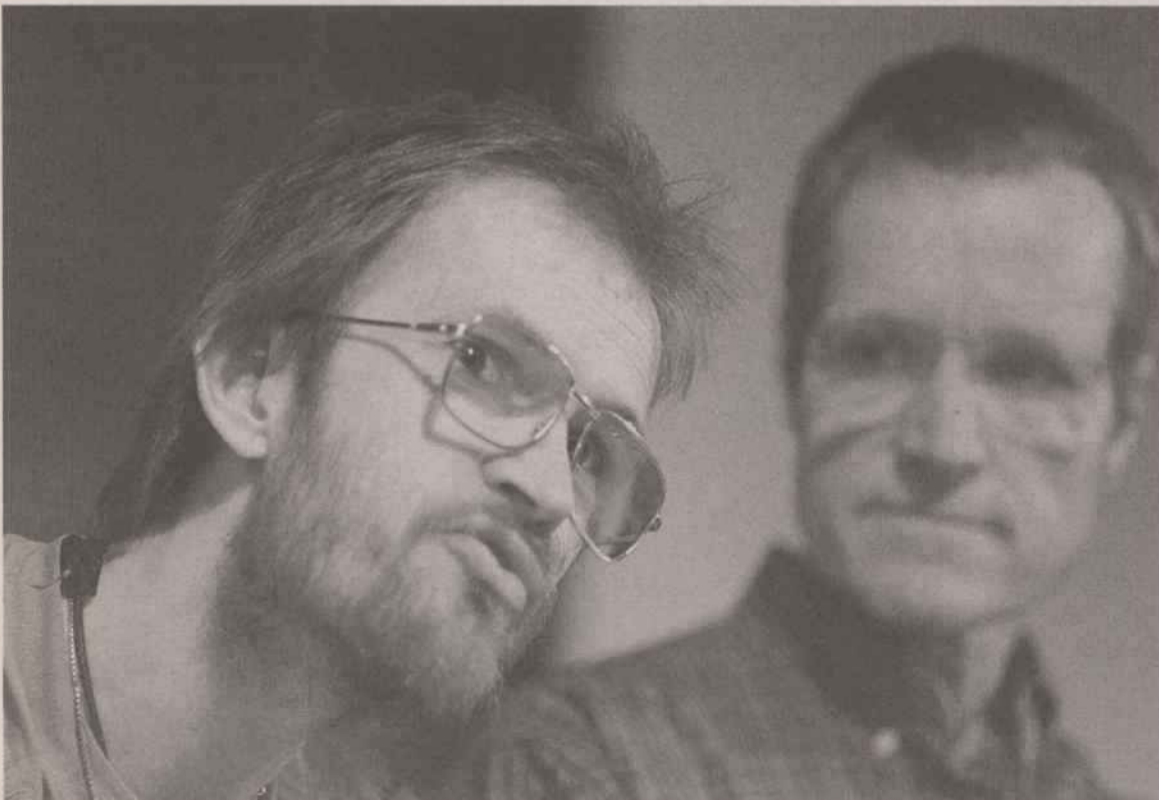
Watching the world go by



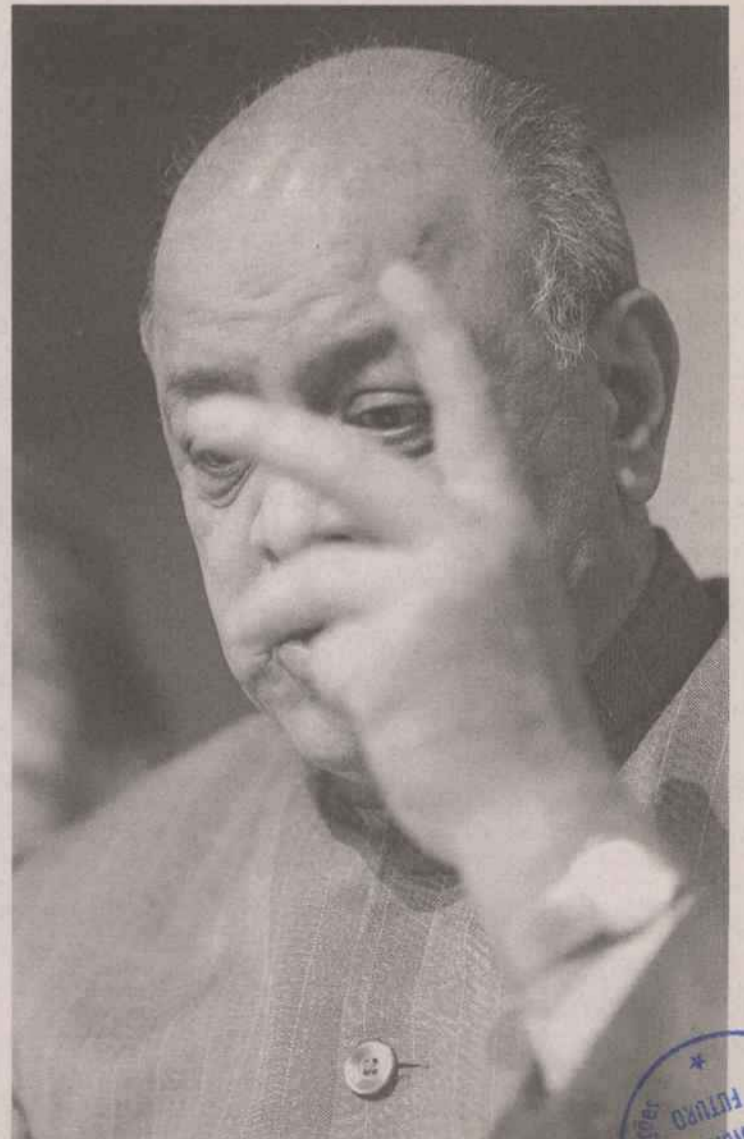
Fundação Cuidar o Futuro

Saying it like it is at the US NGOs caucus

The debate deepens at the Danish interfaith forum



A Buddhist enlightens participants at the interfaith forum



Beware Europe, African poverty may yet stalk you

Pablo Azocar

The situation of the African economy is so explosive that it "constitutes a danger for all European countries", according to the authoritative British economist, Michael Barrat-Brown.

In his book 'The World Economy in the 1990s', Barrat-Brown notes: "African countries are being subjected to such extreme poverty which - if the situation does not change - will mean a collapse of their economies in a very short time. This will have direct repercussions on developed countries."

Barrat-Brown maintains that even after renegotiating their foreign debt with international commercial banks, the total income of the African nations will "continue to be equal to the sum they need to pay off these debts ... in general terms, service charges on the debt alone, absorb half of the revenues African countries earn from their exports".

Barrat-Brown is currently director of the Third World Information Network (TWIN) — an organisation which

has encouraged an innovative type of trade in products like coffee and cocoa, conducted outside the orbit of transnationals.

"In Africa, the price of goods continues to rise while wages remain very low. In addition, for those who are earning money, there are not sufficient consumer goods to buy on the market because most are exported," he notes.

Countries like Somalia and Sudan demonstrated that there was a direct relation between a very high level of debt per capita and civil war. "This is because the prices of the commodities they produce have been falling, while the manufactured products which they consume are becoming scarce."

According to the economist, this situation is more or less the same in all countries which produce raw materials — but it is more serious in African nations because of their traditional relations with Europe.

"The African countries have always been organised to produce commodities destined for manufacture in Europe. But, while prices of manufactured goods in Europe have increased, this rise has not been passed on to Africa," he noted.

In contrast, countries located in the Japanese sphere of influence — such as Taiwan, Malaysia and Indonesia — were encouraged to first set up light industries, and only later, to move on to a more advanced type of manufacturing, Barrat-Brown emphasises.

He notes that this kind of economy triggered a general development on the Asiatic continent. "Africa, in contrast, continues, on the average, to be bogged down in an alarming negative growth of only one percent annually."

In his judgement, "few people notice that this collapse of Africa's economies is also a danger for Europe". He says that such economic crises are already demonstrating that they have a direct relation to the rise of terrorist or insurgent movements.

Panama's gamble

Anti-poverty plans risky

by Silvio Hernandez

Panama's President Ernesto Perez Balladares is gambling implementation of neo-liberal programmes this year will bring success for his five-year development plan but some economists say it's a risky bet.

They believe that the current deceleration of the country's economy cannot be resolved by economic liberalisation, which the government hopes will result in an influx of investments.

Transform

Perez wants to eradicate poverty which in Panama is widespread, affecting half of the population of 2.5 million. He would like to transform state businesses into mixed endeavours, reform labour legislation, eliminate tariffs and promote foreign investments.

Minister of Planning and Economic Policy Guillermo Chapman said while "modernisation" was anticipated, the main priority of the government's plans was an attack on poverty.

To do this, the government has drawn up a three-year plan, the first stage of which will be financed by a 750 million dollar loan from the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) in 1995-96. The IDB will also grant a further 750 million dollars in the period 1997-99 if the government satisfies certain unspecified conditions.

President of the National Union of Economists, Alejandro Cordero, dismissed Chapman's state budget for 1995 as contradictory and "frankly recessive."

Cordero said that earmarking 24 percent of the 3.95 billion dollar government budget to pay foreign debt "gears the development plan to external creditors and not to our own resources."

He explained that even with the IDB giving the amount promised, there would still be a difference of more than 500 million dollars between funds destined to pay the debt and

foreign loans.

"Given that the state budget is the main national investment fund," said Cordero, if other resources were not found "income could fall and make unemployment and poverty more serious still".

He also criticised the opening up of the local market to foreign goods and investments.

"This is not preparing the economy to open up new foreign markets, but quite the reverse," he said. The small size of the internal market and the poor level of training among the local workforce mitigated against foreign investment, Cordero added.

Although the government of former President Guillermo Endara offered similar advantages to foreign investors, barely 5.6 million dollars of new investments were made in the productive sector over the last five years.

"The plan has become a gamble, a gamble on new investments, a gamble on whether selling INTEL (the state telecommunications network) will make a billion dollars, and a gamble that the international community will regain confidence in the nation just because the debt payments are made on time," said Cordero.

Panama

In 1993 Panama's Gross National Product fell three percent. This follows growth of 8.4 percent in 1992 and 3.8 percent in 1994.

The economic slow down was caused by the saturation of the construction sector - which has stagnated this year after three years of unprecedented growth - and poor wealth distribution causing decreases in local consumption.

In spite of per capita earnings increasing from 776 dollars per head in 1991 to 925 in 1993, they have still not recovered the 1985 levels of 934 dollars.



Figures: UNDP.

chair of the Panamanian Industrial Union Luis Barraza, described Perez's plan as "turning the country into a market stall for foreign goods."

The country "cannot base its development on a total opening of the market, but must open foreign markets to increase national production, ... employment and improve wealth distribution in society," said Barraza.

In spite of the criticisms, Perez said that the challenge facing him was either "to do nothing," and watch the nation deteriorate, or to face up to modernising the economy to attract new investments and make Panama more competi-

Business boom leaves many behind

Millions remain poor despite economic growth

by Ron Corben

Asia may be the world's most economically dynamic region, but millions of people there are still unable to meet their most basic needs, says the U.N. Economic and Social Commission on Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

The Asia-Pacific is expected to remain a major centre of economic growth in the next century, with rates of expansion well in excess of a 7 per cent set by the world's industrialised countries, reports IPS in Bangkok.

ESCAP says growth has helped alleviate poverty in countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines. "Yet the total number of the poor remains uncomfortably high in many countries," its 1994 report says.

"Substantial proportions and staggeringly high total numbers of people in the region remain poor at a level where they cannot meet their basic needs for food, clothing, health, housing and illiteracy," it says.

The report adds: "The average level of achievements can provide little satisfaction to those who are ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-housed, illiterate or simply ill."

ESCAP figures show there are still some 465 million poor people in Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

"The incidence of poverty declined in Thailand between 1976 and 1988. That, however, did not bring about a marked reduction in the absolute number of the poor," says the report.

In Thailand, slum workers say more people are being driven into slum communities in major cities and provincial centres due to low international commodity prices.

According to Prateep Ungsongtham Hata, secretary-general of the Klong Toey slum community Duang Prateep Foundation, people are being forced to live in difficult conditions with whole families crammed into a single room.

"The wealth is not shared," says Prateep. "The government is talking about decentralisation but is not doing anything about wealth distribution."

Economic growth in Thailand has mainly benefited

Bangkok and nearby provinces, with the agricultural sector — which comprises 62 percent of the population — being left behind.

The rural sector only has a 13 percent share of the national income, reflecting the widening disparities between the country's rich and poor.

Data from the Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI), an economic and social think tank, show that 40 percent of the population will control 76.75 percent of the national wealth in 1994.

But the director of TDRI's Human Resources and Social Development Programme, Dr Chalongsob Sussangkarn, says Thailand's economic growth has contributed positively to poverty alleviation.

About one-fifth of the nation's population now lives below the poverty line. If current trends continue, the figure could decline in the long term, said Chalongsob.

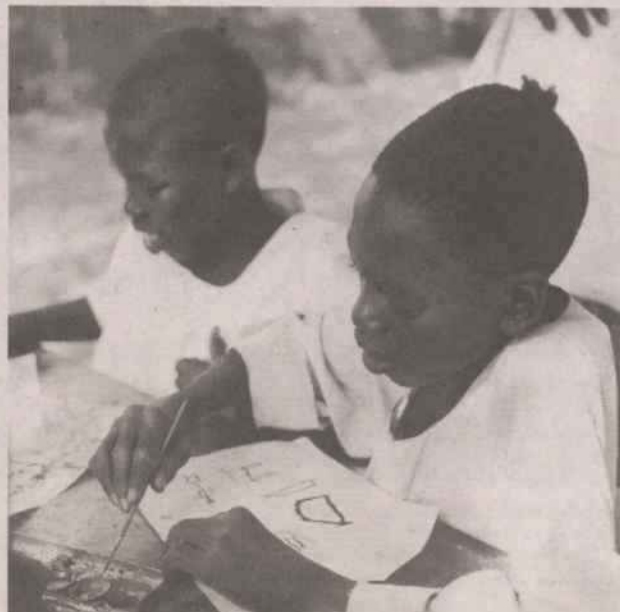
But he warns that the trend could be reversed unless the government expands its education and training programmes to enable people, especially from the agricultural sector, to be absorbed into the "modern industrial sector".

"They are running against time. Many of the labour-intensive industries will be moving elsewhere and the people will need to find alternative sectors to work in," he says.

"The government is on the right track, but not completely successful," says Chalongsob. "They are trying to upgrade the skills of workers but it is occurring very slowly."

He also calls for official strategies to alleviate poverty by expanding social safety net measures such as social security and medical insurance.

The ESCAP report says the growth of urban slums was due to the rapid pace of urbanisation, leading to lower levels of industrial safety and security and the breakdown of the family unit.



Economic growth must bring opportunity: picture: U.N.

AsDB loan to help Bangladesh coastlines

by IPS Correspondents

A newly approved loan from the Asian Development Bank (AsDB) will improve Bangladesh's efforts to add lush greenery to its balding coastal region and improve the incomes of the poor, reports IPS in Manila.

The Manila-based bank approved a 23.4-million-dollar loan this week to protect the coastal environment of the South Asian nation, supported by a technical assistance grant worth 1.3 million dollars from the government of Norway.

The interest-free loan from the AsDB's concessional Asian Development Fund is to be paid back over 40 years.

The project, to be completed in seven years, will help increase Bangladesh's forest cover and reduce local poverty by creating supplementary income opportunities.

By reforesting the coastal region, the project will also help the government's bid to recover the country's rapidly disappearing forest resources.

Bangladesh loses thousands of hectares of forest land every year. Firewood is the main source of energy in the country.

According to one estimate, some 35 million cubic feet of wood is consumed every year as fuel for cooking. Brick kilns use up 90 percent of the country's total wood supply.

Though trees are not being planted as quickly as they are being cut down, afforestation schemes have managed to reverse the damage in some areas. A vast swathe of mangroves on the southern coast has been reforested in recent years.

Non-governmental groups and Bangladesh's Forestry Department will select participants from among groups of landless men and women in the project area to plant trees along embankments, roads and railways.

Local farmers will receive quality seedlings to improve

productivity of palms and fruit trees. The general public will also benefit from the better environmental conditions brought about by increased tree cover.

The technical assistance grant from Norway, to be administered by the AsDB, will finance consultant services, training and related equipment and facilities to help the Forestry Department implement the social forestry activities in the country's coastal region.



AsDB seeds Bangladesh

OECD supports convention

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) - grouping the world's most advanced economies - favours a global pact to reduce greenhouse gas emissions which would oblige the participation of industrialised and developing nations.

The Paris-based organisation made the call in the run-up to the U.N. Climate Conference starting March 28 in Berlin, reports IPS in Bonn.

The Berlin gathering is the first follow-up meeting of the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in June 1992 in Rio de Janeiro which gave rise to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. Some 115 states have ratified the convention, which came into force on Mar. 21 last year.

The OECD argued that the U.N. Framework Convention target of stabilising the gas emissions of industrialised countries - 25 member countries of the OECD, eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union - by the end of the current decade at the 1990 levels would imply costly measures.

It said governments could partly or fully compensate for these losses by providing data on energy saving measures and - in some situations - setting efficiency standards.

The OECD said the research needed to develop technologies to raise energy efficiency or develop carbon-free or neutral energy sources was basically similar to other industrial applied research, it should be carried out in the private sector.

Bogus NGOs mushrooming?

Non-governmental are sprouting up all over the place in Nigeria, raising questions about their bona fides.

"Most of the new non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are not interested in their stated aims, but are only interested in financial gain," charged a local U.N. official.

In 1994 the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) received more than 10,000 applications for assistance from NGOs, reports IPS in Lagos.

"Not all of the applications were genuine. Most of the groups have only letter heads and addresses with no infrastructure in place to implement their plans," Richard Prado, UNICEF's Director of Planning.

And former Health Minister Julius Adelusi-Adewuyi said: "Most NGOs here do not operate anything more than a letter head. They don't have any office, but still claim they are legitimate NGOs."

Andrew Arkutu, country director for the U.N. Population Fund declared: "So far, all NGOs with UNFPA have been getting on fine. But we have to keep

monitoring their spending. They are made to be accountable for any money spent."

However, officials of some of the NGOs over whom this cloud hangs said free spending donors were to blame.

"Some granting agencies encourage unrecognised and unapproved organisations to seek funds privately without cross-checking with the council," said Leila Dongoyaro, President of the National Council of Women's Societies (NCWS).

Some think an umbrella body should be created to help regulate NGO activities. But the idea has met with hostility from agencies vying to serve the country's 89 million people.

"We need as many NGOs as possible," says Sherifat Okunu, president of the Moslem Women's Association. "I don't think the problem is proliferation of NGOs, but the ability to have a common front."

To minimise fraud, the government is now insisting NGOs register as companies at a fee of 454 dollars and have an office before being allowed to operate.

Moscow moves to allay safety doubts

Secrecy and poverty feed nuclear fear

By Rajiv Tiwari

Radioactive contamination from Russian nuclear facilities poses the biggest environmental challenge in the country, but secrecy and lack of funds continue to threaten millions of people.

"Unfortunately too many things are being kept secret in our country and the authorities just do not listen to the specialists," said Leonid Ilyin, head of the Moscow-based Institute of Biophysics.

He told the newspaper 'Segodnya' that nearly eight million Russians lived near nuclear power plants. Hundreds of thousands worked in nuclear weapon factories where they were exposed to hazards which they are not fully protected from.

Some of the concerns raised by this leading nuclear safety expert have been echoed by the international community as well. The European Union (EU) has spent the last year negotiating terms on financial assistance to Moscow to upgrade Russia's nuclear plants.

The result was the signing of an agreement between the European Commission and

Moscow officials in Brussels last week.

The programme's aim is to improve the safety of operating power plants and other civilian nuclear fuel and waste treatment facilities and strengthen regulatory regimes to promote regional cooperation on nuclear safety among countries operating Soviet-designed nuclear power facilities.

Financing of the most urgent safety improvement measures was estimated at 700 million dollars.

"The agreement will allow engineering projects and equipment deliveries financed by the European Union's TACIS programme to go further in improving nuclear safety levels in Russia," said Rolf Thiemans, chief negotiator of the Commission.

The TACIS programme is a European Union initiative which provides grants for expert and technical assistance to foster the development of market economies and democratic societies in eastern Europe.



Chernobyl in 1986: picture AP

Kenya back on track: IMF

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has pledged an estimated 200 million dollars in loans to the east African nation, reports IPS in Nairobi.

IMF Kenyan representative Walter Mahler noted "some improvements (in the reform programme) in the past several years."

Donors suspended aid to Kenya in 1991 to force President Daniel Arap Moi's one-party system into political and economic reforms.

Ban

The ban was lifted after open elections were held in December 1992. Moi's Kenya African National Union (KANU) won the poll and began implementing in earnest free market reforms demanded by donors.

"The downward trend in economic growth has been reversed," said Kenyan central bank chief Micha Cheserem. In real terms, Gross Domestic Product grew by nearly three percent in 1994 compared with a meagre 0.1 percent in 1993.

But opposition member of parliament, Anyang Nyong'o commented that unless the IMF stopped appeasing the government "any gains in economic management will be seriously undermined by a hostile political environment and a cancerous culture of corruption."

Greenhouse Gas pact problems

By IPS Correspondents

Eastern European environmental activists plan to appeal at next month's 'Climate Summit' for help in controlling emissions of greenhouse gases in their region.

The region still lacks mechanisms necessary to safeguard the environment, said Zbigniew M. Karaczun of the Climate Action Network/Central and Eastern Europe (CAN-CEE), a grouping of nearly 12 non-governmental organisations, report IPS in New York.

"It is a question of cooperation in technology," he said. "We need training in management (and in) how to use high-tech facilities to protect the environment. We as a region haven't this political will."

More than 100 ministers and senior officials from around the world are to gather March 28 to Apr. 7 in Berlin for the first conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change.

It will be the first major international meeting on climate since governments signed a 'Framework Convention on Climate Change' at the 1992 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

Rio

A new report by an Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change reiterates that certain human activities - the burning of fossil fuels and the destruction of forests - could alter the atmosphere and raise temperatures. The Convention signed in Rio said that to prevent dangerous climate changes, developed countries must lead the way in reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other earth-warming gases.

Countries in Central and Eastern Europe have experienced reductions in greenhouse gas emissions because of the deep economic recession in the region over the last five years.

"There is a huge potential for further reductions," a representative of the 'Energy Group' in Croatia said, following preparatory talks for the conference here Feb. 7-17.

CANCEE said a lack of data - and of political will - had hampered efforts to collect information on climate change in Central and Eastern Europe.

A report recently published by CANCEE and Climate Network Europe documents the findings of studies done in the 10 countries.

Slovakia is the only country to meet the 'Toronto target' - set after a 1988 conference in Toronto - for 20 percent reductions in carbon dioxide emissions by the year 2005.

CANCEE expects that other countries in the region should also be able to adopt the 'Toronto target' with relative ease given their already low levels of greenhouse gas emissions.

The Bella Centre

Denmark's Bella Centre, venue of the Social Development Summit, is the largest trade fair and conference centre in Scandinavia. Its 95,600 square metres of floor space includes numerous meeting rooms, a large auditorium and a convention hall, all with modern audio and visual equipment.

Starting Sunday, the complex, which is a ten-minute drive from the city centre, is expected to host an estimated 25,000 delegates from all over the globe, including more than 100 world leaders.

When taking a break from the proceedings, they will have a choice of around eight permanent restaurants as well as numerous coffee shops and bars.

Its shopping arcade contains banks, a travel agency, a post office, a computer company, hairdressers, flower shops and a supermarket.

Tigers burning too bright?

Beware Asian growth models

Focus on growth and market leaves marginalised behind

by Johanna Son

East Asia evokes images of prosperous countries growing at breakneck speed, climbing on impressive growth curves through the eighties and early nineties that have driven many to say the region could be a model for other developing countries.

Japan and the tiger economies of Hong Kong, South Korea, Taiwan and Singapore are the envy of many, including aspiring tigers like Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, hopeful cubs like the Philippines and countries like Vietnam or China.

GDP

Most countries in the region have posted average GDP growth rates ranging from 4 to 9 percent in 1980 to 1991. South-east Asia has grown at 6 to 7 percent a year over the last decade.

But development experts say rosy growth statistics are not the complete development picture and warn against the blind pursuit of the Asian growth model as the answer to economic ills.

They say the trek to tigerhood could entail sizable costs in environment, equitable growth, individual rights and worker benefits and quality of life. Developing Asia still has the greatest concentration of poverty, with half of the world's 1.1 billion absolute poor.

Asian NGOs have been meeting to forge a common position, to be presented to the social summit, which will say that thus far development models have failed to address basic human needs because of an overfocus on "economic growth and market mechanisms" that leaves marginalised groups behind.

The Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement says East Asia's growth figures have led to "dangerous illusions that the answer to today's miseries is growth... poverty is not the absence of macroeconomic growth, it is a consequence of its inequity and unsustainability."

Asian NGOs want an overhaul of Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAP), imposed by multilateral financial institutions like the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank and used by donors to gauge developing nations' economic performance.

"We question the NIC model because of its repercussions on the environment and human rights," said Leonor Briones of the Manila-based Freedom From Debt Coalition. She urges governments at the social summit to cut the link between a country undergoing SAPs and its access to devel-

opment aid. They should realise the region's growth hides a debt problem that still exists though many countries are classified as medium-income ones.

"This model focuses too much on growth. It is wrong and should be altered," said Kitazawa Yoko of the Japanese NGO Forum for Social Development.

Japan

Even NGOs from Japan warn neighbors against treading that country's path, since Japan's economic power draws sizably on its dependence on developing countries for food, timber and raw materials, often damaging those countries environments.

Kitazawa says that for Asia's developing countries to become tigers and little Japans, they have to become a predator of sorts. "To become another Japan you need other countries to exploit. We had South-east Asia," she told Terra Viva.

"Everyone wants to be a tiger, but how does a tiger survive? By killing others," said P.N. Jain, co-chair of the Values Caucus group of NGOs at the Copenhagen summit.

In the Final Analysis

Singapore, Mexico and Copenhagen



By Kunda Dixit

If presidents and prime ministers needed a wake-up call in the run-up to the Copenhagen Summit it came as a double alarm recently from two ends of the earth: Mexico City and Singapore.

Mexico's currency crisis in January, its devastating impact on investments in emerging markets worldwide and the necessity of an expensive and controversial bailout by its northern neighbour became an international horror story.

The sequel came last week. Get this: a 28-year-old dealer gambling via satellite on derivatives in Japanese futures contracts and options from his base in Singapore managed to run up losses of over a billion dollars that caused the Empire's oldest merchant bank to go up in a puff.

The lesson from Mexico and Singapore are clear: the world of financial markets has run amok. It defies the powers of governments to control and regulate this multi-trillion-dollar-a-day global casino that creates wealth by the synthetic replication of capital.

And all that money floats precariously on a fragile crust of speculation and greed, ready to tip over and sink at the hint of geological or geo-political tremors.

Leaders from 120 countries are meeting in Copenhagen this week to discuss ways to eradicate absolute poverty, tackle unemployment and social chaos. The summit comes at a time of great post-Cold War global uncertainty and insecurity. Now, add to this an international economic system that seems to be built on sand.

The globalisation of the economy has put it beyond the reach of mere national governments. Global financial transactions make a mockery of national boundaries and their impact is as pervasive as the greenhouse effect.

What can world leaders do? For a start, they could decide to invest in options for the future and bid on development derivatives.

Flow

Seriously, money is no problem. How about a tax on international currency transactions, a tiny cut in military expenditures or a new development partnership with the private sector? These are just three of the concrete, do-able proposals that economists and development planners say can free up more than enough money for social development into the next century.

A 2.5 percent reduction in the money countries spend on buying and building weapons every year would be enough to educate 130 million children in developing countries who at present do not go to school.

The international flow in currency transactions on a good day exceeds 1,000,000,000,000 dollars. A 0.5 percent Speculation Tax proposed by James Tobin, winner of the 1981 Nobel Prize for Economics, would generate upwards of 150 billion dollars a year — three times the money donors currently say they give to poor countries.

Huge risks are being taken and squandered as the markets concentrate power and money in the hands of fewer and fewer nations and people. In the new world of global finance, piecemeal efforts to safeguard "national interest" have become obsolete. The rules are now made by thousands of speculators around the world who gamble 24 hours a day with electronic money that zips around the world at the speed of light.

Developing countries' capacity to allocate money for basic social services are already eroded by structural adjustment, low commodity prices and debt servicing. The global financial lottery erodes their ability to manage their domestic economies even further. They need help to regulate and protect themselves from irresponsible gamblers.

Mexico and Singapore showed us the pitfalls. And if nothing is done, Mexico gives us another example of the consequence of neglect: Chiapas.

The alarm bells are ringing, we can either wake up or we can dig our heads into our pillows and go back to sleep.



PANEL: "BEYOND COPENHAGEN: MAKING THE COMMITMENTS COUNT"

Since it was set up 30 years ago, IPS has grown into a global communications system for development with the fifth largest international news network. It takes a unique global perspective on an increasingly interdependent world, giving a voice to those marginalised by the mainstream.

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- IPS Projects, which carries out training, information exchange and sets up alternative telecommunication networks. It trains journalists in new news values so they can genuinely reflect the concerns of neglected sectors of society.

- IPS Telecommunications specialises in transfer of technology to improve telecommunications in countries of the South.