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Commission for Social Development acting as the preparatory committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing

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Item 3 (b) of the provisional agenda*

Preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing: consideration of the proposed format of the World Assembly

Organization of work of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, including establishment of committees and procedural matters

Note by the Secretariat

1. The present note was prepared by the Secretariat in accordance with past practice in respect of preparatory committees for major conferences, and is submitted to the Commission for Social Development acting as the preparatory committee for the Second World Assembly on Ageing for its consideration with a view to achieving agreement on the format and organization of work of the Assembly.

2. The preparatory committee may wish to consider the feasibility and desirability of the organization of work set out below, including the establishment of committees and procedural matters.

3. The proposed organization of work for the World Assembly could be based upon:

(a) The experience of recent United Nations conferences;

(b) General Assembly resolution 54/262, in which the General Assembly stressed that the World

Assembly should give particular attention to appropriate forms of public/private partnership, including with non-governmental organizations, at all levels, for building societies for all ages, and invited non-governmental organizations in the field of ageing, as well as research institutions and representatives of the private sector, to participate in and contribute to the World Assembly and its preparatory process.

4. It is now recognized that success in the preparation and implementation of the revised International Plan of Action on Ageing will require the input of various actors of civil society. In this spirit, the World Assembly could serve as a forum for an exchange of ideas between Governments and a wide range of principal stakeholders involved in ageing issues, including non-governmental organizations and civil society in particular the private sector.

5. Member States would have the sole and final responsibility in the decision-making process.

* E/CN.5/2001/PC/1.



I. Pre-conference consultations

6. In its resolution 55/58, the General Assembly decided that the World Assembly should take place from 8 to 12 April 2002. Following the practice of previous United Nations conferences, pre-Assembly consultations could be scheduled at the venue of the World Assembly in Madrid, on 6 April 2002. The purpose of these consultations would be to enable all participating States to reach agreement on the recommendations to be made on all procedural and organizational matters to be dealt with by the Assembly at the opening meeting, including the election of officers, the composition of the General Committee, the adoption of the rules of procedure, the adoption of the agenda and organization of work, the appointment of the members of the Credential Committee and arrangements for the preparation of the report of the World Assembly.

7. The preparatory committee could therefore, at its current session, decide to convene these pre-World Assembly consultations.

II. Election of officers

8. Based on the experience of previous United Nations conferences, the preparatory committee, in the provisional rules to be adopted, may wish to decide that the World Assembly should elect from among the representatives of participating States the following officers: a President, 27 Vice-Presidents, an ex officio Vice-President from the host country and a Rapporteur-General, as well as one Chairperson each for the Main Committee, the Hearing Committee and a drafting committee, which may be set up in accordance with the practice of other United Nations conferences. These officials would constitute the General Committee of the World Assembly and would be elected on the basis of ensuring the representative character of the Committee. The World Assembly could also elect such other officers as it deems necessary for the performance of its functions.

9. In accordance with standard practice, the Presidency of the World Assembly would go to the host country. The 27 Vice-Presidents would be distributed according to the following geographical pattern: seven representatives from African States; six from Asian States; three from Eastern European States; five from Latin American and the Caribbean States; and six from

Western European and other States. Regional groups should endeavour to ensure that they would be in a position to make known their nominations for the posts in the General Committee at the opening of the World Assembly.

III. Adoption of the rules of procedure

10. The World Assembly will have before it the provisional rules of procedure recommended by the preparatory committee. These rules will be in accordance with the established practice of the United Nations. The provisional rules of procedure are contained in document E/CN.5/2001/PC/L.____.

IV. Adoption of the agenda

11. The preparatory committee, at its second session, will recommend the provisional agenda for adoption by the World Assembly.

V. Organization of work

12. In accordance with the proposed organization of work, to be discussed by the preparatory committee, the World Assembly would be composed of a plenary, the Main Committee, the Hearing Committee and a drafting committee, which could be established in accordance with the practice of other United Nations conferences. The drafting committee would undertake work on documents, resolutions and decisions which may be allocated to it by the World Assembly.

13. The plenary would allow for a general exchange of views on the main themes of the World Assembly, as will be outlined in the annotated agenda.

14. Oral statements not to exceed seven minutes could be presented at the plenary during the World Assembly.

15. The Main Committee would be in charge of preparing the revised International Plan of Action on Ageing for adoption by the plenary.

16. The Hearing Committee, composed of representatives of Member States, would ensure broad-based participation by conducting "hearings" of statements and reports brought to the Committee by representatives of principal stakeholders mentioned in

paragraphs 3 and 4 above, including the organizations of the United Nations system.

17. The statements and reports to be presented to the Hearing Committee would be the result of the preparatory process, as well as events held during the contributory events segment of the World Assembly. Each hearing could be followed by a discussion by representatives of these events and Committee members.

VI. Report of the Second World Assembly on Ageing

18. In accordance with practice followed at previous United Nations conferences, the report of the World Assembly could consist of the decisions of the World Assembly, a brief account of the proceedings and a reportorial account of the work of the Main Committee and Hearing Committee and of the action taken in plenary on their recommendations, as well as statements and recommendations made by Member States, civil society participants and other principal stakeholders.

19. As has also been the practice, each regional group could be requested to designate, before the opening of the World Assembly, two persons to serve as friends of the Rapporteur-General to assist in preparing the draft report of the World Assembly.

20. Reports of the World Assembly and associated recommendations could constitute the Madrid Assembly papers, reflecting the substance and nature of this assembly of partnerships.
