



**01** OCCASIONAL PAPERS  
SOCIAL WATCH

# The Lion's Teeth

THE PREHISTORY OF SOCIAL WATCH

**Mirjam van Reisen**

August 2001



Social Watch / August 2001

# **The Lion's Teeth**

THE PREHISTORY OF SOCIAL WATCH

The transformation of NGO networking  
in ongoing international negotiations

**Mirjam van Reisen**

## **SOCIAL WATCH**

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*To Misha, Naomi, Joelle and Luana, my four most tangible  
follow-up outcomes of the Social Summit*

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## Foreword

*How was Social Watch created? Does it reflect a change in NGO relations with multilateral organisations? How does it link local experience with multilateral negotiations on social development? How did it make use of new electronic communication technologies? And by employing these new electronic communication technologies, did Social Watch transform NGO networking in international negotiation processes?*

*I accepted with great pleasure the assignment to produce an analysis of the “pre-history” of Social Watch – of the events leading up to the actual establishment of Social Watch.<sup>1</sup> Having been part of those events myself I thought it would be quite a challenge to look at this period in hindsight, and in a more or less “objective” way.*

*With the distance created by time I found elements and traces of important aspects that today define the nature of Social Watch, aspects which I had myself not consciously seen previously. I was surprised by the clarity of views of important actors involved in the setting up of Social Watch, on how to develop NGO participation in the Social Summit as early as 1993. I was also surprised by the convergence of similar ideas among a wide range of actors among the NGOs participating in the Summit preparations. In hindsight I could also identify more easily mistakes that were made – even if they were done with the best of intentions.*

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<sup>1</sup> The original work was used in the evaluation process of Social Watch carried out in 2000. Parts were published earlier in: Mirjam van Reisen, Atila Roque and Patricia Garcé, Social Watch: Civil Society Monitoring of the Copenhagen Commitments, A case-Study by Social Watch, Conference Paper Series, New York : UNDP, May 2000.

*This document has benefited from the views of many. The exercise of looking at how Social Watch came about has strengthened my belief that Social Watch is a unique project of advocacy by NGOs. Its strength is the connection of local experiences with an international advocacy agenda, experimenting with the use of modern communications technology as a means to mobilise.*

*I think that I am right when I state that many of us involved in the Social Summit wanted Social Watch to succeed, and are grateful that it did. There is also little doubt that the accomplishment has been produced by the skilful handling of an intensely complex process in which many precarious and sensitive tensions were dealt with by the talented and capable leadership of the Social Watch secretariat, in particular Roberto Bissio and Patricia Garcé. They have skilfully developed a new, original and powerful instrument for advocacy. But they have also created a “home” for the many activists around the world who share the same values and hopes. It is my sincere hope that the analysis presented here will contribute to a deeper understanding of Social Watch – its origin, its aspirations, its methods and its achievements.*

Mirjam van Reisen

La Hulpe, August 2001



*"This Summit is a historic and unique platform for global social development. But we must not give the impression that the Summit alone will dramatically change daily life. (...) The true significance of the Summit will therefore have to be measured by what happens after the Summit. This is only the beginning of a new, global process."*

Opening Statement by H.E. Mr. Poul Nyrup Rasmussen,  
Prime Minister of Denmark, President of the Summit.

## Introduction

The UN World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) held in Copenhagen (Denmark) from 6-12 March 1995 was attended by 117 governments, and was the greatest gathering of Heads of State until then.<sup>2</sup> The world leaders committed themselves to a Declaration and Action Programme covering the broad spectrum of political, economic and social measures necessary to eradicate poverty. It was a landmark, not only in terms of the size of participation, but also in terms of the depth of issues dealt with. It was the first time that the international community committed itself to the eradication of poverty.

In the Social Summit, as it was more commonly referred to, around 20.000 people from 180 countries participated. Non Governmental Organisations (NGOs) had played a crucial role in the preparations of the Summit, which, therefore, was not only a landmark at the official level but a marking point for the relations between the UN and NGOs:

*"The landmark World Summit for Social Development (WSSD) was many things to different groups and actors. In terms of NGO-UN relations, it was a turning point."<sup>3</sup>*

In the Social Summit NGOs from South and North co-operated in a strong coalition with the goal to influence the positions of their respective governments in order to improve the substantive outcome of the Summit. From this process Social Watch

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2 The United Nations Millennium Summit (6-8 September 2000) brought an even larger number of Heads of State together.

3 Nittin Desai, United Nations Under-Secretary-General for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development. In: "NGLS, Social Priorities of Civil Society. Speeches by Non-Governmental Organizations at the World Summit for Social Development, Copenhagen 6-12 March 1995", Development Dossiers, United Nations, Geneva, 1996, pp. vii.



emerged. At the Summit many realised that its worth was not in the event itself, important as it may have been, but in the follow-up. Ambassador Juan Somavía, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development, stated in his inaugural address to the thousands of participants at the Summit:

*“I am here to say that without you – all of you present here today and the millions that you represent – the World Summit for Social Development would not have been possible. (...) I congratulate you on what you have done. I invite you to grasp the banners of the Social Summit to help make it a reality.”<sup>4</sup>*

Max van den Berg, the Director of Dutch NGO Novib at the time, responded to this invitation in his address to the Summit as follows:

*“We once warned Chairman Somavía that the summit would become a lion which could roar but had no teeth. Tonight, on the eve of the Summit, we feel we are the teeth of a very large lion lying before us. The lion, which is called the Social Summit, is full of royalty and highness. It looks beautiful and important, but in reality its only strength lies in its teeth. That is what we will be. That is both an offer and a promise.”<sup>5</sup>*

The following morning Novib Director Max van den Berg announced in a press release the establishment of a follow-up co-ordination, which would be called “Social Watch”.<sup>6</sup> This formally marks the beginning of Social Watch.

The idea had been developed by participants of the Development Caucus, a meeting of NGO representatives attempting to ensure that the Social Summit would address key issues of relevance to social development in the South. The core of this idea was to monitor the implementation of the international commitments at national level. In many ways the idea of a Social Watch was an obvious one, an idea “that had to emerge”. Amnesty International had been reporting for decades on the fulfilment of the obligations of governments under the UN Convention on Civil and Political Rights. Other groups such as the Reality of Aid group monitored the implementation of commitments made by OECD countries with regards to aid. Some national groups did some work on the UN Convention on Economic, Social

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4 Juan Somavía, Inaugural Address. Op.cit., pp. 135-140.

5 Max van den Berg for Eurostep. Op.cit., pp. 35-37.

6 Persverklaring. “Het Sociale Gezicht van de VN. Plannen voor verdere actie: nieuwe campagne Social Watch”, Novib, Copenhagen, The Hague, March 6, 1995.

and Cultural Rights, but a systematic reporting and engagement linking national level to international commitments on social development was lacking. Roberto Bissio, the founder and director of the Social Watch secretariat put it as follows:

*“The Social Watch is an effort to do what obviously needs to be done.”<sup>7</sup>*

### *Scope of the analysis*

Social Watch evolved naturally from the ongoing engagement of national NGOs with their governments within the context of international negotiations on social development. In other words, what was to become Social Watch had already emerged over a period of almost four years. To appreciate Social Watch as it manifests itself today, it is helpful, if not imperative to understand where it came from. This analysis intends to present the genesis of Social Watch. It will attempt to answer questions such as how was it created? Where did the idea stem from? What were the initial visions and aspirations behind it? How did Social Watch become a reality?

This history of NGO involvement in the Social Summit is analysed with the objective of understanding the emergence of Social Watch. Hence it leaves out activities by NGOs that may have been relevant to the Summit, but were not crucial to the establishment of Social Watch. In particular the relatively prominent role of the International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW) in influencing the text on the Programme of Action will not be analysed in detail, since its process worked more in parallel with the Social Watch related activities. ICSW kept a fairly individual profile, though it subscribed to many overall statements that the Women’s Caucus and Development Caucus would produce.

The NGO forum, which was held during the Social Summit in Copenhagen, produced the Copenhagen Alternative Declaration. This was an important contribution, which expressed the dissatisfaction with the outcome of the Summit. The process that led to it is equally not detailed in this account.

The specificity of Social Watch is that it developed as a process of engagement to the official process, rooted in the national realities of NGOs that contributed to its establishment. The emergence of new information technology and communication tools, particularly through email and Internet, contributed extensively to its

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7 Roberto Bissio, “Occupying new space for public life. Politics and People in a network society.” In: *Whose World is it Anyway? Civil Society, the United Nations and the multilateral future*, (John Foster with Anita Anand, Eds.) The United Nations Associations in Canada, Ottawa, 1999.

establishment. In this account I analyse how Social Watch was established, and it is not intended, therefore, to be a comprehensive analysis of NGO activity around the Summit.

### *Organisation of the publication*

The organisation of this publication is as follows. In the next section the background to the Social Summit itself will be described, and the context in which the NGO participation in the Summit evolved. In the following section I will analyse how, and with what agenda, different NGOs and NGO-groupings became involved in the Social Summit. Then the role of Novib in promoting NGO involvement in the Summit will be looked at, and how this relates to the establishment of Social Watch. Responding to concerns raised by NGO networks then organised in El Taller, and Third World Network (TWN), as well as by NGOs focusing on communication, such as International Press Service (IPS) and the APC-network, Novib facilitated a project that would ensure Southern participation through information distribution by electronic means. These concerns sprang off the experiences NGOs had gained in the previous UN conferences, particularly the UNCED in Rio de Janeiro.

The provisions created to ensure the participation of Southern NGOs enhanced their involvement in the Summit. The greater access to information and enhanced participation of Southern NGOs provoked challenges to the way in which NGOs had been organising themselves during the preparatory process until then. The issues that were raised as a consequence led to some fundamental changes in the relationship between the UN and NGOs – as well amongst NGOs. The role of interlocutor that some NGOs had been playing in arranging NGO contacts with the UN had lost most of its relevance. This is described under sections “NGO Alliances” and “NGO Networking”.

From the openings now created for Southern participation, but also the participation of organisations rooted in work in the area of social development at a local and national level rather than from an international perspective, the realities that could be addressed in the Summit became much more real. It followed logically that participants would go home at the end of the day to monitor if their own circumstances would improve by implementation of the commitments made by their governments and address where their governments failed to do so.

## The Context and Objectives of the Social Summit

The Social Summit fell within a series of UN world conferences which all addressed different aspects of development, including environmental, human rights, population, and gender equality issues. The possibility to hold a Social Summit emerged from work of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Juan Somavía, holding comprehensive consultations with Member States on the World Summit for Social Development. Ambassador Somavía became Chile's representative to the UN following his return from exile in Mexico after the Pinochet dictatorship was sidelined in 1990.

In the analysis of Somavía the UN was entering into an “identity crisis” after the fall of the Berlin Wall. The significance of the UN during the Cold War in politically guiding international relations through the Security Council was dramatically diminishing. Other multilateral institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the GATT – the predecessor of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) – had become important instruments for international co-operation, particularly since the inclusion of Eastern Europe in its membership. Consequentially the UN's role in international security issues declined, and its tasks in social and economic policy areas were seriously curtailed as well.<sup>8</sup>

Somavía believed that the UN should win back its mandate in social and economic areas and that “development” should be put higher at the political agenda. In the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) he found an ally. This UN body launched a comeback in 1990 with the “Human Development Report”. In this annual publication “development” was measured in terms of “human development”, as opposed to the limited traditional economic approach of the Bretton Woods Institutions. It was UNDP's attempt to win back political space by creating a vision that challenged the predominant approach; an approach criticised by an increasing number of developing countries.

UNDP also put their thinking for new initiatives strongly in the context created by the end of the Cold War. It was among others an attempt to give new meaning to the concept of “security” in a human centred idea of security. The chief editor of the Human Development Report at the time, Pakistani Mahbud Ul Haq, wrote during the first Preparatory Committee of the Social Summit:

*“This is a time when the unthinkable is becoming commonplace  
– from the handshakes of Yasser Arafat and Yitzhak Rabin to the*

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8 M. van Reisen, “De Sociale Top: Instrument voor Herijking van Ontwikkelings-samenwerking” (The Social Summit, Instrument for reassessment of Development Co-operation), *Derde Wereld*, Vol 13, N<sup>o</sup> 4, 1995.



*Amb. Juan Somavía, chairman at the Social Summit Preparatory Committee, New York, February 1994.*

*joint Nobel Prize for Nelson Mandela and F.W. de Klerk to the close collaboration between the United States and Russia. (...) We stand at a point in history when the very concept of security may be changing.”<sup>9</sup>*

In UI Haq’s view the Social Summit should provide concrete substance to the emerging concept of “human security” developed by UNDP’s Human Development Report. In the 1993 Report to the Preparatory Committee Chairman Somavía, elected at its first meeting, introduced it:

*“At the heart of the Summit [is] the major issue of human security.”<sup>10</sup>*

Somavía saw the 1990 World Summit for Children as an example of how the political agenda of the UN could be moved. Choosing the right name for the Summit was a challenging question when the idea first emerged in 1991. A “Human Development Summit” would be too closely associated with UNDP. A “Sustainable Development Summit” would not distinguish sufficiently from the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED). An “Economic Development Summit” was likely to be too offensive vis à vis the Bretton Woods Institutions. The term “Social Development” was politically the most neutral term.

9 Mahbub UI Haq, Special Advisor to the Administrator of UNDP, In: The Earth Times, Vol. VI, N° 7. February 7, 1994, p. 1-5.

10 United Nations, Report of the Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development, General Assembly, Official Records, Forty-eighth Session, Supplement N° 24 (A/48/24), New York, 1993. The meeting was held on April 2-16, 1993.

The nature of the meeting being a Summit was justified later by UN General Secretary Boutros Ghali to be necessary as:

*“Social development goes far wider than the mandate of social ministries. It lies at the heart of economic development, of human rights and of peace and security. This is why we must raise the political level at which social issues are discussed, both nationally and internationally.”*<sup>11</sup>

When the proposal was launched during the United Nations General Assembly in 1992 there was more interest than had perhaps originally been anticipated. Clinton had just won the presidential elections. US diplomats were lobbied to give up their opposition in view of the new situation. It was argued that Clinton, who was elected with a social agenda, could not possibly be against the Summit, which would be held during his period as President. After negotiations with the Clinton team the diplomats of Bush voted in favour of resolution 47/92 of 16 December 1992 in which the United Nations decided to convene a World Summit for Social Development (see Annex 1).<sup>12</sup>

## **Exploring Possibilities for the Participation of NGOs**

Ambassador Somavía was well acquainted with the NGO world and believed that the outcome of the Summit could be enhanced by participation of civil organisations. While in exile he had founded a Non Governmental Organisation that monitored practices of multinational corporations. After Pinochet’s partial retreat, Somavía was also the Secretary General of the Chilean Chapter of the *Comisión Sudamericana de Paz*. This Peace Commission, with members such as Raúl Alfonsín in Argentina, and Gabriel García Márquez in Colombia, had been established in the aftermath of the Cold War and end of dictatorships in Latin America with the view to find a new role for the military. The idea was that stability on the Latin American continent could only be achieved if the military would be given a legitimate role within the structure of the new societies.

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11 The Earth Times, Vol. VI, Nº 3, February 1, 1994, p. 5.

12 The Resolution set out the following broad objectives: 1) to further the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations; 2) to put the needs of people at the centre of development; 3) to stimulate international co-operation; 4) to formulate strategies on goals, policies and priority actions; 5) to address the interaction between the social function of the State, the market and social demands; 6) to identify common problems of marginalised and disadvantaged groups; 7) to promote programmes to ensure legal protection and enhance education and training; 8) to highlight the need to mobilise resources for social development; 9) to make recommendations to the UN system.

In 1992, after resolution 47/92 had been adopted, Somavía approached the Executive Secretary of the Chilean chapter of the Peace Commission, Carlos Contreras, as well as Roberto Savio, Director at the time of both the International Press Service (IPS) and the Society for International Development (SID). He asked them to help develop a strategy to enhance NGO participation in the preparations for the Summit. The Peace Commission organised a meeting in April 1993 where a “People’s Alliance for Social Development” was constituted, with a secretariat based in Chile. It included an organising committee with organisations in Africa, Asian and Latin America.<sup>13</sup>

Independently the People’s Alliance and IPS/SID both approached Novib, a Dutch development NGO. The interest of Novib’s Director to actively participate in the Summit was raised in February 1993 with a meeting set up by SID between Novib Director Van den Berg and Somavía.<sup>14</sup> In September Van den Berg again met with Somavía and accepted a request to be special advisor to Somavía in the preparations for the summit.<sup>15</sup>

## **Oaxaca: the Cradle of NGO Input into the Social Summit**

NGO interest in the Social Summit clearly started in Latin America. Not only the *Comisión Sudamericana de Paz* saw possibilities for NGO involvement. The Mexican NGOs *Equipo Pueblo* and the *Foro de Apoyo* discussed with Novib Director Van den Berg the possibility of using the Social Summit to advocate debt swaps as a means of raising public funding for social sectors when he visited Washington and New York in 1993.<sup>16</sup> It was agreed that these Mexican partner organisations<sup>17</sup> would send an English document on substantive issues for the Social Summit. Novib would endorse a position on the basis of these documents. It was further agreed that a group of Mexican NGOs would organise a meeting as a preparation to the Social Summit. This meeting took place in September 1993.

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13 The meeting was held in Santiago, Chile, April 20-22, 1993, convened by the International Council for Adult Education and the South American Peace Committee. The objective of the Alliance is to “constitute ourselves as an organising committee to enhance public participation of social actors in the preparatory process towards the World Summit through the People’s Alliance for Social Development”. People’s Alliance for Social Development, Non Governmental Organizations in support of the World Summit on Social Development, undated information document.

14 Letter by Carlos Contreras, Comisión Sudamericana de Paz, to Mirjam van Reisen, June 9, 1993.

15 Social Summit Special Edition, Novib News, 1993, 11<sup>th</sup> edition, special issue.

16 Max van den Berg, “Lichtenstein revisited. Novib tussen Washington en New York”, Reisverslag, 19 t/m July 23, 1993. [Novib between Washington and New York, Travel account]

17 The term “partner organisation” is used by Novib to refer to organisations whose projects it supports. With some NGOs Novib has a long-standing relationship of co-operation in different areas, including financial support political co-operation and otherwise, that the term “partnership” specifically relates to.



*Conference on Social Development, Oaxaca, Mexico, September 1993.*

Interest in the Summit was slowly growing. In July 1993 Juan Somavía presented a plan for the Social Summit to the Board of Directors of the World Bank. The Bank agreed to co-operate and to produce the necessary documents.<sup>18</sup> The Mexican government in co-operation with the World Bank and UNDP hosted a government meeting in Oaxaca on social development and poverty in early September 1993 as a preparation to the Social Summit.<sup>19</sup> This conference coincided with a number of international and national NGO meetings.

The presence of Somavía and UNDP representatives in Oaxaca together with many NGOs allowed for an initial exchange of views on enhancing NGO participation as a means of strengthening the outcome of the Summit. Apart from the Mexican national platform of NGOs these meetings were attended by a dozen Latin American national organisations, including FASE from Brazil and the Instituto Tercer Mundo (ITeM) from Uruguay,<sup>20</sup> as well as the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA) and the People's Alliance. The participation was limited to Latin America, with the exception of representatives of an American NGO (Development GAP) and Novib.

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18 Information from Eveline Herflens to Max van den Berg, op. cit.

19 Conferencia de Mexico sobre Desarrollo Social y Pobreza, Oaxaca, 8-11 September 1993. This conference was attended by delegations of 63 countries. The objective of the conference was to "contribuir con ello a los trabajos preparatorios de la Reunión Mundial en la Cumbre sobre Desarrollo Social" [to contribute to the preparations of the Summit for Social Development].

20 This group had a meeting in Oaxaca coinciding with the official conference on structural adjustment policies. The meeting was organised by the Washington-based organisation DGAP.





*NGO participants at the meeting on structural adjustment, Oaxaca, Mexico, September 1993.*

In meetings that took place with Somavía and UNDP the NGOs expressed their hesitation about the Summit. Their reservations were partly the result of the disappointment in the lack of follow-up of the UNCED process. Somavía emphasised that it was necessary to begin thinking about the follow-up at an early stage.<sup>21</sup> Additionally, the NGO representatives emphasised in these meetings the need for a transparent and open communication and information process so as to allow broad participation of a wide variety of NGOs.

The NGOs also stressed the need for preparation at the national level so as to “*validate the international process of the Summit*” (see Annex 2). The principle that NGO participation in the Summit had to be based on local experience with social development and that interventions should first and foremost relate to national political realities would become an important element of the Social Summit process and its follow-up. It was also a basic approach of the Social Watch initiative.<sup>22</sup>

The series of meetings in Oaxaca was also used for a preliminary exchange of views between Third World Network, the APC electronic network<sup>23</sup> and Novib. In a written document ITeM's Director Roberto Bissio made some proposals to Novib for co-operation in the Summit process, based on the following conclusion:

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21 Travel account Mirjam van Reisen, August-September 1993, Social Summit in Mexico.

22 UNDP undertook to play a facilitating role at the national level for the preparations.

23 Both represented by ITeM's Director Roberto Bissio.

Memo: Oaxaca, Sept. 9, '93

To: Mirjam / Novib

From: Roberto Bissio

### NGO INPUT INTO SOCIAL SUMMIT

#### SOME PRELIMINARY IDEAS

FROM THE DISCUSSIONS HELD YESTERDAY WITH JUAN SOMARRIVA, IT IS CLEAR THAT NGO PARTICIPATION IS A KEY ELEMENT FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE SOCIAL SUMMIT.

"SUCCESS" MEANS: a) AN 'INTEGRAL' DISCUSSION OF THE SUMMIT ISSUES (POVERTY, UNEMPLOYMENT, SOCIAL COHESION) IN A WAY THAT BRINGS TOGETHER DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT NGOS, WOMEN GROUPS, PEACE MOVEMENTS, SOCIAL ORGANIZATIONS (PEASANTS, INDIGENOUS PEOPLE, UNION, DWELLERS) AND ETHICAL AND RELIGIOUS LEADERSHIPS WHO CAN CONVINCE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP TO GENERATE THE POLITICAL WILL REQUIRED TO CHANGE THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM, PARTICULARLY THE BRATTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS

b) ~~AND~~ A STRONG OPPOSITION TO THE CURRENT ATTEMPT BY THE WORLD BANK TO BECOME THE IMPLEMENTING AGENCY OF SOCIAL POLICIES, DISPLACING ILO, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WHO, ETC. IN A SIMILAR WAY AS THEY DID WITH ENVIRONMENT THROUGH GEF.

THIS REQUIRES A SIMULTANEOUS EFFORT ON ORGANIZATION AND POLICY FORMULATION, AREAS WHERE TWIN HAS A MAJOR ROLE TO PLAY, IN COLLABORATION WITH NOVIB, EURSTEP, ETC.

NGOINET COULD PLAY A SUPPORTING ROLE IN THIS PROCESS

Memo from Roberto Bissio to Mirjam van Reisen, "NGO input into Social Summit. Some preliminary ideas", Oaxaca, Mexico, September 1993.

*“From the discussions held yesterday with Juan Somavía, it is clear that NGO participation is a key element for the success of the Social Summit.”<sup>24</sup>*

The document defined what would be considered a “success” of the Summit, and listed the following elements:

*“a) An “integral” discussion of the summit issues (poverty, unemployment, social cohesion) in a process that brings together development and environment NGOs, women groups, peace movements, social organizations (peasants, indigenous people, unions, dwellers) and ethical and religious leaderships to generate the political will required to change the international system, particularly the Bretton Woods Institutions.*

*“b) A strong opposition to the current attempt by the World Bank to become the implementing agency of social policies, displacing ILO, UNICEF, UNIFEM, WHO, etc.”<sup>25</sup>*

The document identified the need for a strong effort of different networks to work together in a co-ordinated way:

*“This requires a simultaneous effort on organization and policy formulation, areas where TWN has a major role to play, in collaboration with Novib, Eurostep, etc.”<sup>26</sup>*

The Latin American NGOs wrote a joint letter to Somavía that underlined the principles on which the Summit should be based. These were:

- The need for broad participation, including organisations with experience of social development at local level;
- The need to develop specific political strategies relating to specific national and regional political realities;
- The need for an inclusive, open and transparent process to encourage participation.

If implemented this would radically change the involvement of NGOs in the UN.

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24 Memo from Roberto Bissio to Mirjam van Reisen / Novib, Oaxaca, Mexico, September 9, 1993.

25 Ibid.

26 Ibid.

## Novib's Kick Off

During 1993, in the context of the UN conferences, Novib was active in the preparations for the UN World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna. For this conference Novib created a “reference group” of partner organisations. The idea of a “reference group” stemmed from a meeting in October 1992 between Novib and the UN Non Governmental Liaison Committee (NGLS) in New York. NGLS recommended that a shared approach between Northern NGOs with Southern NGOs would not only enhance the Southern participation in the Conference but would also strengthen the potential impact of the lobbying. The “reference group” established by Novib in the lead up to the UN Conference on Human Rights consisted of women’s organisations only. For Novib the participation in the UN Human Rights conference was seen as a step in a bigger initiative towards the Fourth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing in 1995.

Novib saw the reference group as a very useful tool from a political point of view. First and foremost, it created an exchange with Southern partner organisations on the substance and strategy of advocacy work. Expertise of the New York and Washington based International Human Rights Law Group (IHRIG) assisted in guiding practical and substantive questions on how the UN process could most effectively be influenced. Within Novib the reference group also helped to broaden the involvement in the advocacy process from the political unit to the programme department, in charge of relations with Southern partners. In the EU Oxfam UKI had gained interest in the process and participated in the meetings as well.

When Novib decided to work around the Social Summit, with an interest in ensuring that NGOs would play an important role, the model of a “reference group” was chosen as the approach to create Southern involvement. At the same time, during the UN Human Rights Conference in June 1993 in Vienna the “Novib women’s reference group” decided to embark on a strategy to participate into the Social Summit process as a preparation to the Beijing conference.<sup>27</sup> Novib then decided that the existing reference group – functioning with the Women’s Conference in Beijing as its main advocacy objective, would be broadened so as to incorporate the Social Summit process as well. Novib’s Director General declared that the process would keep a strong commitment to raise the issue of women’s rights. In this context Novib’s director also established the principle that the preparations for the Social Summit and the Beijing Conference would be two elements of one strategy.

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27 Novib, Memo “Wenen mr conferentie”, Van Ingrid, Mirjam aan Francesco, Dated July 26, 1993; letter to the Members of the Reference Group by Novib (Ingrid van Tienhoven, Mirjam van Reisen), July 9, 1993.

The decision to broaden the “reference group” and use it in the preparations of the Social Summit fundamentally changed the nature of the original “reference group”. Whereas the first “women’s reference group” consisted of organisations that were already actively involved in the women’s human rights lobby process – and hence had their own programme on the issues, the new version of the reference group incorporated new organisations invited by Novib to participate in the process. No longer was the group composed only of women’s organisations. Novib’s project department was asked to propose new candidate organisations for the reference group, on the basis of criteria developed by the policy department. Novib would take responsibility for the financial requirements for participation.<sup>28</sup>

## Dissemination of Information to the South

During the General Assembly of Tunis-based NGO coalition El Taller<sup>29</sup> in November 1993, several southern NGOs expressed the concern of lack of information on the activities and documents prepared for the Social Summit. A request was made to Novib to facilitate this specific aspect. It was argued that:

*“...all the necessary information coming from UN-bodies (...) is essential for NGOs in the South to ensure not only their participation but also to level up with Northern NGOs on the knowledge of what is going on with the preparations.”<sup>30</sup>*

Novib responded by inviting organisations to implement a project that it would finance with the objective to:

*“...place a person in New York, who will be in charge of disseminating all the information regarding the Social Summit. This information will be disseminated to the NGO Community, especially to some key-points which will act as a clearing house for other NGOs in their respective regions.”<sup>31</sup>*

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28 This would lead later in the process to some ambiguity in the political and financial processes of co-operation between Novib and its partners. It would also lead to some uncertainties concerning “ownership” and “visibility” of the advocacy work that needed to be resolved.

29 El Taller was founded by previous Novib Director Sjeff Theunis, as an institute for training and capacity building. Many of Novib’s partner-organisations were involved in EL Taller, as well as in the board.

30 Project Title: Information for the Social Summit of Copenhagen. Presented to: Novib, October 1993.

31 Ibid.

The original focal points identified were: Phillipine-based PRRM for Asia; ENDA-Dakar for french Africa; Zimbabwe-based ORAP for English Africa; El Taller in the Maghreb Region; Novib in Europe; Development Gap in the USA; IBASE, NGONET, ICD in Latin America, CEDEP in the Andean Region and CECADE and Equipo Pueblo in Central America. This list reflected largely the participants of the El Taller General Assembly meeting and formed the basis for the original participation in the “Novib reference group”.<sup>32</sup>

In subsequent meetings between Novib and IPS, IPS offered to rent office space to the person to be employed and accredit a person under ECOSOC, which would allow the person free access to the UN building. NGOs were invited to apply for the project. Novib selected the candidate proposed by ITeM.

In the following months ITeM and Novib agreed on how the APC network could be used in the preparatory process. It was agreed that the selected candidate would have experience to ensure that the necessary information was available to NGOs.

ITeM employed the information manager, Magela Sigillito, and defined the role as enhancing NGO participation in the Summit. It saw the task as ensuring that not only the reference group, but also NGOs in general, were kept updated about any news relevant to the preparatory process of the Social Summit and the Women’s Conference. ITeM did not see the information manager as being directly accountable to Novib. Novib financed this “project” and interpreted the tasks of the information manager as also administratively supporting all aspects related to the engagement of the Novib reference group in the process. In Novib’s view the information manager was based in New York to help Novib in organising the reference group. Hence, the provision of information was one element in a set of broader tasks.<sup>33</sup>

For ITeM information was a strategic asset that should be used to ensure that the right strategic decisions were taken by the NGOs coalitions. Different levels of communication were implemented in this process. Websites available to anybody were established to provide access to public information on the Summit, whereas e-mail lists and traditional mailings, for those without e-mail access, were used for advancing coalitions in specific groups of NGOs. This information campaign was also used to insist the UN would make documents electronically available as well

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32 The focal points were not really necessary for the dissemination of information, which could be directly obtained by anyone with an email connection. It was important to provide a political coalition supporting the project.

33 In February 1994 Novib and ITeM agreed that the task of the information manager was to be “an information broker” and not in independent advocacy or administrative logistical matters, as stated in the contract. Correspondence A. van den Ham – R. Bissio, 1994; Verslag Dienstreis Allert van den Ham naar de Verenigde States, 5-12 February, 1994, p. 8.

as to advance the access to electronic communication equipment by NGOs actively involved in advocacy for the Summit.

## The “Novib Reference Group”

The concept of the “reference group” established a new approach to lobbying by Novib, not on behalf of the partners but with the partners. While this created important new political opportunities it also produced pressure relating to:

1. The influence of Novib as provider of financial support and as an advocacy actor causing inequality in the lobby co-operation between “partners”;
2. The engagement of locally oriented organisations, alongside lobby organisations, ensuing broader participation but also generating differences in the initial ability to define joint strategic processes in the preparatory process.

The “reference group” was no longer a meeting of equal and independent actors engaged in a common process from different perspectives – according to its original design. The new “reference group” to the Social Summit had inbuilt pressures that needed to be addressed if co-operation was going to be successful.<sup>34</sup>

### *Development of a political programme*

The establishment of the reference group at the beginning of the process meant that a political programme for the reference group had to be created rather than negotiated. In the beginning Novib took the initiative to do this.<sup>35</sup> An initial draft on the possible content of the Summit was prepared by Novib and circulated to 160 Southern partners. Forty-nine organisations responded. The replies were analysed and fed into a second version. TWN provided focus to the content of the meeting

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34 The reference group set up by Novib included the following organisations: IBASE (Brazil), Fase (Brazil), Entre Mujeres/CLADEM (Peru), Centro Flora Tristán (Peru), CIPCA (Bolivia), Concertación Centroamericana de Organismos de Desarrollo (Nicaragua), CEDEP (Peru), ICD (Uruguay) Equipo Pueblo (Mexico), ENDA (Senegal), FIDA (Uganda), TWN Africa (Ghana), Inter Africa Group (Ethiopia), ORAP (Zimbabwe), Group for Environmental Monitoring (South Africa), Women’s Affairs (Israel), LBBT (Indonesia), Centre for Education and Documentation (India), PRRM (Philippines), ADAB (Bangladesh), Proshika (Bangladesh), TWN (Malaysia), ITeM (Uruguay), IHRLG (Washington), IPS (Italy). The composition of the group changed over time, and also became more flexible and fluid. Caroline Wildeman to Max van den Berg, Novib Internal Memo, Subject: Eurostep working group Social Summit. December 17, 1993.

35 Caroline Wildeman to Andy Wehkamp et al., Novib Internal Memo, Social Summit/Vrouwenconferentie [women’s conference]. September 17, 1993.



during a Brainstorming Meeting organised in Penang.<sup>36</sup> The paper was also discussed at regional meetings between Novib and its Southern partners.<sup>37</sup> This consultation process eventually led to the publication of the “Novib position paper. The UN Summit on Social Development”, presented at the first PrepCom in January 1994. Additionally this paper was widely circulated to Novib’s Southern partners.

The Novib position paper drew attention to the structural impediments to social development, and incorporated issues such as debt and structural adjustment. It also sought to address the issue of accountability of the International Financial Institutions and put social development in the context of a human rights perspective. Furthermore, as the work in the reference group was embedded in advocacy for women’s rights it drew particular attention to political participation of women. The paper further prioritised the role of civil society on social development as a key issue for the Summit – which obviously also had a strategic importance.

In identifying these issues, the paper pushed the agenda of the Summit to go well beyond the narrow and only national conceptualisation of social development. It brought macro-economic issues on the agenda. It made the connection to the strong and active women’s movement, and it brought the role of NGOs themselves on the agenda. In general Southern partners of Novib supported this basic approach, although some initial differences existed as to whether or not human rights instruments would be helpful mechanisms to achieve the other objectives set out in the paper. These differences were resolved by emphasising that human rights were universal and indivisible, pointing to the complementarity between civil and political rights on the one hand and social, economic and cultural rights on the other. This “merger” between a rights-based approach and a macro-economic approach remained an important feature of the substantive common position between NGOs during the Summit preparations. This was important because it enabled the emergence of a coalition between development NGOs with a predominant political-economic analysis with women’s rights and human rights organisations.

The “Novib paper” was the most elaborated substantive contribution at the earliest stage of negotiations.<sup>38</sup> It succeeded in influencing the official agenda during the

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36 Max van den Berg to Allert van de Ham, Novib Internal Memo, Subject: Verslag n.a.v. bezoek aan Penang [Report concerning visit to Penang, MvR]. January 5, 1994. The Meeting in Penang was held from December 31, 1993 to January 2, 1994.

37 These were called “regional platform meetings” and were an instrument for dialogue on a variety of issues between Novib and a regional grouping of its “partners”.

38 350 copies were distributed during the first PrepCom.



first PrepCom at the end of which the official documents incorporated most elements that had been brought forward in the position paper.<sup>39</sup>

Nonetheless, even though the process of putting the lobby-paper together had involved many Southern NGOs, the paper was identified as a “Novib position paper” and this was a barrier to creating a common framework for action for the reference group during the first PrepCom. The reference group, which was initially being referred to as the “Novib” group, suffered from a lack of space in which to create distinct organisational identities in the process. In time the strategic importance of fluid alliances in which the identity of individual organisations and groups of organisations could be constructed based of efficiency in advocacy was better understood.

## NGO Alliances

### *People’s Alliance and El Taller*

The People’s Alliance had not secured much funding for its work by the first PrepCom. Novib had agreed a symbolic contribution, and had also agreed to work with, but not as part of, the People’s Alliance.<sup>40</sup> The most extensive network engaged in the People’s Alliance was El Taller.<sup>41</sup> Novib’s intricate connection with El Taller was used to bring together partners involved in the board of El Taller who were also members of the reference group.<sup>42</sup> As a result there was much overlap, particularly in the beginning, between the reference group and the El Taller group – and hence with the People’s Alliance.

### *WEDO*

The Women’s Environment and Development Organisation (WEDO), whose chair was the famous activist and politician Bella Abzug, well connected to Washington circles<sup>43</sup>, was another NGO instrumental in organising alliances of NGOs during

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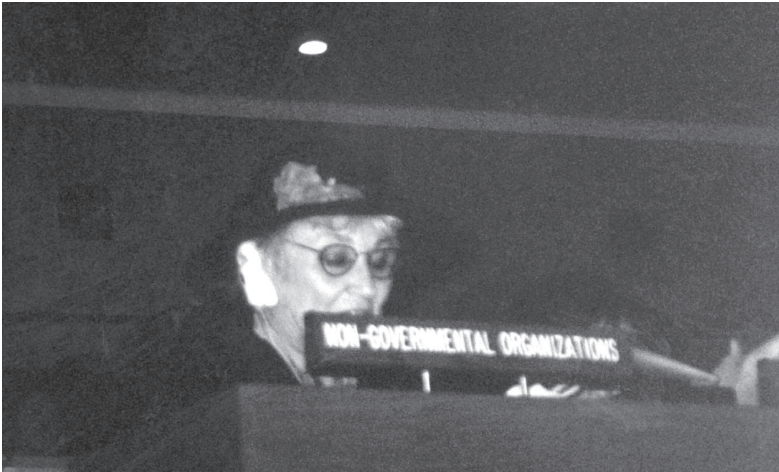
39 Position papers of other groups, such as the Women’s Caucus and the International Council of Social Welfare, took over proposals from the initial “Novib paper”.

40 Max van den Berg to Allert van de Ham, Novib Internal Memo, Subject: People’s Alliance. December 6, 1993. A symbolic contribution of Dfl. 25.000 was agreed.

41 For its financial resources El Taller depended heavily on Novib.

42 Verslag dienstreis. Allert van de Ham naar de Verenigde States (February 5-12, 1994). Four board members of El Taller were also in the reference group. It was arranged that Board meetings of El Taller were held at the same time as preparatory meetings for the Social Summit, for reasons of cost-efficiency.

43 Including then first lady Hillary Clinton.



*Bella Abzug addressing the PrepCom on behalf of WEDO, New York, February 1994.*

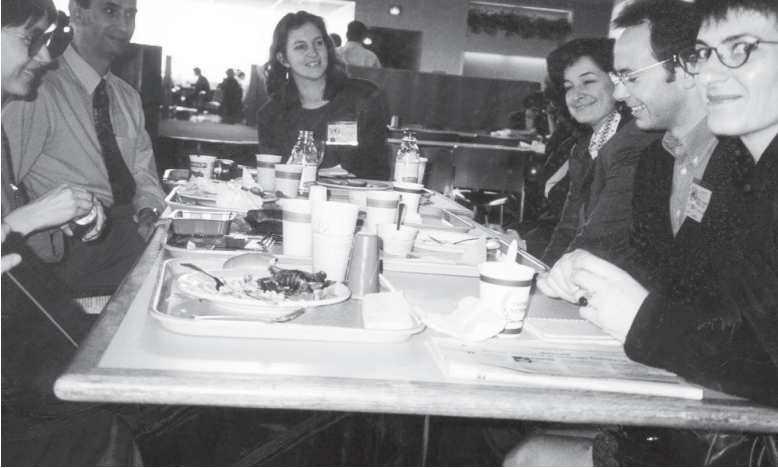
the first PrepCom. WEDO had a vast experience in engaging in the UN conferences. It worked predominantly with women's organisations. WEDO's work in the conferences had the objective to engage as many NGOs as possible in a productive process of engagement with the official process. WEDO provided a space for meeting and exchange in the "Women's Caucus" that they had established. It provided important information on the developments in the official process as well as exchanges with representatives of government. The tools produced by WEDO and the Women's Caucus included precise language for inclusion in the official texts distributed to the official delegates.

The Women's Caucus had a direct link to Somavía.<sup>44</sup> The Caucus included organisations that participated in the Summit with direct support from WEDO, but it was open to anybody interested in contributing to the issues on which the Caucus was working. WEDO's experience in following UN conferences provided an excellent space for obtaining relevant information and opportunities to learn strategies of engagement with the official process that had a real possibility of influencing the process.<sup>45</sup> During the first PrepCom many of the "members" of the Novib reference

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44 Adriana Santa Cruz, a Latin American women's activist, frequently participated in the caucus. She is married to Amb. Somavía.

45 Contact between Novib and WEDO was established just before the first PrepCom. Fax from Susan Davies, Executive Director WEDO to Mirjam van Reisen, Novib, December 28, 1993. In this letter WEDO also asked Novib for a financial contribution.



*Eurostep meeting, 1993.*

group began to attend the morning sessions of the Women's Caucus. The participation of more Southern and Northern groups, as well as of members of different "genders", gave WEDO an even greater political weight.<sup>46</sup> The very close co-operation and trust between Abzug and Novib's van den Berg – also expressed in a "symbolic" financial contribution from Novib to WEDO, was an important aspect of the NGO alliances established during the Social Summit process.<sup>47</sup>

### *Eurostep*

Novib was a founding member of the non-denominational European network Eurostep, established in 1990. Its membership comprised of 23 European Development Organisations. At the Eurostep Steering Committee meeting of 24 March 1993 it was agreed that a list of UN meetings should be produced and steps should be made to co-ordinate efforts of the member organisations in these meetings.<sup>48</sup> Novib produced this list in April. In June 1993 Novib and the Danish NGO MS raised the question of the participation in the Social Summit in the General

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46 WEDO under the leadership of American old lady Bella Abzug suffered from an image that it leaned too much to US feminist perspectives.

47 Susan Davis, Director of WEDO, to Max van den Berg, Novib: "It always helps when the sun shines and one hears that funding is coming through. We appreciate the symbolic contribution (...) because symbols are important. We do value the partnership with Novib." February 17, 1994.

48 Eurostep, minutes of the Steering Committee. March 24, 1993.

Assembly. At the same time Milan-based member Mani Tese was organising a Convention to take place in Florence in November 1993 on “People’s participation”, in part as an input in the Social Summit.<sup>49</sup> On 9 December 1993 Somavía attended an informal meeting with the General Assembly of Eurostep.<sup>50</sup> A working group of Members active in the Social Summit was established.<sup>51</sup> Together with Novib the secretariat of Eurostep prepared a Eurostep statement for the first PrepCom and organised regular meetings for the Members present in the PrepCom.

Eurostep emphasised that a focus on advocacy should be developed towards the EU and EU Member States. The secretariat attended all the PrepComs in order to co-ordinate the work of the several Member organisations involved in the process.<sup>52</sup> In doing so it provided a specific focus on the negotiations from a regional reality. In the case of the EU this was particularly complex because positions between EU Member States were co-ordinated and presented by the EU Presidency. Eurostep ensured that advocacy and national and EU level would not be contradictory. It also gave continuity and consistency in relations with the different actors, including the individual Member States, the European Council, the European Commission, the European Parliament and the Presidency.

## NGO Networking

A visible player in the early Social Summit preparations, but not so much a “coalition” was the International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW). This group represented perhaps most clearly the way NGO input had been organised originally in UN events. With communication being much less fast and transparent before the revolution in electronic communications, and with UN rules which allowed observer status mainly to international organisations (often US based, with chapters in various other countries), a relatively limited number of organisations with observer status dominated the input of NGOs in UN affairs. The organisations with observer status, originally perhaps representing clear constituencies, now often lacked real membership and support in the South. Southern NGOs had begun to challenge

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49 Eurostep, minutes of the General Assembly. June 18-19, 1993.

50 Eurostep, minutes of the General Assembly. December 9-10, 1993.

51 Cooperation of Eurostep Members Around the Social Summit. A Request to the Steering Committee. Undated report of the meeting. A meeting was held in The Hague, attended by NCOS, MS, Terre des Hommes Germany, HIVOS, NOVIB, Action Aid, Mani Tese, Oxfam, the gender working group and the Eurostep Secretariat.

52 In the first PrepCom Oxfam UKI, Terre des Hommes Germany, OIKOS (Portugal), Action Aid (UK) and Novib were involved. Caroline Wildeman to Max van den Berg, Novib Internal Memo, Subject: Eurostep Working Group Social Summit. December 17, 1993. In time increasingly more members became active in the process.

this problem in the UNCED, which allowed much broader participation. As a first result, the UN Commission on Sustainable Development mandated to oversee the implementation of UNCED's "Agenda 21" agreed on rules that invited all the 1.400 NGOs who had participated in the UNCED to be accredited in order to "*continue participation in the work of the Commission*".<sup>53</sup>

### *The power of electronic communication*

The overall organisation of NGOs participation in UN affairs took a further next step in the Social Summit process. Two developments contributed to this. Firstly, new electronic communication technology ensured that any NGO in even the remotest area could have access to any information of what was happening in New York or anywhere else. Moreover, the appointment of an information broker in New York for the Social Summit ensured that a truly interactive process could begin between the UN and NGOs. This had two effects. Not only could NGOs receive information relating to the Summit in a timely way, also they could send information to be introduced in the process. Rather than consumers, they became active players in the process and hence could influence the outcome.

### *Review of rules for Consultative Status for NGOs*

In response to the challenges made particularly by Southern NGOs, the UN formally recognised that its relationship with NGOs should be reviewed and updated. Within the UN there was recognition that:

*"[t]hey have increasingly assumed the role of promoters of new ideas, they have altered the international community to emerging issues, and they have developed expertise and talent which, in an increasing number of areas, have become vital to the work of the United Nations, both at the policy and operational levels."*<sup>54</sup>

The UN established an open-ended working group, which would hold a first substantive session in May 9-13 1994, and would complete its work by 1995.

NGOs already in Consultative Status with ECOSOC were organised in the Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations in Consultative Status with the United Nations

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53 Jaya Dayal, "United Nations: Opening Doors wider to NGOs met with caution." New York : IPS, February 19, 1994.

54 Nitin Desai, UN Under-Secretary for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development, quoted by Jaya Dayal, *ibid*.

Economic and Social Council (CONGO). CONGO objected to changes to drastically increase the number of NGOs in consultative status. It argued that:

*“treating the representatives of all NGOs equally lowered the rights and privileges of status NGOs while increasing pressure on already thinly spread resources and services.”*<sup>55</sup>

At the same time regional and national NGOs continued to press for rules that would give them access to the United Nations system and its conferences. The majority of these NGOs increasingly found that CONGO-arrangements made for them were becoming an obstacle to effectively participating in the UN rather than a facility.

### *Facilitating NGO participation in the Social Summit*

Obviously this situation created tension between CONGO, which had traditionally provided for information and access to the UN, and the majority of regional and national NGOs. On November 3 1993, CONGO wrote to Ambassador Somavia and reported its internal agreement to establish a “Facilitating Committee” to which it invited: Education International, the International Council of Voluntary Agencies (ICVA), the International Council of Social Welfare (ICSW), the World Federation of UN Associations, ATD Fourth World, the International Council of Social Sciences and the Society for International Development (SID). These were all traditional “status” NGOs. CONGO also stated that it expected to add more members *“in order to ensure outreach to more constituencies.”*<sup>56</sup>

In further contacts between Novib and ICVA the intentions of the IFC were explored.<sup>57</sup> ICVA was already planning to organise regional meetings and in Geneva it was playing a key role together with the ICSW and Education International in negotiating the terms of an IFC. Novib, which did not have Consultative Status with ECOSOC, sent an observer to the meetings in order to be kept informed.<sup>58</sup>

Within the deliberations on this matter Roberto Bissio, speaking for TWN, stressed again the importance of interaction at the national level:

*“The national debate and preparatory process is (...) the key aspect where the Social Summit can be a contribution in the*

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55 Annabel Wiener, Deputy Secretary-General of the World Federation of UN Associations (WFUNA), quoted by Jaya Dayal, *ibid.*

56 Letter from Rosalind Harris, President of CONGO, to Ambassador Somavia. November 3, 1993.

57 Mirjam van Reisen to Max van den Berg, Novib Internal Memo, Subject: ICVA. December 6, 1993.

58 The International Service for Human Rights.

*Third World, where the debate among government, NGOs and social movements is still far from being a standard practice on any issue. We should see that our actions encourage this debate and the participation of civil society at a national level whenever possible, and not substitute that with a top-down approach.”<sup>59</sup>*

TWN suggested that NGLS be asked to co-ordinate the acquisition and distribution of financial resources.<sup>60</sup> Consultations with NGLS clarified that it was not willing, in the first instance, to take this responsibility. NGLS also pointed out that some responsibility was required to work out some framework of operations for the NGOs. Reluctantly, after various interventions of CONGO, which invited TWN and Eurostep for discussion during the first PrepCom, negotiations to broaden the IFC were started to ensure that the interest of a broad representation was ensured.<sup>61</sup>

Following further discussions on the issue of an IFC, TWN and Eurostep decided to negotiate on the basis of the following principles:

1. Organisations, which represent broad constituencies and were active in the Social Summit, should be represented in the IFC;
2. Preferably the IFC should not handle any requests for money. The “impartial” UN Non Governmental Liaison Committee (NGLS) should be asked to handle financial support for Southern participation offered by donors on behalf of the NGOs;
3. The IFC should not take any political position and not be engaged in any substantive debate;
4. The mandate of the IFC should be clearly limited to logistical matters;
5. The IFC should not be engaged in organising regional meetings or raising money for those.

This position was confirmed and agreed with the People’s Alliance and WEDO. It was also agreed that TWN, Eurostep, People’s Alliance and WEDO should all become members of the IFC. If CONGO organisations would not agree, NGLS could be asked to “fill the gap” and take responsibility for financial matters and logistical support.<sup>62</sup>

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59 Roberto Bissio (TWN) to Mirjam van Reisen (Novib), fax. January 11, 1994, p. 2.

60 The position taken was a result of problems arisen between Southern NGOs and CONGO during UNCED preparations. Roberto Bissio (TWN) to Mirjam van Reisen (Novib), fax. January 11, 1994.

61 “NGLS is only willing to do it if there are very solid arguments. NY NGLS Director states that the NGOs need to think about the way in which the vacuum of NGO representation could best be filled.” Mirjam van Reisen (Novib) to Carlos Heredia (Equipo Pueblo), fax, Subject: Social Summit. January 11, 1994.

62 Mirjam van Reisen to Max van den Berg, Novib Internal Memo, Subject: Social Summit. January 11, 1994.

### *Establishing a “loose facilitating committee”*

In response, on 2 February 1994, CONGO presented a proposal for an IFC with its seven proposed CONGO members (including ICVA, ICSW and SID) as well as Eurostep, TWN and the People's Alliance for Social Development, representatives of the Women's Caucus and Regional representatives. In its proposed mandate fund-raising for the IFC and for broader NGO participation was included. There was much disagreement on this proposal among the NGOs, including those proposed as members. A wide number of NGOs did not believe that the involvement of CONGO in the Committee was justified on the basis of what it represented. A consultation of Southern NGOs endorsed the five principles on the basis of which negotiations were started by TWN and Eurostep. With no rapprochement between CONGO and other groups on the definition of the mandate negotiations on an International Facilitating Committee were basically stalled.

On February 9, 1994 it was agreed that a general meeting of all NGOs attending the first PrepCom would be convened. This meeting was attended by over 50 organisations. All decisions were taken by consensus and included the following conclusions<sup>63</sup>:

1. Several NGOs and institutions were already actively disseminating information through newsletters, press releases electronic networks and other media and this should be stimulated;
2. Before the second PrepCom an information meeting for NGOs should be convened, and NGLS and the Danish platform would be requested to facilitate the organisation of such a meeting;
3. NGLS would be requested to assist travel expenses and other means to promote Southern NGO participation.

In the rest of the process loose co-ordination between all the actors ensured the continuously increasing participation of NGOs (see Annex 4). With these conclusions agreed the IFC had ceased to exist, and CONGO NGOs were marginalised as the central organisers of NGO input into the UN.

### *Accreditation*

During the first PrepCom it was decided that NGOs, which had attended the first PrepCom, would automatically be accredited for future sessions, as well as to the Summit itself. All NGOs that were not in consultative status with ECOSOC should

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63 Minutes of the Meeting of NGOs attending the Social Summit First PrepCom. February 9, 1994. Magela Sigillito, “World Summit for Social Development, First Session of the Preparatory Committee,” January 31-February 11, 1994, Information Dossier.





*Development Caucus meeting during the first PrepCom, New York, February 1994.*

become accredited before the second PrepCom. NGOs from the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) would also be accredited to the Social Summit and its PrepComs.<sup>64</sup> This decision was a further extension of the broadening of NGO engagement in the UN Conferences, particularly UNCED.

## **Organisation of Caucuses**

With the resolution of the tensions surrounding the IFC in the first PrepCom the organisation of NGOs around substantive issues could begin. During the first PrepCom the Women's Caucus was the strongest in terms of participation and output and set an example that could be followed by groupings interested in other issues. An important step was the organisation of a Development Caucus. This replaced the earlier meetings of the "(Novib) reference group" – the purpose of which had become difficult to define. The Development Caucus broadened the interaction of development organisations and Southern NGOs to any organisation interested in North-South issues participating at the PrepComs. In the second PrepCom the Development Caucus was organised every day at lunchtime and often attracted more than 50 people.

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64 Ibid.

The Development Caucus worked on the same principle as the Women's Caucus. Based on the individual contacts of NGOs with their governments information was exchanged in the Caucus and lobby strategies were discussed. The lobby interventions were specifically geared to national and regional levels and discussions of NGOs with government delegates were encouraged. Meanwhile overall approaches with regards to advocacy interventions were debated and planned in the Caucus, in response to the official process as a whole. The Caucus also provided a space for newcomers to be included in the ongoing processes, and provided a space where information could be gathered. It also provided meetings of NGOs with government delegates on development related themes.

The Caucuses were also used for interaction with the official process as a whole. Speaking time was allocated to representatives of these Caucuses, which previously had been allocated to members of the CONGO committees. Incidentally, ICSW began to organise a Social Welfare Caucus – later called the “Issues Caucus”. Regional Caucuses were also emerging, creating possibilities for exchange of information and co-operation on strategies between organisations based in the same region. These were very important, if not crucial, for changing positions of groups of delegations in the official conference.

The Caucuses became the crucial linking point of NGOs with the official process. Representatives of the Caucuses were requested to speak in the plenary on behalf of the NGOs in the remaining PrepComs. The Caucuses also submitted material to the official process on behalf of NGO groupings. The co-operation between the Women's Caucus and the Development Caucus, as well as the regional Caucuses, remained very strong throughout the Social Summit process and this laid an important foundation for the follow-up in the creation of Social Watch.

## **The Quality Benchmark of the Social Summit**

With the access of NGOs being significantly improved, attention started to turn to the substance of the negotiations. At the second PrepCom this had reached a very disappointing level, with Western delegations ensuring that none of the macro-economic issues were reaching on to the agenda of the Summit.

At the second PrepCom in August-September 1994 NGOs expressed their great frustration. Max van den Berg stated on behalf of Eurostep:

*“The economic policies of multilateral organisations define poor people as the problem rather than the solution. The initiatives of*



*Development Caucus, first PrepCom, New York, February 1994. The meeting was chaired by Roberto Bissio (Third World Network) and Simon Stocker (Eurostep).*

*the poor people themselves are crushed, instead of being welcomed. If we do not address the structural economic policies, that exclude one fifth of the people from fundamental rights of citizens, this summit is as a lion that has no teeth, and cannot even roar.”*

The strong criticisms conveyed in the Development Caucus led to the first common document prepared by the Caucus in collaboration with the women’s caucus, called “Twelve Points to Save the Social Summit”.<sup>65</sup> This statement, later launched under the title: “The Quality Benchmark of the Social Summit”,<sup>66</sup> was signed by hundreds of NGOs from all over the world – being one of the first common statements being circulated for endorsement by Internet.

The “Quality Benchmark” was the result of direct input from a number of people all over the world who were directly making inputs to the drafts by e-mail. The document had a joint ownership with no specific authors identified. This shared ownership to the document was essential for it to be a political programme that could unite all the different NGOs. By circulating it electronically, the document became then a mobilising tool around the Summit. It was endorsed by organisations from all over

65 It was initially endorsed by Cordillera People’s Alliance Philippines, DAWN, EURODAD, EUROSTEP, Instituto del Tercer Mundo, Uruguay, The International Human Rights Law Group, Washington, Third World Network and WEDO. “Twelve Points to Save the Social Summit. An NGO Statement for the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee of the Social Summit.” August 25, 1994.

66 “The Quality Benchmark for the Social Summit. An NGO statement for the third session of the Preparatory Committee of the Social Summit”, September 1994.

the world, even those who could not go to New York, but agreed with its content. The document was presented in the first statement of the Development Caucus given to the second PrepCom on 29 August 1994.<sup>67</sup>

Incidentally, the “Quality Benchmark” was an important element in the establishment of Social Watch. Firstly, it demonstrated that there was a genuinely shared political programme for the Summit between Northern and Southern NGOs. It also showed the broad interest in the Summit, not only of NGOs present in New York, but of NGOs all over the world who had expectations of this process. It was significant because the new possibilities created by electronic communication were now utilised in international advocacy and showed how powerful this could be. Thirdly, the “Benchmark” provided a measure. It introduced the concept of utilising the Summit as a continuous process to measure progress in implementing the goals of social development.<sup>68</sup>

## **Establishing Mechanisms for Follow-up**

### *The original idea*

Soon after the Second PrepCom a meeting in preparation of the Intersessional Meeting planned for October 1994 took place in the Netherlands between ITeM, Eurostep and Novib.<sup>69</sup> During this meeting the concrete idea to establish Social Watch as a follow up to the Summit was born. It stemmed from the analysis that:

- Follow up should consist of the monitoring of the implementation of the agreed Summit Declaration and Programme of Action;
- It was of crucial importance that monitoring would take place at national level, which would enhance the dialogue between civil society and governments in social development;
- The monitoring exercises should be compiled in such a way that they could contribute to the Commission on Social Development, if it was going to be in charge of implementing this task;

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67 “A Question of Credibility.” Statement on behalf of the NGOs in the Development Caucus on the revision of the Programme of Action. August, 29 1994.

68 The “Benchmark” would remain throughout the preparations a tool for measuring how much progress was made in the negotiations. At the Summit itself the Development Caucus issued a statement “Did we achieve the Quality Benchmark?” The “Benchmark” also remained a point of reference in the follow up of the Social Summit (See Annex 4).

69 Participants of the meeting were Roberto Bissio, Simon Stocker and Mirjam van Reisen.

- The monitoring process needed to be open to all who wanted to participate, this could be realised by utilising instruments such as electronic mail and electronic sites, where participants could also respond to the substance offered by others in an ongoing process;
- The monitoring should be specifically directed to measure concrete targets, if established by the Summit;
- A secretariat should be established which had know-how of technically facilitating this process.
- There should be a shared concept of ownership over the instrument by participating NGOs. The mechanism should not be linked to a specific organisation.

The idea of a “Social Watch” was discussed with colleagues in the Development and Women’s Caucuses and was received with great enthusiasm. The initial response in Novib to the proposed mechanism was, however, lukewarm and no preparations for any follow-up were undertaken. Further consultations were put on hold.

### *Public announcement*

During the Summit – under pressure of the media inquiring what NGOs would do to ensure that implementation of the commitments agreed by the Heads of State would take place, it became clear that a mechanism for follow-up was indeed imperative. In response to questions of the press Novib Director van den Berg announced the establishment of “Social Watch” at the Summit in Copenhagen, as a Novib follow-up initiative. In a first response to the results of the Social Summit a Novib press statement said:

*“In the coming weeks Novib and its partners will start a worldwide campaign to begin to debate the social issue with national governments. The most important question in this debate is what changes in policy are necessary in order to implement the commitments made in Copenhagen.*

*“A worldwide “Social Watch system” is being prepared, which from the interest of the marginalised will attempt to measure the solidity of the fine-looking intentions of Copenhagen.”<sup>70</sup>*

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70 Translation MvR. Persverklaring. “Het Sociale gezicht van de VN. Eerste Reactie van Novib op de resultaten van de Sociale Top. Plannen voor Verdere actie: Nieuwe Campagne Social Watch.” Heerko Dijksterhuis, Greetje Lubbi, Novib, undated. [Press Statement, The Social face of the UN. First reaction of Novib to the results of the Social Summit. Plans for further action: new campaign Social Watch].

Following this statement the launch of an initiative by Novib was announced in the Development and Women's Caucus.

## **The Foundation of Social Watch**

Many nice ideas have seen the light, but few of those are actually implemented. Novib played a crucial role in enabling the actual foundation of Social Watch. By playing a crucial role it also created problems that contradicted the very nature of the Watch.

The effectiveness of the "Quality Benchmark" as a mobilising and influencing tool had been its shared ownership, in its creation jointly by many organisations over the Internet. The Benchmark was not associated with any one particular organisation, or even one caucus. Each organisation could use it as its own tool for its own advocacy purposes in its own context.

The launch of the proposal to establish a Social Watch as a Novib initiative undermined an important principle of the original concept, that the instrument created should not be identified as a mechanism controlled by a single organisation. As the Benchmark, the idea had been that it should promote participation and plurality of views and methods of working. But the reality was that Novib had "called the shot" – perhaps by lack of initiative of others to make announcements to this effect, and as a consequence Novib was guiding the process of consultation in the following months.

### *From Copenhagen to Beijing ...*

In Novib's view Social Watch should reflect the link established between Copenhagen and Beijing. During the Beijing conference a workshop was organised to further discuss the Social Watch initiative, and place it properly in the context of the 1995 UN Conference on Women.

### *... to Soesterberg ...*

In November 1995 Novib organised a meeting in Soesterberg with a number of the partners (the original "reference group", but not in the exact same "membership") with which it had worked in the Social Summit process to discuss follow-up mechanisms. During this meeting Social Watch was formally established and ITeM was asked to propose mechanisms for implementing the initiative. ITeM was initially very hesitant to accept the request to host Social Watch.

ITeM finally accepted to facilitate a secretariat for Social Watch, which would facilitate the production of annual reports monitoring the implementation of the Social Summit. In Soesterberg provisionally a task force was mandated with ITeM as editor, Novib as secretariat, the Freedom for Debt Coalition, the Co-ordinator of the Beijing process for Latin America and the Caribbean and Third World Network Africa. A Northern American representative was later added as well.

In order to make an impact at the first Commission on Social Development after the 1995 Summit a fast-track arrangement was agreed for a zero-issue of a Report of Social Watch to be prepared by early 1996.<sup>71</sup> An unusual funding arrangement made this possible in which Novib generously provided the financial resources while the project proposal was being prepared by ITeM. By doing so Novib solidly ensured that the momentum in the founding of Social Watch was maintained. The trial issue was published in March 1996 and was divided into two sections. The first one introduced the idea of Social Watch and the second part included NGO reports from 13 countries.

While Novib played an instrumental role in enabling Social Watch to be established, the appropriation by Novib of an idea that had actually naturally evolved of a process of co-operation among the NGOs in the Development Caucus almost destroyed such an initiative. Novib assumed full responsibility over the Social Watch initiative and secured initial funding. However, without underestimating the importance of Novib's initial support, this also appeared initially to be an obstacle to raise funds and participation from a much broader base – as the ownership was then identified with Novib. In political terms participation from a broad base was initially hindered as well by Novib's political and practical hold on the project, and this created obstacles for Social Watch to establish itself in its own right.

### *... to Montevideo ...*

ITeM agreed with Novib on the “fast-track option” to produce a book in three months if it was mandated with full editorial authority. The initial task force was transformed into a co-ordinating committee mandated with the political thrust of the project. The secretariat of Social Watch was moved to Montevideo, which facilitated the establishment of Social Watch and the publication of the reports. The reference group and co-ordinating committee met in 1996 to review the

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71 Email message from Caroline Wildeman (Novib) to Roberto Bissio (ITeM), Subject: Social Watch Document. November 29, 1995.



*Cover of the trial edition  
of Social Watch Report  
"The Starting Point",  
Montevideo, March 1996.*

demo publication, to discuss the content of the next report and to decide on the organisational structure of Social Watch.

The project proposal setting out the Social Watch Programme of Action from 1996-1999 identifies that it was agreed that the co-ordinating committee would ensure the transparency of the initiative and define lobbying activities at the international level. This committee would be politically responsible for the edition of the report and would encourage national and regional contributions. It would foster the establishment of national NGO committees within their regions, so that the reports could be jointly developed.

The secretariat in Montevideo was mandated with the tasks to assist the co-ordinating committee, ensure communications, record activities, promote networking, compile the information and facilitate its analysis, publish the annual report and disseminate all relevant information about the follow-up of the Social Summit and the Beijing Conference.<sup>72</sup>

It was further agreed that national Social Watch platforms would become members of the "reference group", which could in this way develop with the evolution of Social Watch. It was further agreed that the funding of the activities of the national co-ordinating committees and other reporting NGOs and networks would be their own responsibility, and not that of the Social Watch co-ordinating committee. The decision to publish their report in the context of Social Watch is made without the

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72 Social Watch Programme of Action 1996-1999.



interference of any other benefits. The participation of national groups in Social Watch can, therefore, be seen as a measure of its “added value” to national organisations.<sup>73</sup>

The 1996-1999 Programme defined the following objective:

*“Social Watch aims to contribute to the social development and to the improvement of women’s conditions by watching the fulfilment of the World Summit for Social Development and World Conference on Women Commitments. Since those commitments are not binding, Social Watch aims to strengthen citizen’s movement at the local, national and international levels, promoting governmental accountability through an ongoing monitoring.”<sup>74</sup>*

More specifically Social Watch aimed to:

1. Publish annually a Social Watch Report;
2. Disseminate information on the commitments’ follow-up;
3. Promote lobby and advocacy activities at the national, regional and international levels, fostering Social Watch national co-ordinations, strengthening networking and participating in different follow-up events.

### *... to Cyberspace*

Since 1995 Social Watch has grown. It has thrown off the identification with Novib,<sup>75</sup> even though Novib still takes a keen interest in participating in the network.<sup>76</sup> It has now members and national platforms in 60 countries. It has

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73 Roberto Bissio, unpublished.

74 Ibid.

75 This review cannot consider the counterfactual, namely what would have happened to Social Watch without the profound involvement of Novib. Nevertheless, in this regard it is perhaps useful to make a comparison with the transformation of the “Novib Reference Group” to the “Development Caucus”. The fundamental understanding that was expressed repeatedly by a coalition of Southern NGOs under the leadership of TWN, namely that an open and transparent participation should be encouraged and promoted, allowed Novib’s ambitions in the Summit to be directed in a more helpful and useful approach to partnership. To a larger or lesser extent, Novib has been responsive to these views and has allowed real partnership to emerge in the Social Summit process, based on equality - while accepting independent thinking of its “partners”.

76 In other words, one of the yardsticks for the success of Social Watch is exactly how Novib has been embedded as an actor in the overall set up. A key question to address is as to whether Social Watch established an open, inclusive and equal relationship between all political participants, including Novib, as well as a transparent approach to resolving questions that emerged from the central role that Novib took as an initiator and predominant financier of the project.

created a global network in which social development can be monitored from day to day, and changes and updates can be provided in an interactive process at any moment in time. It has established a new way of relating to international negotiations and diplomatic processes. It does not exist in any particular place, it is everywhere and nowhere at the same time. Most importantly it has established a process in which the local actuality and the international reality are connected in a very real sense. Hence Social Watch is as good as its network, as good as its ability to engender communications between any people, wherever they are, interested in promoting social development.

## **Conclusions**

The foundation of Social Watch is a reflection of a new way in which NGOs relate to multilateral organisations in general and to the United Nations in particular. Its creation is a clear reflection of a period in which electronic communications began to be used as new technological tools for advocacy and mobilisation by NGOs, particularly in the South. The creation of Social Watch stems from an “obvious” lacuna in which there were hardly any mechanisms to commit governments to implementing social development policies. Social Watch originates from the need to monitor national obligations to economic and social rights within the context of an international enabling environment for social development.

The examination of the foundation of Social Watch leads to the following conclusions.

1. In the view of the chair of the Preparatory Committee for the Social Summit and according to other actors in the UN system, NGOs made a critical difference to the outcome and substance of the Summit. In this light one should see the point made by the UN Secretary General for policy co-ordination and sustainable development that the Summit marked a turning point in NGO-UN relations. Social Watch is a product of that achievement.
2. The foundation of Social Watch is based on objectives that were identified by NGOs in the preparations to the Social Summit in September 1993 in Oaxaca. Specifically these were stated as:
  - a. The need for broad participation, including organisations with experience of social development at local level;

- b. The need to develop specific political strategies relating to specific national and regional political realities;
  - c. The need for an inclusive, open and transparent process to encourage participation.
3. The emphasis of Social Watch to monitor social development at national level stems from, and is consistent with, the initial analysis by NGOs that the value of the Social Summit would be in enhancing dialogue between civil society organisations and governments at national level.
  4. ITeM elaborated a strategy for realising the objectives stated in point 2 in September 1993 with the experiences it had gained in utilising electronic media for enhancing NGO participation in the UN Conferences through the APC network.
  5. Novib's strategic coalition in building a "reference group" established a new approach to advocacy by donor organisations in the UN. This created important new political opportunities and enabled broader participation in the Summit. It also produced tensions relating to:
    - a. Financial dependency creating political dependency;
    - b. As a consequence of this dependency much consultation was needed to establish criteria for participation, substance and strategies. This had the danger of excluding consultation in a broader (not Novib and finances related) setting;
    - c. Novib's need to demonstrate that its extensive inputs were justified in terms of results, therefore wanting visibility and tending to claim ownership;
    - d. The engagement of locally oriented organisations alongside pure lobby organisations in the process sought to ensure broader participation, but at the same time caused differences in ability to define individual strategic processes and negotiation tactics.

The transformation of the reference group into a Development Caucus was a successful attempt to deal with the tensions referred to in the previous point. It made the NGO co-operation much more inclusive and transparent.

6. The co-operation achieved at the Social Summit between North and South, the Women's Caucus, the Development Caucus, regional and thematic caucuses, demonstrated by the support for the Quality Benchmark for the

Social Summit has been a marking point in the context of NGO participation in UN conferences. The process shows that specificity in interests, agendas and advocacy strategies by different NGOs can be combined with some level of commonality in the political approach towards the overall process.

7. The regional caucuses have been crucial instruments to strengthen the Southern involvement and structure Northern involvement in an engagement with their own governments. In the European context Eurostep fulfilled a crucial role in engaging European NGOs in strategies to influence European governments.

The success of Social Watch has to be measured in terms of its ability to allow national NGOs and national coalitions to engage in a debate with their government on social policy, without exclusion and in an open and transparent manner. The success of Social Watch has to be measured in terms of its ability to engage local organisations with experience in social development in the national debate and expand these efforts to become a valuable contribution in an international strategy to address these issues.

If Social Watch has made representations on this basis engaging with the UN follow up mechanisms of the Social Summit, it certainly has achieved the ambitious objectives set out by NGOs in the beginning of the preparations to the Social Summit in the summer of 1993. Social Watch was established as an enabling process that would work towards substantive goals. It is first and foremost the quality of its ability to engage all those who work in different circumstances and realities towards the eradication of poverty, and to bundle their energy into a common approach and joint direction, that will ultimately determine its success.

## About the Author

Mirjam van Reisen (1962) is a policy advisor based in Brussels with various NGOs and NGO networks, as well as the European Parliament. She is the author of “*EU Global Player, The North-South policy of the European Union*”, which offers a profound analysis of the dynamics within the European Union, necessary for the understanding of the development policies and practices of the EU. She is currently finalising a Ph.D. thesis in Policy Studies, which is forthcoming under the title: “*The Logic of Coincidence. A re-construction of Agenda-setting on development aid (1989-1995)*”. This study analyses the political process on which policy changes were based in European aid, following the end of the Cold War.

Mirjam van Reisen, who is a Dutch national, was previously employed by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the University of Nijmegen (Department of Political Science). From 1988-1995 Mirjam van Reisen was associated as a policy advisor to NOVIB, an NGO based in The Hague, as a consultant from University of Nijmegen. Among other things, she was hired by Novib for advocacy towards the UN Human Rights Conference, the UN Copenhagen Social Summit and the Fourth UN Conference on Women, and, in this context, was speech-writer for Novib’s Director. She has been the author of the annual contributions of Brussels-based network Eurostep in the *Reality of Aid* (published by Earthscan in London) and *Social Watch*.

## Acronyms

APC	Association for Progressive Communications
CECADE	Centre for Training and Promotion in Democracy
CEDEP	Centre of Development and Participation Studies
CONGO	NGOs with Consultative Status at ECOSOC
CSD	Commission on Sustainable Development
DGAP	The Development Gap
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council
ENDA	Environmental Development Action
EU	European Union
EUROSTEP	European Solidarity for Equal Participation of People
FASE	Federation of Organizations for Social and Educational Assistance
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IBASE	Brazilian Institute for Social and Economic Analysis
ICD	Institute of Communication and Development
ICSW	International Council of Social Welfare
ICVA	International Council of Voluntary Agencies
IFC	International Facilitating Committee
IHRLG	International Human Rights Law Group
ILO	International Labour Organization
IPS	Inter Press Service
ITeM	Third World Institute
NGLS	United Nations Non Governmental Liaison Committee

NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NOVIB	Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ORAP	Organization of Rural Associations for Progress
PrepCom	Preparatory Committee
PRRM	Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement
SID	Society for International Development
TWN	Third World Network
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
US	United States
WEDO	Women's Environment and Development Organisation
WHO	World Health Organization
WSSD	World Summit for Social Development
WTO	World Trade Organization

# **Annexes**



## Annex 1: Resolution 47/92

163 895 NEW 07 '97 15 06

Attachment: United Nations Resolution 47/92

5. Decides that the Summit shall have the following objectives:

- (a) To further the objectives of the Charter of the United Nations, as stated in Article 55, to promote "higher standards of living, full employment, and conditions of economic and social progress and development", and "solutions of international economic, social, health, and related problems", with particular focus on social development aspects;
- (b) To express a shared world-wide commitment to put the needs of people at the centre of development and of international cooperation as a major priority of international relations;
- (c) To stimulate international cooperation at the bilateral, regional and multilateral levels, through governmental, private and non-governmental initiatives, in order to assist in the implementation of nationally appropriate, effective and efficient social policies and to formulate strategies which enable all citizens to be actively engaged in those policies;
- (d) To formulate strategies on goals, policies and priority actions that could be taken at the national, regional and international levels to address, in the different development realities, core issues of shared universal concern in the field of social development, giving particular attention to the needs of the least developed countries;
- (e) To create international awareness of and address the modalities to attain the necessary balance between economic efficiency and social justice in a growth-oriented, equitable and sustainable development environment in accordance with nationally defined priorities;
- (f) To address, in creative ways, the interaction between the social functions of the State, market responses to social demands and the imperatives of sustainable development;
- (g) To identify common problems of socially marginalized and disadvantaged groups and promote the integration of those groups into society, highlighting the need for societies to equalize opportunities for all members;
- (h) To promote programmes to ensure legal protection, foster effective social welfare programmes and enhance education and training for different groups in all societies, including the marginalized and disadvantaged groups;
- (i) To assist in ensuring a more effective delivery of social services for the more disadvantaged sectors of society;
- (j) To highlight the need to mobilize resources for social development at the local, national, regional and international levels;
- (k) To make appropriate recommendations regarding more effective action by the United Nations system in the sphere of social development, in particular measures and policies for the revitalization of the Commission for Social Development.

## Annex 2: Letter and statement of NGOs gathered in Mexico in 1993

Oaxaca, México, 10 de setiembre de 1993

**Embajador JUAN SOMAVIA**  
**Representante Permanente de Chile ante la ONU**  
**Nueva York**  
**Estados Unidos**

Apreciado Juan:

Atento saludo. Ante todo queremos agradecer su deferencia en reunirse con nosotros y su estímulo para la participación de las ONG y organizaciones sociales en el proceso de la Cumbre sobre Desarrollo Social.

Al día siguiente de la animada reunión que mantuvimos con usted y el Sr. Thierry Lemaresquier, PNUD; en el Hotel Misión Los Angeles de Oaxaca, nos hemos encontrado nuevamente y discutido un borrador que resume los puntos básicos de la discusión. Luego de un intenso debate, al que se agregaron algunos nuevos participantes, hemos coincidido en los puntos que le anexamos.

Somos de la opinión que ahora se impone la más amplia coordinación entre el Comité Preparatorio de la Cumbre, la Secretaría de la ONU, el PNUD y las diversas organizaciones de la sociedad civil. El grupo de organizaciones reunidas en esta ocasión considera que es menester sostener con usted, la Secretaría de la ONU y el PNUD los más amplios contactos y, en lo posible, coordinación de acciones. Empero, y para efectos prácticos hemos coincidido en que ICVA sea, transitoriamente, quien facilite el diálogo --comenzando por la transmisión de esta misiva--, sin detrimento de otras interrelaciones y contactos.

Confiamos entonces poder iniciar la construcción de un camino de cooperación al servicio de la más amplia, plural y decidida participación de la sociedad civil en el proceso de la Cumbre de Dinamarca.

Atentamente,

**LOS FIRMANTES DE LA COMUNICACION ANEXA**

cc: Sr. Thierry Lemaresquier, PNUD

**ALGUNOS PUNTOS BASICOS SURGIDOS DEL ENCUENTRO MANTENIDO DURANTE LA CONFERENCIA DE MEXICO SOBRE DESARROLLO SOCIAL Y POBREZA ENTRE UN GRUPO DE ORGANIZACIONES DE LA SOCIEDAD CIVIL CON EL EMBAJADOR JUAN SOMAVIA, PRESIDENTE DEL COMITE PREPARATORIO DE LA CUMBRE SOBRE DESARROLLO SOCIAL, Y EL SEÑOR THIERRY LEMARESQUIER, RESPONSABLE DE LA RELACION CON LAS ONG EN EL PNUD (Nueva York)**

**Oaxaca, México, 10 de setiembre de 1993**

1. Apreciamos como algo fundamental la realización de una Cumbre Mundial sobre Desarrollo Social, ya que ella permitirá ubicar en lugar prioritario un tema y una problemática que afecta a millones de seres humanos.

Entendemos que la comunidad de naciones cuenta con los recursos necesarios para eliminar de la faz de la tierra el hambre y la pobreza extrema, que tanto se ha agravado en los últimos años. El desarrollo social debe ser el objetivo central de las políticas económicas y ambientales.

Desde nuestra perspectiva, se trata, pues, de un problema fundamentalmente ético y político.

2. Lo esencial en relación a la Cumbre Social, es el proceso que lleva a la misma y las acciones que ésta sea capaz de generar. Consideramos necesario que los estados identifiquen y se comprometan con una agenda común, pero ello debe hacerse a partir de que la sociedad civil se apropie del tema y sea la que elabore sus propias propuestas.

Por lo tanto, el proceso de preparación nacional adquiere una importancia básica, no solo a efectos de darle validez al proceso internacional de la Cumbre, sino también para garantizar el fortalecimiento y participación de los actores reales que sufren la pobreza y la enfrentan de manera creativa y tenaz.

3. La participación organizada y directa de los movimientos sociales es clave, tanto en la preparación como en el seguimiento de la Cumbre.

4. Es igualmente imperativo evitar la dispersión de esfuerzos y la competencia entre los distintos sectores involucrados. Las ONG deben coadyuvar a una participación amplia, democrática y productiva de la sociedad civil. En ese sentido, el PNUD debiera contribuir al alcance de ese objetivo, en particular a nivel de cada país, pero también a nivel internacional, incluida la participación de la sociedad civil en la misma Cumbre.

5. Desde ahora nos comprometemos a realizar un esfuerzo común, partiendo de un gran trabajo nacional en el cual la concertación y la participación de todo el conjunto de actores vinculados a la problemática del desarrollo social, sea lo esencial.

CIRINIO PLACIDO VALERIO	CONSEJO GUERRERENSE 500 AÑOS DE RESISTENCIA INDIGENA
IMELDA CONDE HERNANDEZ (Indígena chinanteca)	COMISION REGIONAL DE DERECHOS HUMANOS "MAHATMA GANDHI, A.C / AREA INDIGENA"
IHON JAIRO CARDENAS	INNOVACION Y REDES PARA EL DESARROLLO (RED AMERICA LATINA)
DELMAR BLASCO	CONSEJO INTERNACIONAL DE ORGANIZACIONES VOLUNTARIAS (ICVA)
CARLOS CONTRERAS QUINA	ALIANZA DE LA GENTE PARA EL DESARROLLO SOCIAL
PORFIRIO ENCINO HERNANDEZ	CONVERGENCIA DE ORGANIZACIONES INDIGENAS DE CHIAPAS
CRISTINA LAVALLE	ESPACIOS
ERNESTO JIMENEZ OLIN	ALIANZA VECINAL
CHRISTINE Y. CHILANWE-NG'AMBI	WOMEN FINANCE TRUST OF ZAMBIA
ARMANDÓ RAMIREZ PALOMO	COPEVI - CONVERGENCIA DE ORGANISMOS CIVILES
LUIS LOPEZ YERA	PROMOCION DEL DESARROLLO POPULAR
RENF SEGBENOU	<u>INADES-FORMATION</u> , COTE D'IVOIRE
MAZIDE N'DIAYE	RESEAU AFRICAIN POUR LE DEVELOPPEMENT INTEGRE (RADI)
HUMBERTO CAMPODONICO	CENTRO DE ESTUDIOS Y PROMOCION DEL DESARROLLO (DESCO), PERU
JAI SEN	VOLUNTEER ACTION NETWORK INDIA (VANI)
ALEJANDRO VILLAMAR	RED MEXICANA DE ACCION FRENTE AL LIBRE COMERCIO (RMALC)
GERANDO ROMERO VAZQUEZ	UNION DE COLINIAS POPULARES
BERTHA C. COSTELO	ALIANZA
ROBERTO BISSIO	INSTITUTO DEL TERCER MUNDO
MARIA ELENA PEREZ GARCIA	CONSEJO MEXICANO 500 AÑOS DE RESISTENCIA
AMELIA CARRILLO	ASOCIACION DE COLONOS DE CUAUHTPEC

### **Annex 3: Original project proposal**

Project title: Information for the Social Summit of Copenhagen <sup>1</sup>  
Presented to: Novib  
Date: October 1993  
Budget: US \$ 60.400

### **INTRODUCTION**

In a consultation held by NOVIB in Tunis during the General Assembly of El Taller, several Southern NGOs expressed the concern of the lack of information on the activities and documents leading to the Copenhagen Summit (consultations, PrepComms etc).

It is considered that all the necessary information coming from the UN-bodies, especially from the Organisation Committee for the NGO-meeting, is essential for NGOs of the South to ensure not only their participation but also to level up with Northern NGOs on the knowledge of what is going on with the preparations.

To ensure this, at invitation from NOVIB, a proposal is presented, to support this flow of information directly from the source, i.e. New York United Nations Office as well as other UN bodies involved in the preparation process.

### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The basic idea is to place a person in New York, who will be in charge of disseminating all the information regarding the Social Summit. This information will be disseminated to the NGO Community, especially to some key-points who will act as a clearing house for other NGOs in their respective regions.

The requisites for this person are:

- perfect English spoken and written
- knowledge of French and Spanish recommended
- capacity to make summaries of important documents
- capacity to process information fast

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<sup>1</sup> To: Carlos Heredia; Atila Roque; Roberto; Youba Sokona; Allert van den Ham; Boy Morales. From: John Schlanger, IPS. Re: Novib project for the Social Summit. Date: November 5th, 1993. Budget break-down not included.

- capacity to relate to UN-bodies, UN-embassies, press (PR function)
- It must be a person of the South, to be placed in New York until the end of the Summit.
- Skills to work with E-Mail

## **ACTIVITIES**

As said before, this person will have as main task to collect material important to the Summit, and disseminate it throughout the network of NGOs participating in the several events that will lead to Copenhagen, i.e.

- regional consultations
- PrepComms
- other relevant meetings
- updating agendas of meetings and monitoring of Preparation Commission in the UN.

The information will be sent to focal points in the several regions. Some focal points are:

- Asia: PRRM
- French Africa: ENDA Dakar
- English Africa: ORAP (or other one in Zimbabwe)
- Maghreb Region: El Taller
- Europe: NOVIB
- USA: Development GAP
- South America: IBASE, NGONET, ICD
- Andean Region: CEDEP
- Central America, Mexico: CECADE, Equipo Pueblo

These “focal points” will re-distribute this information to all NGOs involved in the preparation process. This will demand:

- translating important summaries
- photocopying work of important summaries
- e-mailing to NGO-networks

As most UN-documents are produced in the main languages (even Arabic) the “focal points” would copy and pass on the documents received from the New York contact person to other NGOs.

Contribution of the Focal NGOs:

- free access to E-mail via Peacenet (APC host in the US)
- copying facilities in the focal points
- costs of re-distribution in the region (postage)

## **FINAL REMARKS**

There is a possibility that IPS could provide UN-accreditation to the candidate, in order to facilitate access to the missions and the UN bodies.

The candidate must, at the latest, be in New York at the time the first PrepComm starts, to meet the participants of the “focal points” and work out a plan of action together.

## Annex 4: Minutes of Meeting of NGOs attending the Social Summit First PrepCom

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF NGOS ATTENDING THE SOCIAL SUMMIT 1st PREPCOMM

February 9, 1994

The NGOs that attended the First PrepComm of the Social Summit met on January 11, 1994. The meeting was cochaired by Michel Foucault (ICVA) and Roberto Bissio (ITEM). The meeting identified tasks that would contribute to promote the participation of NGOs (particularly those of the South) in the Social Summit and identified the institutional mechanisms best suited to perform those tasks.

All decisions were taken by consensus.

1. Dissemination of information on the Social Summit to the NGOs. Several NGOs and other institutions are already active disseminating information on the Social Summit to NGOs and the public through newsletter, press releases, electronic networks, and other media and the NGO networks are setting up mechanisms to channel NGO input to the Conference. This efforts should be stimulated to continue and improve, avoiding duplication whenever possible.

2. Convening of a meeting at the beginning of the Second PrepComm to inform attending NGOs.

During the first or second day of the PrepComm a meeting should be held to provide arriving NGOs information on the process, sensitive points, what is going to be negotiated, opportunities for intervention, etc. NGLS and the Danish NGO Committee were asked to organize this meeting. It was suggested that the weekend in the middle of the PrepComm could be used for a discussion among NGOs on the substantial issues.

3. Coordination of practical arrangements (meeting rooms, use of facilities, etc.) with the Secretariat during the PrepComm could take place using similar mechanisms as those developed during the SDC meeting.

4. Travel assistance and other means to promote Southern NGO participation

The work of NGLS in allocating travel assistance grants during previous UN conferences (particularly UNCED) was commended and donors were requested to use that channel to support Southern NGO participation. NGLS will work in consultation with the NGO community. National and regional consultations are essential to



actively involve NGOs in discussing the Summit agenda and the national policies towards its implementation. Meaningful NGO participation requires appropriate information and mechanisms to ensure them should also be supported.

The NGO networks that have initiated actions to promote NGO participation and to facilitate NGO input into the process were encouraged to continue doing so and to coordinate their actions. Taking into account the results of national and regional consultations and the activities of the NGO issue-oriented caucuses (women, youth, ...) an NGO body could be established during the Second PrepComm in order to enable further participation and lobbying by NGOs. *The body should be a permanent one, not just a one-time body, and should be established during the Second PrepComm.*

## **Annex 5: The Quality Benchmark for the Social Summit**

### **The Quality Benchmark for the Social Summit**

An NGO statement for the third session of the Preparatory Committee of the Social Summit / September 1994

The World Summit for Social Development will be held in Copenhagen from March 6 to 11, 1995. From the outset our aspirations have been for the Social Summit to address the structural causes of poverty, unemployment and social disintegration, rather than dealing with their symptoms. Our contribution has been set out in various documents, including the "Twelve Points to Save the Social Summit" on which the current document is based.

Many UN conferences have been held in the past five years which dealt directly or indirectly with the question of sustainable development. In our view, the importance of the Social Summit lies in its possibility to identify the connection between political, economic and social factors for sustainable development and the interface of those areas. Agenda 21 already identified the inter-relationship of environmental sustainability and social development. The UN Vienna Conference on Human Rights confirmed the universal right of all people to development and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. The important contribution of women to social and sustainable development has been the core of the debate in the UN Cairo Conference on Population and Development and the preparations for the UN Beijing Conference on Women. We expect the Social Summit to seek a new paradigm for social and economic relations among nations, communities and men and women to reach peace, sustainability and justice.

Concretely the Draft Declaration for the Social Summit should be commended. It embraces a broader vision of social development and identifies the need to improve the economic environment to enable social development. It also recognises the necessity to make the international organisations more accountable to standards for social development set by the international community. Even though the Declaration is dealing with such key-issues, we are still looking for improvement.

The Declaration fails to note the necessary connection between sustainable growth and social progress. This must be strengthened in view of the relation between poverty, over consumption and unsustainable production patterns in the North that have already been addressed in Agenda 21.

Within the Declaration “poor” people are still seen merely as victims. We feel it is regrettable that persons living in poverty are viewed as people in need of aid, instead of as citizens universally entitled to development and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.

We have emphasised consistently that we believe the commitments of our national governments for social development cannot be implemented unless civil society is fully integrated in the implementation of the programme. The commitments in this respect should be stronger. A dialogue and consultation process at the national level regarding the Social Summit is imperative, and NGOs should become part of the national reporting. In line with the spirit of the Summit's preparations adequate NGO involvement must be ensured during inter-sessional meetings.

The huge gap between the revised Programme of Action and the spirit of the Declaration must be closed because the Programme of Action as it currently stands can not be a basis for the realisation of the Declaration. The Draft Programme of Action has, therefore, to be brought in line with the Declaration. We need clear goals and commitments for the Declaration. More particularly, for the Programme of Action we need well-defined targets, clear time-tables, specified measures for follow-up and implementation and instruments for monitoring the implementation both at the international and the national level.

From the experience and analysis of our organisations working in social development throughout the world the following points are essential to the conclusions of the Summit:

1. The Social Summit should call on all governments to ratify the six core Human Rights Treaties, the International Convention Relating to the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families, and the relevant ILO conventions by the year 2000, without reservations that are contradictory to their intention and meaning. The Programme of Action should call on governments to recognise the legally binding obligations of the Convention on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and to establish means for the further elaboration and determination of those rights. The Social Summit should endorse the call from the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights for the creation of an optional complaints procedure under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The complaints procedure would allow individuals and groups to bring alleged violations of economic and social rights before an impartial international body. Governments should adopt a National Strategy with specific actions and target dates for implementing their obligations under the Human Rights Treaties and ILO-Conventions related to social development. The strategy should be

developed in full consultation with NGOs and civil society, and its implementation be monitored by an independent national commission which is drawn mainly from civil society.

2. Structural adjustment programmes focused on export led growth and which disregard wealth distribution and environmental sustainability have been an obstacle for national governments to develop such strategies. They fail to create employment, deepen social inequality and poverty, and thereby feed social disintegration. The impact of these policies falls most heavily on women. Trickle down economics is not working - in the north or the south. The Summit must urge that adjustment policies be fundamentally revised. Through its expert Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ECOSOC should investigate the underlying premises of World Bank and IMF policies, and measure their impact against the criteria established for the Social Summit: namely, do they exacerbate or alleviate the forces which exclude and deprive people living in poverty from the enjoyment of their basic rights. We, therefore, call for a reform of the multilateral structure, which brings the accountability of the International Financial Institutions - and the World Trade Organisation - into the UN system.
3. Those national and international programmes and projects that have an impact on social development, should be monitored through social impact studies, including those programmes implemented by the International Financial Institutions and the World Trade Organisation. Their programmes should be submitted to the relevant UN treaty monitoring bodies through regular reports explaining what steps are being taken to assist governments to comply with their economic, social and cultural obligations under the treaties and both governments and international organisations should provide the treaty monitoring bodies with evaluations of the effectiveness of their poverty alleviation measures and provide disaggregated data on the impact of their programmes on women, children and vulnerable groups.
4. Low Income Countries should receive compensation for losses experienced as a result of the Uruguay Round, so that resources are made available for social development.
5. The UN expert bodies on economic, social and cultural rights should also examine the implications of the new trade regime and the operations of the World Trade Organisation. There is a need for a social audit to gauge their impact on human welfare in the South. The right of Nations to establish national food and agriculture policies in order to eradicate hunger and ensure food security should be explicitly recognised. There should be no patenting of life forms.

6. Governments should direct their economic policies towards achieving sustainable economic development, not merely short-term economic growth. They should guide and moderate the operation of market forces, require fairness and honesty in business activities, provide adequate public infrastructure, and invest heavily in human resources (especially through education and health care). In particular, vigorous action should be taken to ensure that market forces are not allowed to degrade the community and environment in which they operate. Recognising that the major actors of the macro-economic system are unaccountable, the Social Summit should include as a condition for an enabling economic environment the international monitoring and a code of conduct for the operations of transnational corporations.
7. For a lot of countries the debt burden remains one of the most important obstacles to social development. The Social Summit should promote debt reduction initiatives that go beyond the existing package of options. Most urgently, the writing off of multilateral debt in Africa and all Low Income Countries is needed, since multilateral debt has been identified as a major obstacle for releasing resources for social development.
8. The UN target for Overseas Development Assistance of 0.7% of GNP should be achieved in the year 2000 by all OECD countries, including those who have yet to make such a commitment. To enable social sector expenditure and to enable investment in the economy of people living in poverty, effective spending of public resources is required. To achieve social development that caters for a broad range of fundamental human needs at least 50% of Official Development Assistance should be allocated to social development areas, which would include primary health care, reproductive health, education, shelter, water and sanitation, credit, institutional support and work guarantee schemes for people in poverty.
9. The Social Summit should establish effective mechanisms to curb the arms trade as a contribution to minimising violent social disintegration. Governments must decrease military expenditure to make resources available for social development.
10. Recognising the central role of citizenship and citizens' organisation in social development, the Programme of Action should insist on governments committing themselves to provide legal and regulatory frameworks for the contribution of different actors so as to involve local, regional and national civil society in social development. This requires the eradication of corrupt practices.
11. The gender specific aspects of each issue addressed by the Social Summit should be explicitly identified in the policy analysis and commitments taken by

the Social Summit. Governments should pay specific attention to the development, implementation and evaluation of the impact of government policy on women, in order to create a new social climate, and should recognise the central role that women play in social and economic development. Governments should ensure that effective laws and agencies prevent violence, harassment and discrimination against women. The Social Summit should draw on the contribution and respect of the unique cultures of people and integrate sustainable indigenous and traditional practices which do not violate women's rights into social development. Vigorous action should also be taken to prevent discrimination on the grounds of disability, race, age, religion or sexuality. Specific strategies to develop greater respect for cultural diversity and for the needs of refugees and migrants should be adopted by encouraging tolerance in society.

12. Data on social development and environmental sustainability, including those related to health, education, income distribution, disaggregated by gender, are lacking and need to be seriously gathered and used as the basis for new indicators for sustainability and social development. The Social Summit should vest principal responsibility for the monitoring of the commitments undertaken in the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. The Committee's mandate and methods of work should be adjusted accordingly to accommodate such responsibilities.

Sixty NGOs both national and international as well as national platforms with a well established record in areas such as human rights, gender, environment, labour, social welfare and development endorsed the earlier version: "Twelve Points to Save the Social Summit" during the Second PrepCom.

**The Quality Benchmark for the Social Summit  
Endorsements - 2 December 1994**

**Organizations:**

ACEEDAC, Congo  
ACRF, Belgium  
ACTIONAID, U.K.  
Adventische Entwicklungs- und Katastrophenhilfe (ADRA), Germany  
Agencia Latinamericana de Informacion (ALAI), Italy  
AGKED, Germany  
Aide aux Personnes Deplacées, Belgium  
Anchalika Kunjeswary Sanskritika Sansad, India  
Anglican Consultative Council of the Worldwide Anglican Communion  
Approche asbl, Belgium  
APRODEV  
Asociacion Latinoamericana de Asociaciones de Promocion (ALOP)  
Association Belgique Rwanda, Belgium  
Associazione degli Operatori di Cooperazione allo Sviluppo (AdOCS), Italy  
Associazione Interventi Cooperazione allo Sviluppo, Italy  
ASSEFA (India)  
Bensheimer Kreis, Germany  
Caribbean NGO Policy Development Centre, Barbados  
Curius Uruguay, Uruguay  
CASI-UEO, Belgium  
Catholicas por el Derecho a Decidir, Uruguay  
CDL, Bangladesh  
CENCOSAD, Ghana  
Center for Development of International Law  
Center of Concern, USA  
Centre of Concern for Child Labour, India  
Centre d'ecologia i Projectes Alternatius, Spain  
Centre d'etudes et de la formation en ecologie, Belgium  
Centre for the Development of Human Resources in Rural Asia, Philippines  
Centro Cooperativista del Uruguay, Uruguay  
Centro de Educacion y Comunicacion, Peru  
Centro de Estudios Ambientales, Argentina  
Centro de Investigacion y Promocion Popular, Peru  
CEPAM  
CETRI, Belgium  
CINTERAD, Belgium  
CIRAT, Belgium  
Citizen's Network for Sustainable Development, USA  
CNAPD, Belgium  
CNCP, Belgium  
Coalition for Popular Development Initiatives in Nigeria  
COMI, Italy  
Comite Afrique Austral, Belgium  
Comite Amerique Centrale Charleroi, Belgium  
Comite pour l'annulation de la dette de tiers-monde, Belgium  
Commission Justice et Paix, Belgium  
Confederacion Nacional de Pescadores Artesanales de Chile

Confederation des Betteraviers Belges  
 Conseil de la Jeunesse Catholique, Belgium  
 Conseil International de l'Action Sociale, Belgium  
 CONVERGENCIA, Mexico  
 Coordinating Group of NGOs in Swaziland  
 Coordination des Communautés de Base de Wallonie, Belgium  
 Coordination Regionale Bruxelloise pour la Paix, Belgium  
 Cordillera Women's Education and Resource Centre, Philippines  
 COPEVI (Mexico)  
 Cotidiano Mujer, Uruguay  
 CREDAR, Belgium  
 CRID, France  
 Culture, Tourisme et Loisirs, Belgium  
 DAWN  
 De Bouche a Oreille, Belgium  
 Deutsche Welthungerhilfe, Germany  
 D-GAP, USA  
 ECOLO, Belgium  
 Ecologist Movement of Macedonia  
 El Taller  
 Emmaus International  
 ENDA inter-arabe  
 ENDA-Tiers Monde (Dakar)  
 Entraide et Fraternite, Belgium  
 Entwicklungspolitische Gesellschaft e.v., Germany  
 Environmental Coalition of Prince Edward Island - Canada  
 EURODAD  
 EUROSTEP  
 FASE, Brasil  
 Federation des Etudiants pour les Nations Unies, Belgium  
 Federation Nationale des Patros Masculins, Belgium  
 Federation Nationale des Patros Feminins, Belgium  
 Feed the Children International  
 Food and Disarmament International  
 FoodFirst Information and Action Network (FIAN International)  
 Fondazione Internazionale Lelio Basso, Italy  
 Fondation Joseph Jacquemotte, Belgium  
 Forum Bruxellois de Lutte Contre la Pauvrete, Belgium  
 Frente Nacional por el Derecho a la alimentacion, Mexico  
 Freres des hommes, Belgium  
 Freres des hommes, France  
 Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, Germany  
 Friends of the Earth International  
 German Doctors for Developing Countries  
 German NGO Forum  
 GEA. Grupo de Estudios Ambientales, Mexico  
 GEM. Grupo de Estudios de la Mujer, Mexico  
 GRESEA, Belgium  
 Grupo Sofia, Italy  
 Helinas, Greece  
 HIVOS, Netherlands  
 IATP, USA



IBASE, Brasil  
 Ibis, Denmark  
 ICCO, Netherlands  
 ILRIG, South Africa  
 Indjenhilfe e.V, Germany  
 Institute for International Cooperation of the German Adult Education  
 INESC, Brasil  
 Instituto de Comunicacion y Desarrollo, Uruguay  
 Instituto de Estudios para America Latina y Africa (IEPALA), Spain  
 Instituto del Tercer Mundo, Uruguay  
 INTERMON, Spain  
 International Council for Social Welfare  
 International Council of Voluntary Agencies  
 International Federation of terre des hommes  
 International Kolping Society  
 International Planned Parenthood Federation  
 International Union for Land Value Taxation and Free Trade  
 International Worker's Aid  
 IOCU  
 ISAR, Brasil  
 ISIS International  
 Kairos Europe  
 Kindernothilfe e.V, Germany  
 Korea Human Rights Network (KOHNET)  
 La Poudriere, Belgium  
 Lega Italiana per i Diritti e la Liberazione dei Popoli, Italy  
 Loretto Community, USA  
 Los Algarrobes, Argentina  
 Lutheran World Federation  
 Magasins du Monde-Oxfam, Belgium  
 Mani Tese, Italy  
 Mellempfolkeligt Samvirke, Denmark  
 Mexican Action Network on Free Trade  
 Miel Maya Honig asbl, Belgium  
 Monde Selon les Femmes, Belgium  
 Mouvement Chretien pour la Paix, Belgium  
 MOVIMONDO, Italy  
 MRAX, Belgium  
 Mujer Ahora, Uruguay  
 Museo Provincial de Cs. Naturales "Florentino Ameghino", Argentina  
 Natural Resources Protection Group, Sudan  
 NGO-EC Liaison Committee  
 Norwegian Forum for Environment and Development  
 Norwegian People's Aid  
 Novib, Netherlands  
 OIKOS, Portugal  
 Orbi-Pharma, Belgium  
 Oxfam, Belgium  
 Oxfam-Canada  
 Oxfam, UKI  
 Pan African Institute for Development, Cameroon  
 PARC, Japan

Parti Ouvrier Socialiste, Belgium  
 Partners for First Peoples, USA  
 Peace Trust, India  
 People to People Aid, Japan  
 Peoples Alliance for Social Development  
 Peter-Hesse-Stiftung, Germany  
 Peuples Solidaires, Belgium  
 Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement  
 PROMUNDO, Argentina  
 REDES Amigos de la Tierra, Uruguay  
 Resonances asbl, Belgium  
 Service Laïque de Cooperation au Development, Belgium  
 Service Social des Etrangers, Belgium  
 Servicio Paz y Justicia (SERPAJ), Uruguay  
 Sierra Club of Canada  
 Socialisme Sans Frontiere, Belgium  
 Solidarite International des Travailleurs Nord-Sud, Belgium  
 Solidarite Mondiale, Belgium  
 Solidarite Socialiste, Belgium  
 Swedish Volunteer Service  
 Terros des hommes Germany  
 Terre Vivante/ Living Earth  
 The International Human Rights Law Group, USA  
 The Synergos Institute, USA  
 Third World Network  
 United Nations Association, Canada  
 United Nations Association, Denmark  
 Universita' Degli Studi Di Milano. Facolta Scienze Politiche, Italy  
 Vie Feminine, Belgium  
 WEDO  
 WEED, Germany  
 WIDE  
 Women's International League for Peace & Freedom  
 World Federalist Movement

Individuals:

Rinaldo Bontempi	Parlamento Europeo - Vice Presidente - Commissione Libertà Pubbliche e Affari Interni
On. Fulvia Bandoli	Member of the Italian Parliament
Giovanni Brunale	Member of the Italian Parliament
Valerio Calzolaio	Member of the Italian Parliament
Luciana Castellina	Chairperson of the European Parliament's Committee for Culture, Youth Education and the Media
Giancarla Codignani	Former member of the Italian Parliament
Giancarlo Contadoni	
Elena Cordoni	Member of the Italian Parliament
Ferdinando di Orto	Senator of the Italian Parliament
Antonio Drago	University of Naples
Paola Guiotti	Member of the Italian Parliament
Galileo Guidi	Member of the Italian Parliament

Carmelo Incorvaia Member of the Italian Parliament  
Enrica Pietra Lenzi Senator of the Italian Parliament  
Riccardo Nencini Member of the European Parliament  
Diego Novelli Member of the Italian Parliament  
Edo Ronchi Senator of the Italian Parliament  
Giancomo Santini Member of the European Parliament  
Salvatore Senese Senator of the Italian Parliament  
Rino Serri Senator of the Italian Parliament  
Malcolm Sylvers University of Venice  
Luigi Vinci Member of the European Parliament  
Itala Vivian University of Milan

## THE LION'S TEETH

### The Prehistory of Social Watch

Mirjam van Reisen

*“All of us involved in the multilateral political processes of the 1990’s knew that something was changing. One of those key changes was the emergence of non-governmental voices and movements, particularly from developing countries, onto the global stage. The role of NGOs in the run up to and during the Copenhagen Social Summit was influential. It continues today through Social Watch, an international citizen’s progress report on poverty eradication and gender equality. This study helps us to understand how the Social Watch network came about, and in doing so, to understand better the times in which we are living.”*

Juan Somavía

Director-General of the International Labour Organization.  
Somavía was Chilean Ambassador to the UN and Chair of the Preparatory Committee for the Social Summit in 1993-95.

The *Occasional Papers* intend to address issues that are relevant for the members of the Social Watch network, and as an empowering tool for civil society.