

2. In the course of the discussion, most speakers stated that their comments were of necessity preliminary at this stage. Although the Working Group did not attempt to reach any conclusions, there was broad agreement on the following points which could serve as guidance for the future work of the Working Group at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee:

(a) Some reform of United Nations institutions in the field of environment and development is needed, taking into account general efforts for restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the context of General Assembly resolution 45/264.

(b) Working Group III must take into account decisions with institutional implications originating from Working Groups I and II and the Plenary.

(c) Proliferation of institutions at the global level must be avoided.

(d) There is a need to work out mechanisms to promote coordination, both at the intergovernmental level and at the level of the Secretariat and United Nations specialized agencies and programmes involved with environment or development.

(e) Existing international institutions at the global and regional levels in the field of environment and development, including UNEP and UNDP, should be adapted to changed circumstances in order to support sustainable development. There was consensus that UNEP must be strengthened.

(f) Among the goals of institutional reform at the global and regional levels should be enhancement of the capacity of institutions at the national level, especially in developing countries, to ensure the full integration of environment and development.

(g) Institutions and organizations outside the United Nations system, including the non-governmental sector, have an important role in this process.

(h) The Working Group, at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, will have to consider the need for institutional arrangements, both at the intergovernmental and secretariat levels for the implementation and continuous review of Agenda 21.

3. In order to facilitate discussion at the fourth session of the Preparatory Committee, the necessary documentation should be prepared by the Secretariat. Specifically, an updated compilation of institutional proposals made by delegations during the third session of the Preparatory Committee, including those made in Working Groups I and II and the plenary, with a focus on options for action, is required. In this context, the matrix developed by the delegation of Canada should be used, as well as the relevant information contained in national reports. In addition, it is expected that the Working Group will have before it, in response to General Assembly resolution 44/229, a report by the Secretary-General on the structure and responsiveness of the United Nations in dealing with major environmental issues.

-----