

Another contentious point which arose during the consultations on the mandate of Working Group III related to the desire of certain countries (in particular the EEC) to include the rights of individuals as a topic for consideration by Working Group III. This proposal was blocked by the Group of 77, in particular Mexico, Tunisia and Algeria. The USSR suggested by way of compromise that the mandate would take into account the conclusions of such regional conferences as the Bergen Conference where individual rights were referred to. This compromise could now pave the way for consideration of the "**Charter of Rights and Obligations**" which was prepared and actively promoted by the Netherlands on behalf of the EEC.

Perhaps the most problematic issue surrounding Working Group III arose on the day its proceedings were to commence. The draft agenda tabled differed markedly from the actual mandate which was approved by the Plenary in the preceding week. The draft agenda read as if the only issues to be considered would include but legal and institutional matters. There was no reference whatsoever to the full scope of items on Working Group III's mandate such as the legal and institutional aspects of cross-sectoral issues. NGOs at our Daily Strategy Session were clearly disturbed about these events and undertook to informally lobby those delegations who we perceived to be behind the contracted agenda. The revised agenda was a considerable improvement and included not only legal, institutional and related matters, but the legal and institutional aspects of cross-sectoral issues, including those referred to Working Group III by Working Groups I and II and the Plenary.

On the question of the Earth Charter which falls under the mandate of Working Group III, the Baha'i International Community presented an intervention which sets out essential elements to be included within such an instrument. They include:

- a) Identification of those aspects of unity which are prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development;
- b) Rooting of any proposed solutions to environment and development problems in an approach which fosters spiritual balance and harmony within the individual, between individuals and with the environment as a whole;
- c) Consideration of a world federal system to enable nation states to manage cooperatively an increasingly interdependent and rapidly changing world;