

Some delegations, including the US and the Netherlands (EC) raised concerns as to the ambitiousness of the Survey, noting that it required a lot of research, as well as information and cooperation from states parties to the agreements.

Chile raised concerns about the fact that countries not party to certain environmental agreements contained in the Survey would be in a position to comment on their suitability to promote sustainable development and all the criteria agreed to by the Working Group. The delegate wondered if such countries were competent to comment on bilateral/regional agreements if they were not familiar with the political/economic/social conditions in such States.

Four Directions, an NGO representing North American indigenous peoples, suggested that the Survey should examine how environmental agreements relate to individual and group rights to a safe and healthy environment.

The representative referred to the International Labour Organization Conventions 107 and 169, which address rights of indigenous peoples to manage natural resources and to be protected from environmental damage. Stating that "State reports and UN resolutions were not enough," he stressed the need to develop national mechanisms to address the concerns of individuals and groups, in particular, their rights vis-a-vis their own States and other States, including public and private institutions originating from those third States (i.e. transnational corporations and enterprises).

The Baha'i International Community called on UNCED to develop "A single code of international law" which would, through a world federal system and international legislature, regulate the planet's resources and peoples without depriving States and individuals of their liberty. The representative noted that the Earth Charter could play a pivotal role in "articulating a unifying vision for the future and boldly asserting the values upon which it must rest."

OUTCOMES AND ASSESSMENT

Drawing on comments by delegations, the Secretariat prepared a revision of PC/77 and presented it for consideration in an informal meeting. Although most of the participants in the meeting were knowledgeable in international law, the informal degenerated into a petty drafting exercise.

The US suggested that the Survey could be made more objective if its analysis stayed away from relating the environmental agreements to the promotion of sustainable development -- a concept the delegation considered vague and subjective.

This brought vigorous protests from several delegations, including Canada, which pointed out that there were a number of adequate definitions of "sustainable development" and that