

UNCLASSIFIED PD-AAW-124 INCOMING
Department of State 51674 TELEGRAM

PAGE 01 OF 03 NAIROBI 23321 00 OF 04 162110Z 4703 AID1298
ACTION 10-16

NAIROBI 23321 00 OF 04 162110Z 4703

AID1298

INFO AFEA-03 AFDP-06 AFDR-06 FVA-01 OFDA-02 STDA-01 VID-01
STAG-02 STPO-01 SAST-01 ED-03 PVC-02 SIFA-01 STHR-01
/031 AS 1-16

INFO LOG-08 COPY-01 ADS-00 AID-00 IMR-10 EUR-00 SS-09
OIC-02 AF-00 CIAE-00 DINT-05 DOOE-00 N-01 HUD-02
NEA-07 NSCE-00 ARA-00 NSAE-00 COME-00 ISO-07 HA-08
L-03 LAB-04 TRSE-00 PH-10 EAP-00 PA-02 PC-05
ED-04 OME-01 SIL-01 HNS-06 IMRE-00 RP-10 AGR-01
JUS-01 SP-02 TFCE-07 DOEE-09 SR-06 CNP-01 PRS-01
SPD-01 /111 V

-----317157 162110Z /72

O 161958Z JUL 85
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3171
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USIA WASHDC 6459
WHITEHOUSE WASHDC

UNCLAS NAIROBI 23321

E.O. 12356: N/A
TAGS: UNWC, OARC
SUBJECT: ADDRESS IN WOMEN'S CONFERENCE PLENARY BY
MAUREEN REAGAN

1. FOLLOWING IS THE TEXT OF AN ADDRESS PRESENTED
BY MAUREEN REAGAN, HEAD OF UNITED STATES
DELEGATION TO THE NAIROBI WOMEN'S CONFERENCE ON
JULY 16.

STATEMENT BY MS. MAUREEN REAGAN,
HEAD OF THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION
TO THE WORLD CONFERENCE TO REVIEW
AND APPRAISE THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE
UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN:
EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT, AND PEACE,
IN PLENARY, JULY 16, 1985

THANK YOU, MADAME PRESIDENT. ON BEHALF OF MY
ENTIRE DELEGATION, I WOULD LIKE TO CONVEY OUR
CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR ELECTION TO THE PRESIDENCY
OF THIS CONFERENCE. UNDER YOUR LEADERSHIP, WE
HAVE FAITH THIS CONFERENCE WILL BE MOST PRODUCTIVE
AND SUCCESSFUL. I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO EXTEND OUR
CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE BUREAU.
KINDLY ALSO RELAY TO YOUR GOVERNMENT, AND TO ALL
THE KENYAN PEOPLE OUR SINCERE THANKS FOR THE WAY
THEY HAVE OPENED UP THEIR HEARTS AND WELCOMED US
TO YOUR BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY.

IT IS ESPECIALLY FITTING THAT THIS MAJOR GATHERING
OF THE WORLD'S WOMEN SHOULD TAKE PLACE IN AFRICA.
AFRICA TODAY SYMBOLIZES THE UNIQUE IMPORTANCE OF
WOMEN IN SHAPING THE PRESENT AND FUTURE OF
HUMANITY. AFRICA IS A CONTINENT OF PAIN AND
PROMISE, OF RICHNESS AND SCARCITY, OF INTENSE
SUFFERING AND UNDYING HOPE. AT THE HEART OF THESE
POIGNANT CONTRASTS, THE WOMEN OF THIS CONTINENT
TOIL. AT A TIME WHEN FOOD PRODUCTION IS CRITICAL,
THEIR LABORS PRODUCE MOST OF THIS CONTINENT'S FOOD
CROPS. AT A TIME WHEN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS
CRUCIAL, THEY ACCOUNT FOR A LARGE PART OF AFRICA'S
LABOR FORCE IN ITS MOST CRUCIAL ECONOMIC SECTORS.
CLEARLY, THE GREAT PROMISE OF AFRICA WILL ONLY BE
FULFILLED, IF, AS PRESIDENT MOI YESTERDAY
DECLARED, WE KEEP FAITH WITH AFRICA'S WOMEN. SO

THE WOMEN OF AFRICA REPRESENT AND SYMBOLIZE THE
CRITICAL ROLE, THE PASSIONATE HOPES, AND THE
STRIVING FUTURE OF US ALL.

THE US DELEGATION REPRESENTS OVER 100 MILLION
WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES. WOMEN CONCERNED WITH
THE ISSUES THIS CONFERENCE WILL ADDRESS. THEY
HAVE ACHIEVED DRAMATIC PROGRESS DURING THIS DECADE
FOR WOMEN, AND I WOULD LIKE TO SPEAK BRIEFLY OF
THEIR ACHIEVEMENTS.

OF COURSE, IT IS EASY TO POINT OUT SPARKLING
EXAMPLES OF INDIVIDUAL SUCCESS. DURING THIS
DECADE, THE US WITNESSED THE APPOINTMENT OF THE
FIRST WOMAN JUSTICE OF OUR SUPREME COURT, THREE
WOMEN SERVING SIMULTANEOUSLY IN THE CABINET OF OUR
GOVERNMENT, THE SPACE FLIGHT OF THE FIRST AMERICAN
WOMAN ASTRONAUT, AND THE FIRST NOMINATION BY A
MAJOR PARTY OF A WOMAN CANDIDATE FOR THE VICE
PRESIDENCY.

BUT THE ADVANCEMENT OF AMERICA'S WOMEN DURING THE
DECADE GOES FAR BEYOND THESE INDIVIDUAL CASES. BY
THE END OF THE DECADE, WE HAVE SEEN THE PERCENTAGE
OF WOMEN PRESIDENTIAL APPOINTEES RISE. WOMEN NOW
OCCUPY MORE THAN 1600 HIGH LEVEL POLICY-MAKING
POSITIONS IN OUR FEDERAL GOVERNMENT.
PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN IN THE LABOR FORCE AT LARGE
HAS GROWN FROM 40 TO 44 PERCENT WHILE THE AVERAGE
WAGE FOR WOMEN IS STILL LESS THAN THAT OF MEN,
HERE TOO THERE HAS BEEN IMPROVEMENT OVER THIS
DECADE. WE NEED TO BUILD ON THIS PROGRESS, AND I
HOPE THE NEXT FIFTEEN YEARS WILL WITNESS EVEN MORE
IMPROVEMENT.

AT THE START OF THE DECADE, AMERICAN WOMEN HAD
ALREADY ACHIEVED SUBSTANTIAL POLITICAL EQUALITY
THROUGH LEGISLATION. WOMEN HAD THE RIGHT TO
PARTICIPATE FULLY IN POLITICAL AFFAIRS AND HAD
OBTAINED LEGISLATIVE GUARANTEES PROHIBITING
DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT AND PAY.
DISCRIMINATION IN HOUSING, CREDIT, AND EDUCATION
HAD ALSO BEEN PROHIBITED. SINCE THE DECADE BEGAN,
FURTHER LEGISLATIVE PROGRESS HAS BEEN MADE IN TAX
LAWS, IN SOCIAL SECURITY REGULATIONS, IN PREGNANCY
DISCRIMINATION, IN JOB TRAINING, AS WELL AS IN THE
FIELD OF PREVENTION AND TREATMENT OF CHILD AND
SPOUSAL ABUSE.

BUT WE STILL ARE NOT SATISFIED! WHILE ALL LEGAL
BARRIERS TO POLITICAL EQUALITY HAVE LONG SINCE
BEEN ELIMINATED, THERE STILL EXIST CULTURAL,
SOCIOLOGICAL AND ECONOMIC BARRIERS. THESE ARE
PROBLEMS FACED BY WOMEN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD AND
WE ARE HERE TO DISCUSS THESE PROBLEMS, AND TO JOIN
YOU, THE WOMEN OF THE WORLD IN FORMULATING
STRATEGIES TO OVERCOME THEM.

DURING THIS CONFERENCE, THE US DELEGATION WILL BE
SEEKING TO FOCUS ON FOUR ISSUES OF SPECIAL CONCERN
TO MY COUNTRY: WOMEN REFUGEES, WOMEN IN
DEVELOPMENT, LITERACY, AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. WE
WILL BE HOSTING SPECIAL CONVERSATION GROUPS TO
CONCENTRATE ON THESE ISSUES. THE UNITED STATES
HAS INVITED A NUMBER OF THE DELEGATIONS HERE
ASSEMBLED TO PARTICIPATE IN THESE GROUPS.

IT IS A TRAGIC COMMENTARY ON MODERN TIMES THAT
MORE THAN 10 MILLION REFUGEES SUFFER DAILY FROM
DEPRIVATION, DISORIENTATION AND DEGRADATION.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED
Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 02 OF 03 NAIROB 23321 00 OF 04 162110Z 4703

AID1298

NAIROB 23321 00 OF 04 162110Z 4703

AID1298

SINCE 1975, THE UNITED STATES HAS ACCEPTED NEARLY ONE-HALF OF ALL THE REFUGEES RESETTLED TO THIRD COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD. THE NEEDS OF REFUGEE WOMEN RESETTLING IN THE UNITED STATES VARY, DEPENDING FROM WHAT CULTURE THEY COME. THE MOST COMMON DIFFICULTY FOR REFUGEE WOMEN IN THE UNITED STATES, IS A BACKGROUND AND A TRADITION IN WHICH WOMEN DO NOT TAKE AGGRESSIVE ROLES OUTSIDE OF THE HOME, AND WHERE THEY ARE TAUGHT TO BE DEPENDENT UPON OTHERS. SELF-SUFFICIENCY SKILLS ARE CRUCIAL FOR SUCCESSFUL INTEGRATION INTO AMERICAN LIFE. THEREFORE THE MAIN JOB OF OUR REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM - BOTH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE - IS TO HELP WOMEN FROM THESE TRADITIONAL CULTURES LEARN TO BE FULL PARTNERS IN OUR SOCIETY - WHETHER THEY WORK IN THE MARKETPLACE OR IN THE HOME.

LET US NOT FORGET IN THESE DISCUSSIONS, HOWEVER, THE ROOT CAUSES WHICH HAVE BROUGHT ABOUT NEARLY 10 MILLION REFUGEES AND MANY MORE DISPLACED PERSONS IN THE WORLD TODAY - FAMINE, DROUGHT, WAR, AND PARTICULARLY THE WHOLESALE LOSS OF HUMAN FREEDOM. WHEN WE SEE THE SUFFERING OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN REFUGEES IN THE WORLD TODAY, WE MUST DEPLORE THE ACTIONS OF GOVERNMENTS WHICH FORCE PEOPLE FROM THEIR HOMES IN SEARCH OF FREEDOM.

THE DESIRE FOR FREEDOM IS ALSO AT THE HEART OF THE VITAL ROLE PLAYED BY WOMEN IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS. GOVERNMENTS HAVE THEIR TARGETS AND THEIR FIVE-YEAR PLANS. WOMEN HAVE DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS. OUR EXPERIENCE CONVINCES US THAT THE ABILITY OF WOMEN IS TO CHOOSE THEIR OWN PATHS AND, THEREFORE, TO PARTICIPATE COMPLETELY IN ALL ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT IS ESSENTIAL.

IN MANY DEVELOPING COUNTRIES, WOMEN PLAY A MAJOR ROLE IN THOSE SECTORS OF THE ECONOMY WHERE PRIVATE EFFORT AND INITIATIVE ARE VITAL. PARTICULARLY IN THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, THEY ARE THE FOOD FARMERS, THEY ARE THE MERCHANTS, THEY ARE SHOPKEEPERS, THE BACKBONE OF THE LOCAL MARKET ECONOMY. THE EXPERIENCE OF OVER TWO DECADES OF DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS AROUND THE WORLD HAS SHOWN THAT COUNTRIES WHICH PLACE THE EMPHASIS UPON THE PRIVATE ECONOMIC SECTOR ACHIEVE THE BEST DEVELOPMENT RESULTS. THIS MEANS THAT ESPECIALLY FOR THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, THE WOMEN'S PATH TO DEVELOPMENT IS THE BEST PATH. EMPHASIS UPON THE PROBLEMS, CONCERNS AND CAPACITIES OF WOMEN IS THE BRIGHT HOPE OF THE DEVELOPMENT FUTURE. THE PRIVATE SECTOR IS OFTEN THE WOMEN'S SECTOR. PARTICULARLY IN THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, EMPHASIZING THIS ROLE OF WOMEN OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR OFTEN MEANS THE ROLE OF WOMEN. COULD THIS BE ONE REASON PRIVATE SECTOR APPROACHES MEETS SO MUCH RESISTANCE FROM GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACIES?

WHILE GOVERNMENT PROJECTS AND GOVERNMENT CONTROL HAVE NOT PROVEN TO BE THE KEYS TO DEVELOPMENT, GOVERNMENTS DO HAVE A RESPONSIBILITY TO ENCOURAGE EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES. OVER A DECADE AGO, THE US CONGRESS APPROVED REGULATIONS REQUIRING THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TO ALLOCATE RESOURCES TO ENSURE THAT BILATERAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS INCLUDE PROGRAMS SPECIFICALLY DESIGNED TO HELP WOMEN. THAT AGENCY IS ALSO REQUIRED TO CONSIDER THE POTENTIAL IMPACT ON WOMEN IN ALL ITS DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.

THROUGH VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS TO SEVERAL UN PROGRAMS, SUCH AS THE UN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM, UNICEF, AND THE UN VOLUNTARY FUND FOR THE DECADE FOR WOMEN, THE UNITED STATES HAS GENEROUSLY CONTRIBUTED TO THESE MULTILATERAL PROGRAMS. THESE IN TURN HAVE SUPPORTED IMPROVING THE CONDITION OF WOMEN IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. WE ARE COMMITTED TO ENCOURAGING THESE KINDS OF ACTIVITIES THAT WILL FOSTER THE FULL AND EQUAL PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN THEIR COMMUNITIES, IN THEIR NATIONS, AND IN THE WORLD. WE BELIEVE THE UNITED NATIONS CAN CONTINUE TO PLAY AN IMPORTANT ROLE AS CATALYST IN ACHIEVING THIS GOAL. IT HAS ALREADY DONE SO DURING THE DECADE FOR WOMEN, AND WE ANTICIPATE IT WILL CONTINUE TO DO SO IN THE FUTURE.

LITERACY IS AN AREA OF MAJOR CONCERN TO THE US. WHILE BASIC ILLITERACY IS NO LONGER A MAJOR PROBLEM FOR US, ACHIEVING TRUE FUNCTIONAL LITERACY IS A MAJOR CHALLENGE. FUNCTIONAL LITERACY MEANS THE KNOWLEDGE THAT MAKES EVERYDAY LIFE WORK. MEETING THIS CHALLENGE WILL ALLOW WOMEN TO FURTHER IMPROVE THEIR OWN LIVES AND THE LIVES OF THEIR FAMILIES AND THEIR SOCIETIES.

FINALLY, AMERICAN WOMEN ARE INCREASINGLY COMING TO GRIPS WITH THE DEVASTATION CAUSED BY FAMILY VIOLENCE. NOW SOME OF YOU MAY SEE THIS AS A CONCERN ONLY IN WESTERN CONTEXT. BUT VIOLENCE IN THE HOME, WHETHER BASED ON TRADITIONAL CUSTOMS OR SPOUSAL ABUSE, IS ALL TOO PREVALENT WORLDWIDE. FAMILY PRIVACY, FEELINGS OF GUILT OR EMBARRASSMENT HAVE OFTEN COVERED UP THIS WORLDWIDE PHENOMENON. HELP MUST COME FROM OUTSIDE THE FAMILY. THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO DEAL WITH FAMILY VIOLENCE IS TO RECOGNIZE IT IS A CRIMINAL ACT AND TO TREAT IT WITHIN THE JUDICIAL SYSTEM. THE LEGAL RESPONSE SHOULD BE GUIDED BY THE NATURE OF THE ABUSIVE ACT, NOT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN VICTIM AND ABUSER. I HOPE THAT WE CAN SHARE INFORMATION ON PRACTICAL MEASURES WE HAVE TAKEN TO MEET THIS WORLDWIDE PROBLEM, AND TO MAKE A CONTRIBUTION TO ITS SOLUTION.

I HAVE JUST DESCRIBED THE FOUR ISSUES THAT ARE OF SPECIAL IMPORTANCE TO THE UNITED STATES IN THIS CONFERENCE. THEY WERE CHOSEN BY OUR DELEGATION AS AREAS OF SPECIAL INTEREST AND CONCENTRATION BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THAT PROGRESS IN THESE FOUR AREAS IN THE COMING YEARS WILL HAVE THE GREATEST POSITIVE IMPACT ON THE CONDITION OF WOMEN THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. I REALIZE, HOWEVER, THAT OTHER DELEGATES CONSIDER OTHER ISSUES TO BE OF GREATER IMPORTANCE. WE ARE HERE TO LISTEN TO THOSE CONCERNS. IN DOING SO, WE HOPE TO PROMOTE GREATER UNDERSTANDING AMONG ALL WOMEN.

FOR EXAMPLE, MANY DELEGATIONS, ESPECIALLY THOSE FROM AFRICA, BELIEVE IT IS OF UTMOST IMPORTANCE THAT THIS CONFERENCE ADDRESS THE QUESTION OF APARTHEID IN SOUTH AFRICA. OTHERS BELIEVE THAT THE SITUATION OF PALESTINIAN WOMEN DESERVES SPECIAL ATTENTION. THE UNITED STATES HAS NEVER, AND DOES NOT NOW, OBJECT TO THE DISCUSSION OF THESE ISSUES AT THE CONFERENCE.

APARTHEID IS ABHORRENT TO THE GOVERNMENT AND TO THE PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES. IN ADDITION TO ITS DEMEANING AND DESTRUCTIVE EFFECT UPON THE

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED
Department of State

INCOMING
TELEGRAM

PAGE 03 OF 03 NAIR08 23321 00 OF 04 162110Z 4703 AID1298

BLACK PEOPLE OF SOUTH AFRICA, ITS EFFECTS UPON
WOMEN ARE ESPECIALLY SEVERE. THE FORWARD-LOOKING
STRATEGIES SHOULD ADDRESS WAYS TO OVERCOME THE
EFFECTS ON WOMEN OF THIS EVIL AND INHUMAN
SYSTEM.

SIMILARLY, WE RECOGNIZE THAT MANY DELEGATIONS FEEL
VERY STRONGLY ABOUT DISCUSSING THE SITUATION IN
THE MIDDLE EAST AND ITS EFFECT UPON WOMEN. WE ARE
PREPARED TO WORK CONSTRUCTIVELY WITH THOSE
DELEGATIONS IN A SPIRIT OF CONSENSUS-BUILDING TO
ARRIVE AT RESULTS THAT ALL CAN ACCEPT.

I REALIZE THAT THIS CONFERENCE OFFERS TO MANY
WOMEN A PLATFORM FROM WHICH TO SPEAK THAT MAY BE
DENIED TO THEM ELSEWHERE. I AM BLESSED TO BE A
CITIZEN OF A NATION WHERE WOMEN ARE FREE TO SPEAK
OUT ABOUT THEIR POLITICAL VIEWS AND TO WORK WITHIN
A DEMOCRATIC SYSTEM TO SEE THAT THEIR VIEWS
PREVAIL. THAT IS WHAT I HAVE DONE FOR MY ENTIRE
ADULT LIFE. I WOULD NEVER DENY TO ANY WOMAN AN
OPPORTUNITY SUCH AS THAT PRESENTED HERE TO USE
THAT PLATFORM NO MATTER HOW MUCH I MIGHT DISAGREE
WITH HER POSITION.

WE HAVE BEEN CONCERNED, IT IS TRUE, OVER THE
POSSIBILITY THAT GENERALIZED POLITICAL ISSUES WITH
ONLY A NOMINAL CONNECTION TO THE UNIQUE CONCERNS
OF WOMEN MIGHT COME TO DOMINATE OUR CONFERENCE.
THIS IS A RESULT THAT WE WILL WORK HARD TO
PREVENT. WE WANT THIS TO BE REMEMBERED AS A
CONFERENCE OF WOMEN, BY WOMEN, AND FOR WOMEN. I
AM HOPEFUL THAT IN THE SPIRIT OF COMPROMISE AND
CONSENSUS THAT HAS MARKED THE OPENING OF OUR WORK
HERE IN NAIROBI, THIS RESULT CAN BE ACHIEVED. I
THANK YOU. END TEXT. THOMAS

NOTE BY OC/T: ACTION OFFICE RETURN ONE COPY WITH TIME OF RECEIPT TO
OC/DC/T/TRS.

UNCLASSIFIED