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support to developing countries, to help them implement the convention.

Some 160 countries signed a pact on reducing emissions of carbon dioxide and other global warming gases at the Rio de Janeiro summit. The treaty now needs 50 ratifications to enter into force.

Barrett Frelinghuysen, Director of the NRDC's 'Earth Summit Watch' said, "We are pleased with the movement so far by the nations of the world to ratify the Climate Change Treaty."

"This treaty is a critical step towards reducing the emissions of global warming gases," Frelinghuysen added.

The U.N.-brokered climate change convention is meant to address the rapid climactic changes which scientists blame on the 'greenhouse effect'.

The steady build-up of carbon dioxide and

chlorofluorocarbon (CFC) gases are held responsible for the depletion of the earth's protective ozone layer.

Experts say the consequent rise in temperatures will produce extremes of drought and rainfall, and disrupt world food production.

According to the NRDC survey, of the top 10 countries responsible for global warming gases, only the United States, which gives off 25 percent of the world's carbon dioxide emissions, and China, the third largest greenhouse gas polluter, have formally approved the treaty.

The other top emitters of global warming gases, in order, include the 15 nations of the former Soviet Union, Japan, Brazil, India, Germany, Britain, Mexico and Italy.

The NRDC expects these countries to complete the ratification process by the end of 1993. ■

expressed reservations on the proposed move at a closed-door meeting of the Committee.

Ambassador Stephen Ledogar, the U.S. representative to the Conference on Disarmament, told the Committee Monday that the United States opposed the proposal because the Office for Disarmament Affairs "should remain in close touch with other relevant elements of the Secretariat".

"While the U.S. was a strong advocate of the Organisation's streamlining and rationalisation," he said, "such changes should enhance -- not detract -- from the United Nations' ability to support important work underway".

The Secretary-General's proposed move has also been challenged or opposed by several other countries including Canada, Cuba, Benin, Iran, Mexico, Nigeria, Nepal, Pakistan, and Ukraine.

Ukraine, a newly independent state that had inherited enormous military potential from the Soviet Union, was one of the member-states that was vociferous in its opposition.

Volodymyr Khandogy, the delegate from Ukraine, said he was puzzled and concerned about the intended split of the Office for Disarmament Affairs and the proposed transfer to Geneva.

He said that such a step might be counter-productive because it was important to retain in New York an effective and strong centre for disarmament, adequately equipped to carry out its important functions.

Egyptian Ambassador Nabil Elaraby, chair of the Committee, last week informally briefed delegates of the proposed move.

The only branches expected to remain in New York were the newly created Arms Registry and the Committee and Conference Branch of the Office for Disarmament Affairs. The proposed change is an integral part of the ongoing restructuring of the U.N. system.

Although the Secretary-General has shelved the decision on a new home for the Office for Disarmament

Affairs, member-states expect him to announce other planned relocations shortly.

The Centre for Social Development and Humanitarian Affairs (CSDHA) is to be moved from Vienna to New York, and the Outer Space Affairs (OSA) Division of the U.N. Secretariat is to be shifted from New York to Vienna.

The Austrian government, which hosted the 1982 U.N. Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE '82), has openly expressed a desire to have the OSA Division in Vienna.

The Secretary-General will also announce the relocation of the former U.N. Centre on Transnational Corporations from New York to Geneva, the Office of the World Food Council from Rome to New York, and the former Centre for Science and Technology for Development from New York to Geneva.

Meanwhile, the New York-based Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Committee on Disarmament Inc., has also opposed the relocation of the Office for Disarmament Affairs.

The NGO Committee has written to the Secretary-General, urging that the Office remain in New York.

The Committee said at a meeting last month that disarmament measures are being increasingly used as integral elements of peace-making and peace-keeping -- areas which are part of the mandate of the Security Council.

It said the Office for Disarmament Affairs has therefore become an even more valuable resource for the Security Council and for delegations.

Disarmament issues such as the control and transfer of arms and the relevant data banks are clearly increasing in significance, making it logical to have the Office in the same location as the Arms Registry, the Committee noted.

"We believe it is vital that the Office remain here. Any shift would, it seems, be inevitably interpreted as a downgrading of the Office, an impression which could affect its effectiveness," the letter says. ■

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CUBA TO CALL FOR SPECIAL SESSION ON RIGHTS VIOLATIONS AGAINST CHILDREN

Geneva, Mar 9 (IPS) -- Cuba may call for a special session of the United Nations Human Rights Commission to discuss human rights violations perpetrated against children around the world, it was announced here Tuesday.

Speaking at a press conference in Geneva, Cuba's ambassador to Switzerland, Jose Perez, expressed concern that the U.N. Human Rights Commission pays scant attention to abuses committed against millions of children in Third World countries.

"The present 49th session of the Human Rights Commission has been meeting for six weeks, but the issue of children's rights was only discussed on two or three days," Perez said.

He recalled that the U.N. Special Investigator on Children's Rights, Vilit Muntarbhorn, had criticised the lack of a specific budget and resources to carry out his tasks.

Perez stressed that Muntarbhorn was unable to make a single trip to prepare his report because the U.N. Human Rights Commission did not have the funds to pay for his expenses.

"However, when Northern countries consider that something is important because it affects them directly, the funds are always found," the Cuban ambassador added.

According to Perez, the issue of children's rights merits an extraordinary meeting of the Human Rights Commission. He noted that the U.S. convened special sessions on two occasions in 1992 in order to discuss the situation in the former Yugoslavia.

During the first of these meetings, held in August, the Commission appointed former Polish Prime Minister Tadeusz Mazowiecki as Special Investigator in the former Yugoslavia.

Perez said the authorities in Havana were consulting other Third World governments to seek support for the Cuban initiative.

Although Perez conceded that the Yugoslav question "is very important", he said the plight of 20 million Third World children who are exploited and abused should be of equal concern.

"Some of the developed nations in this U.N. Commission have a double standard: when something concerns them they apply all the necessary pressures," Perez noted.

"But when something doesn't interest them or when they are the ones violating human rights, then no resources are available."

Perez said although most cases of child pornography, forced prostitution and child trafficking occur in Third World countries, this

happens because there is a ready market in the industrialised countries of the North.

Last Friday, the Special Investigator on Children's rights, Vilit Muntarbhorn, presented his report to the U.N. Human Rights Commission during the 49th regular sessions.

According to the report, several organisations and individuals in the United States, Europe, Japan and other industrialised countries are involved in activities ranging from child pornography and prostitution to illegal trafficking in children.

The report describes the purchase and sale of children as "adoption for commercial purposes" and says such activities, along with child prostitution and pornography, are "transnational phenomena" whose victims are mostly Third World children.

The text cites a report by a U.S.-based research centre which documents the thriving traffic in children between the United States and Mexico.

It also describes similar trafficking in children from Eastern Europe to "receptor" countries in the West such as the United States, France, Italy, and Sweden.

The U.N. report also records cases of children bought and sold in Sri Lanka, Malaysia, Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Mexico and other Third World countries.

The document says the use of children for pornography and prostitution is a growing problem in many countries including the United States, Canada and some African nations.

However, this problem is particularly serious in Asia, especially in Thailand where "sex tourism" is a rapidly growing industry. ■

14 COUNTRIES RATIFY CLIMATE CHANGE TREATY

New York, Mar 9 (IPS) - The New York-based Natural Resources Defence Council (NRDC) says 14 countries have ratified the global convention which addresses the effects of global warming on climate change.

The NRDC, a leading public interest law firm, expects that by year's end, an additional 61 countries will ratify the convention, which countries signed at last June's 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The 'Earth Summit Watch', a project of the NRDC, published a survey with these findings Tuesday. The NRDC published the study in advance of the Mar. 15-19 meeting of the U.N. body which is mandated to negotiate the details of the convention.

The Intergovernmental Negotiating Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change (INC/FCCC) will use next week's meeting to discuss mechanisms for the transfer of technical and financial

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SECRETARY-GENERAL DEFERS DECISION TO RELOCATE OFFICE FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS

by Thalif Deen

New York, Mar 9 (IPS) - U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has deferred a final decision on his controversial proposal to move the United Nations' Office for Disarmament Affairs from New York to Geneva.

The Secretary-General implicitly told the General Assembly's Political and Security Committee he will rethink the matter in light of reservations expressed by member states.

"As I understand it, there is a desire among delegations to consider this idea in the broader context of the disarmament machinery and the Secretariat's capacity to service it. I will therefore continue consultations on the matter," he said.

The strongest and most unequivocal protest came from the United States, which last week

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PEACEKEEPING RESERVE FUND GETS FIRST SET OF CASH

by Appan Menon

New York, Mar 9 (IPS) - The United Nations' Peacekeeping Reserve Fund, a brainchild of Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, has received its first contribution.

Boutros-Ghali has informed the General Assembly finance and budgeting committee that he has transferred 59 million dollars to the Fund from the accounts of closed peacekeeping missions, the U.N. Department of Public Information (DPI) said here Tuesday.

These include 42 million dollars from the U.N. Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG) in Namibia and 17 million dollars from the U.N. Iran-Iraq Military Observer Group (UNIMOG).

Namibia became an independent nation in 1989 and the Iran-Iraq war ended in Aug. 1988 when the two countries signed a ceasefire agreement.

Boutros-Ghali had suggested last year that a 50-million-dollar revolving Fund for peacekeeping be set up to help remedy the critical cash-flow problem each new peacekeeping mission faces after its authorisation by the Security Council.

But the General Assembly recommended 150 million dollars as the base level for the Fund in a resolution adopted in December.

As the budgetary process in the United Nations requires the General Assembly to approve moneys for peacekeeping operations, there is always a time lag between Security Council authorisation and the actual setting up of a mission.

The United Nations' peacekeeping mission in Mozambique (ONUMOZ), for instance, was approved by the Security Council in December and the General Assembly has still to approve its budget.

At present, the United Nations spends about 2.8 billion dollars every year on the 13 peacekeeping operations currently underway.

Outstanding contributions to peacekeeping operations amount to 1.1 billion dollars, according to

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EC URGED TO CONDEMN TORTURE OF AFRICAN JOURNALISTS

by Bob Mantiri

Brussels, Mar 8 (IPS) -- Journalists from Africa and the Caribbean have made an urgent appeal to the European Community to condemn regimes in their countries who kill, torture, threaten, imprison or expel colleagues in the course of their work.

In a carefully worded open letter to EC president Jacques Delors they urged him "to do everything in his power to ensure that independent inquiries are undertaken on the assassination of journalists, that those responsible be brought to justice and those colleagues imprisoned be immediately released".

The letter was signed by 17 journalists, editors and publishers and by more than 10 non-governmental organisations (NGOs) after a five-day seminar here on the press and democracy in Africa. It was organised by the European Commission and the French-based independent organisation 'Reporters San Frontieres'.

Angola, Rwanda, Sierre Leone and Chad are singled out as countries where the "state, army and paramilitary organisations are killing journalists often with impunity.

"Currently at least six states Angola, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Sudan are keeping journalists in prison. They are simply guilty of having expressed different opinions from those of the authorities or giving disturbing information," Delors was told in the statement.

"In Djibouti, Equatorial Guinea, Malawi and Sudan no voice other than those in power can be heard. In Cameroun, Haiti and Togo journalists are condemned to exile due to threats against them," the letter said.

During the meeting journalists who were victims of violence gave accounts of their suffering at the hands of dictatorial governments. EC Commissioner Manuel Marin, who is in charge of human rights and development, said the journalists had suffered "simply because they dared to defend their rights to free access of information".

Abbe Andre Sibomana is a journalist from Rwanda who was arrested, imprisoned and tortured because he wrote a report in his newspaper about the massacre of hundreds of his countrymen by the army.

"I was tortured so seriously that I am still under medical care," he said. Though he is now living in Europe he said he was "still being harrassed and threatened by people hired by the Rwandan government".

Editors, reporters and NGOs stressed during the meeting that "one cannot conceive a process of development and democracy without an independent and pluarlistic press".

They urged international organisations, including the European Community, to stop their aid to countries where freedom of the press is being curtailed.

"International organisations should strengthen the freedom of the press internationally as a proof of the professionalism which is necessary for the development of the process of democracy," they said in the letter.

To draw the attention of international public opinion to the violations of press freedom in Africa the journalists are planning to set up a permanent office for human rights in Africa in Geneva to try and ensure the subject is given a high profile.

It was decided that at the international conference on human rights in Vienna in June 1993 a dossier on government interference with the freedom of the press in Africa will be presented.

The European Commission has said it will make available an amount of 20 million dollars for media projects in Africa.

This will include training management for press enterprises, the training of specialised reporters and the development of regional professional associations on the African continent.

The European Community has said it will also finance the creation of documentation services related to the African continent.

Commissioner Marin said that a few years ago holding a seminar on press and democracy in Africa's developing countries and in other parts of the world would hardly have been considered a useful exercise.

"We can say openly today that the defence of human rights, of democracy and therefore freedom of information, are an essential and indispensable factor in developing countries," Marin said.

But Pius Njawe, editor of the newspaper 'The Messenger' in Cameroun, who was expelled by the authorities, said that words are not enough to promote the democratisation process in African countries.

"The European community is still giving development aid to Cameroun. This aid must be stopped immediately," he said. Not only international organisations like the Community but also member countries have to suspend their aid. He singled out France for failing to condemn dictators in its former colonies.

"France must be forced by the Community and by other member countries to condemn the dictators in its former colonies and stop its financial aid to them," he said. ■

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a background note of the DPI.

Boutros-Ghali has already loaned about 40 million dollars from the Fund to the peacekeeping missions in Angola, El Salvador and Mozambique.

The resolution setting up the Fund authorises the Secretary-General to take advances for unforeseen and extraordinary expenses relating to peacekeeping, and for start-up costs of an operation.

However, another proposal of Boutros-Ghali that the General Assembly approve one-third of the estimated cost of a new peacekeeping operation as soon as the Security Council decides to establish an operation has not been discussed yet.

Most U.N. peacekeeping operations are funded by legally binding assessments on all member-states. But in almost all cases contributions lag behind the expenses incurred by each operation.

"Whatever decisions are taken on financing the Organisation, there is one inescapable necessity: Member States must pay their assessed contributions in full and on time," said Boutros-Ghali in his 1991 'Agenda for Peace' proposals.

But this year, the level of contributions to the regular budget has fallen behind last year's. According to the 'Status of Contributions as at January 31' report, only 15.1 percent of the assessment has been met, compared with 21.9 percent last year.

The report also shows that none of the 16 new states admitted to the United Nations this year have met their budgetary obligations. Only 104,694 dollars have been paid up from the total assessments of 21.5 million dollars.

Many of the conflicts which the Security Council is busy unravelling are in the newly independent republics of the former Yugoslavia or the former Soviet Union. ■

AFRICAN ECONOMIC DECLINE BLAMED ON DEARTH OF ECONOMIC ANALYSTS

by Andrew Zhakata

Harare, Mar 8 (IPS) - The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) has urged African countries to expand their policy analysis capacity and development management base to remedy the continent's economic malaise.

"Africa lacks a capacity to analyse, adapt, initiate and respond to a rapidly changing global economic environment", said ACBF Executive Secretary Pierre-Cleaver Damiba.

The inability to analyse has resulted in many African governments pursuing shoddy economic strategies which have caused untold suffering to

Africa's 640 million people, Damiba added.

The economist noted this is also the reason why the continent has readily swallowed bitter medicines prescribed by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

"Just because Africa lacks top-flight policy analysts, the multi-lateral financial institutions have forced their bitter medicine down our throats", said Damiba, referring to structural adjustment programmes (SAP) and economic reform programmes, which have been adopted by many governments.

ACBF, whose headquarters is in Harare, was formed in 1991 with funding from the African Development Bank, the World Bank and U.N. Development Programme (UNDP).

Its aim is to build and strengthen human and institutional capacities in policy analysis and development management in sub-Saharan Africa.

The foundation facilitates the establishment of training institutions in order to build a strong nucleus of indigenous professional policy analysts and managers.

This aims to lessen the region's dependence on external technical assistance and place debt-burdened African nations more firmly in control of their economic destiny and development, said Damiba.

Africa currently spends about four billion U.S. dollars a year on 100,000 expatriates, most of whom are engaged to formulate economic policies, while the majority of 35 million Africans living abroad are skilled workers driven away either because of poor salaries or political persecution.

Per capita grant in sub-Saharan Africa fell by 20 percent in the 1980s alone, leading to severe budget cuts throughout the public sector and resulting in shortages of funds for research, training, institution building and education in general.

The World Bank singles out higher education as a sector hard-hit by declining budgets and a rapidly growing student population.

For instance, institutions of higher education which offered first-class training in the 1960s such as Makerere in Uganda, Ghana's Legon and Nigeria's Ibadan universities are now in a state of disrepair.

Damiba said the ACBF has started training projects in policy and economic analysis at central banks, universities, financial ministries, national planning commissions and the secretariat of the Addis Ababa-based Organisation of African Unity (OAU).

Such projects are currently being undertaken in Benin, Burundi, Nigeria, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe and a further 100 institutions are planned for sub-Saharan Africa. ■