

# 1998 REDEFINITION OF “DEVELOPMENT” IN EQUITABLE AND ECOLOGICAL TERMS

There is a need to redefine development in equitable and ecological terms. The following is an attempt to outline what would constitute a “developed” state in equitable and ecological terms:

## 4.1. SOCIAL AND CULTURAL

- (i) the degree to which there is an equitable distribution of resources
- (ii) the degree to which there is the provision for sufficient income to meet basic needs
- (iii) the degree to which the right to food, right to education shelter, and universal health care is guaranteed and assured

## 4.2. SOCIAL EQUALITY/EQUITY

- (i) the degree to which cooperation supersedes competition
- (ii) the extent to which there is the political will to promote development in such a way ... to alter the current unequal conditions and structures that continue to define women as secondary persons and give **gender** issues a low priority. Development *should shall* now move to another plane in which **both women and men's** pivotal roles in society **are** recognized and given **their** true value. **This plane** will allow **both women and men** to assume their legitimate and core positions in the strategies for effecting the changes necessary to promote and sustain **socially equitable and environmentally-sound development**, [Para 21, ICPD] Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies, 1985)

## 4.3. ENVIRONMENT

- (i) the degree to which a state has been able to integrate ecologically sound practices in policy
- (ii) the degree to which biodiversity is protected and the degree to which a biocentric rather than an anthropocentric view of society is adopted
- (iii) the degree of condemnation and avoidance of over- consumption

- (iv) the ability to live within the carrying capacity of the ecosystem and to refrain from contributing to global ecological harm
- (v) the degree to which a state has recognized “ecosystem integrity”, the “anticipatory principle”, the “precautionary principle”, the “reverse-onus principle”, the “polluter pay” principle, the “compensatory principle”, the “assessment of environmental costs” principle; the “non-transference of substances or activities that are harmful to human health or the environment” principle

#### **4.4. HUMAN RIGHTS**

- (i) the degree to which there is the absence of discrimination based on gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, refugee or immigrant status, aboriginal ancestry, race, tribe, culture, ethnicity, religion or socioeconomic conditions (age) and other status
- (ii) the degree to which there is affirmative action and equal access to [employment]
- (iii) the extent to which a state guarantees the rights of indigenous peoples
- (iv) the ability to minimize the human impact on the environment while fulfilling obligations to human rights
- (v) the degree of enshrining and implementing of the right to socially equitable and environmentally-sound development which includes the right to food, potable water, universal health care, education and shelter, as well as the right to civil and political rights (security, freedom of speech etc.) as well as the right to full and meaningful participation in the decision-making processes that affect peoples lives.
- (vi) the extent to which there is the absence of religious fanaticism and intolerance

#### **4.5. PEACE**

- (i) the degree to which support is given to non-aggressive, peaceful ways to resolve conflict
- (ii) the degree to which no or little funds are spent on the military and on arms production
- (iii) the degree to which the state has frozen the military budget at the 1981 level and transferred funds to socially equitable and environmentally sound development as agreed in the UN General Assembly Resolution 1981,
- (iv) the degree to which citizens can be conscientious objectors in time of war
- (v) the degree to which citizens can transfer the proportion of the military budget to socially equitable and environmentally sound development

- (vi) the degree to which the state is not involved indirectly or directly in the development of conventional weapons or of weapons of mass destruction**

#### **4.6. ENFORCEMENT OF LAW**

- (i) the degree to which a state has signed and ratified international conventions, treaties and covenants**
- (ii) the degree to which a state has enacted the necessary legislation to discharge these obligations**
- (iii) the degree to which these laws are enforced**
- (iv) the degree to which a state has fulfilled obligations under globally adopted conference action plans or platforms of action, and under General Assembly Resolutions**
- (v) the degree to which laws are enacted and enforced on a national, regional and local level to protect human rights and the environment, and promote social equality/equity, justice and peace**
- (vi) the degree to which those who violate the law are held accountable**

#### **4.7. DECISION MAKING**

- (i) the degree of participatory decision making opportunities for the citizenry**
- (ii) the degree to which citizens are involved in the decision making process from the formulation of the terms of reference**
- (iii) the recognition of the importance of grass-root decision making and implementation**
- (iv) the degree to which decision making bodies draw upon varying areas of expertise and experience rather than upon those with a vested economic interest**

(From Russow, J, and D. White and F. Knelman. (1994) "Redefinition of Development in Equitable and Ecological Terms" Panel on Ecojustice. A Environmental Law Conference, Faculty of Law, University of Victoria, Canada, Extended, as part of Brazil/Canada Project on the Interdependence of Issues.