its ambassador, banning new investment, and convening a meeting of the UN Security Council, which adopted a call for voluntary sanctions with only the U.S. and Britain abstaining. Other European Economic Community members followed by summoning their ambassadors home for talks, as did Australia.

Meanwhile, before adjourning, Congress also passed a final version of the foreign aid bill with a string of amendments that delighted conservatives in both Houses and parties. These include repeal of the Clark Amendment that has barred U.S. assistance to insurgents in Angola, a ban on military aid to Mozambique and a requirement that economic aid be channeled through Mozambique's private sector. ■

WOMEN

A NEW AWARENESS IN NAIROBI

[AN] The World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women is now history. But the problems of the world's women are not. A report by the UN, compiled from the results of its own field studies and from questionnaires answered by 121 governments, lists some of the ways women around the world are disadvantaged:

- Most women work a double day, responsible for labor both inside and outside the home;
- Women grow half the world's food but own almost no land, have difficulty getting loans, and are overlooked by agricultural development plans;
- Women constitute half the world's wage labor force, but everywhere are concentrated in the lowest-paid occupations.

Delegates to the Nairobi conference pondered the progress made by their sisters during the United Nations Decade for Women. */Africa News*

Because they have been most subject to diseases of poverty and malnutrition, women and children have been the main beneficiaries of new global priorities that emphasize primary health care. Health care professionals stress, however, that a reorientation of resources has only begun. Although three-quarters of the world's health problems could be solved by low-cost primary health care, three-quarters of developing countries' health budgets are spent on doctors and hospitals that serve only a few.

While women illiterates still outnumber men by three to two, the educational rift between the sexes is finally beginning to close. In most countries, the gap between the number of girls and boys attending school is slowly narrowing.

Encouraged by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), 50 countries have begun nutrition programs of which half are specifically aimed at women.

An estimated 80% of all diseases in the developing world are caused by a lack of clean water and sanitation, with women being the group most vulnerable to water-related disease. In addition, women in much of the world must carry all of a family's water—for drinking, washing and cooking—many miles each day from the nearest source to their homes. Nudged by women, the UN in 1980 launched the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade, under whose auspices some 26 countries have pledged to evaluate the particular needs of women for clean water supplies.

More than 90% of the world's nations now have organizations promoting the advancement of women, a tacit recognition, at least, of the need for change. Women of all countries had many complaints about the official UN conference in Nairobi last month. But in the end, the government-appointed delegates agreed on a document that urges aggressive worldwide action to improve women's status. And that, perhaps, is a better indication of how far women have come in this decade than the specifics of the compromise document itself.

In sharp contrast to the conference that launched the women's decade and the session that marked its mid-point, no delegation in Nairobi wanted to be seen as responsible for the meeting's "failure." From Maureen Reagan's conciliatory opening statement about the discussion of "political" issues, to the final compromise by Palestinians and their supporters that eliminated any reference to Zionism, delegates displayed a deep desire for unity. Male-dominated governments, meanwhile, have been served notice that they will, in future, be under pressure from an increasingly cohesive international women's movement. ■

Farms, Men, and Money

Women in Africa have not always submitted lightly to their loss of land and livelihood. Some are objecting in the only way they can. When government pricing policies sent men's maize profits soaring in Zambia and led to more land being put under maize, women kept working doggedly in their own peanut fields and refused to turn them over to the more lucrative maize: Why? Because they—and not their husbands—kept the money from sales of peanuts. In Tanzania, too, when new hybrid maize seeds, plus fertilizer and pesticides, were given to men, their wives—who do most of the work in the fields—neglected the new crop because, while it increased their work load, the profits went only to their husbands. The exact opposite happened in Zimbabwe, however, and yields rose dramatically when the same hybrid maize package was introduced. Why? Because the new seeds were given to women.

—**The State of the World's Women, 1985** *(a report published for the UN by New Internationalist Publications, Oxford, UK)*

The U.S. Attacked

Why is it this conference becomes politicized when you discuss the rights of refugee women or racist violence experienced by women in South Africa? Is that any more political than the issues that are called "women's issues?" ... The women's movement is a political movement. It is a social revolution; it is about changes in society, changes that are global. This means it addresses itself to all issues that affect the daily lives of women. This also means that no one group of women can determine what are women's issues and foreclose discussion on non-women's issues, as that group defines them—and I am talking about the United States.

—**Margaret Papandreou, head of the Greek delegation**

The U.S. Defended

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 ... [and] its effects upon women are especially severe. The forward-looking strategies should address ways to overcome the effects on women of this evil and inhumane 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 would never deny to any woman an opportunity ... to use that platform no matter how much I might disagree with her position.

—**Maureen Reagan, head of the U.S. delegation**

Circumcision

The Africans are on the move. What is needed from our Western sisters is not a denigrating, we-know-better approach, but the realization that mutilation of women is the actual order of the day. In the West, it manifests itself as economic, psychological and spiritual mutilation; in Africa, it includes the physical. Let us then unite against all forms of female mutilation, beginning with ourselves and our children.

—**Nadia Atif,** writing for the UN publication *Forum 85*