

Chapter X

Women

During 2003, United Nations efforts to advance the status of women and ensure their rights continued to be guided by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted by the Fourth (1995) World Conference on Women. The outcome of the General Assembly's twenty-third (2000) special session, to appraise and assess implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing+5), prompted further action and initiatives for the advancement of women.

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-seventh session in March, recommended to the Economic and Social Council for adoption agreed conclusions on women's participation in and access to the media and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, which the Council endorsed in July. The Council also took action on assistance to Palestinian women; women and girls in Afghanistan; mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the UN system; and the revitalization and strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). The Commission also adopted and brought to the attention of the Council a resolution on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS; and a decision on communications concerning the status of women.

The Assembly adopted resolutions on women and political participation; violence against women migrant workers; improvement of the situation of women in rural areas; elimination of domestic violence against women; the girl child; an in-depth study on all forms of violence against women; women in development; improvement of the status of women in the United Nations; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The United Nations Development Fund for Women continued to focus on women's economic security and political empowerment, and to advocate gender mainstreaming and equality.

INSTRAW continued its research and training, and networking and information dissemination, in particular through the gender awareness information and networking system. Economic and Social Council amendments to the Institute's statute included the replacement of its Board of Trustees with an Executive Board and the em-

powerment of the Secretary-General to appoint its Director, taking into account the list of candidates proposed by the Board. In December, the Secretary-General appointed Carmen Moreno as the Institute's new Director.

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and Beijing+5

During 2003, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly considered follow-up to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, particularly the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action [YUN 1995, p. 1170], and the political declaration and further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the twenty-third (2000) special session of the Assembly (Beijing+5) by resolution S/23-2 [YUN 2000, p. 1084]. The political declaration had reaffirmed the commitment of Governments to the goals and objectives of the Fourth World Conference and to the implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern set forth in the Platform for Action: women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights and women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child (see pp. 1167-1190 for action taken regarding the critical areas of concern). In the context of the follow-up, the issue of mainstreaming a gender perspective into UN policies and programmes was also addressed (see p. 1188).

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 57/182 [YUN 2002, p. 1137], the Secretary-General, in a July report [A/58/166], described the steps taken by the Assembly and its Main Committees, the Economic and Social Council and the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women to promote the main-

streaming of gender perspectives into UN policies and programmes. The report highlighted action taken relating to the follow-up to the United Nations Millennium Declaration [YUN 2000, p. 49], the World Summit on Sustainable Development [YUN 2002, p. 821] and the World Summit on the Information Society (see p. 857).

The Secretary-General recommended that the Assembly call for continued efforts to include gender equality in reports; take further steps to provide greater attention to the follow-up and implementation of the resolutions and decisions addressing gender equality and the empowerment of women; ensure that gender perspectives were an integral part of all aspects of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration; and call for further attention to gender perspectives in the follow-up to and reporting on the Johannesburg Declaration and Plan of Implementation adopted by the World Summit on Sustainable Development. It might also wish to encourage further systematic attention to gender perspectives in the preparatory process for and outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 77], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee [A/58/502], adopted **resolution 58/148** without vote [agenda item III].

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the question, including resolution 57/182 of 18 December 2002,

Recalling also the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", and the proposed actions and initiatives to overcome obstacles and challenges thereto,

Deeply convinced that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session are important contributions to the advancement of women worldwide in the achievement of gender equality and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned, as well as by non-governmental organizations,

Stressing the importance of strong, sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels for achieving full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Recognizing that the responsibility for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special ses-

sion rests primarily at the national level and that strengthened efforts are necessary in this respect, and reiterating that enhanced international cooperation is essential for the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Welcoming the increased attention to the situation of women and girls and the integration of a gender perspective in the work of the United Nations, in particular in the outcomes of major conferences, special sessions and summit conferences and their follow-up processes, and reaffirming its commitment to building on progress achieved in this respect,

Emphasizing the importance of Economic and Social Council decision 2003/287 of 24 July 2003, in which the Council decided to undertake, during the coordination segment of its substantive session of 2004, a review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, adopted by the Council on 18 July 1997, and taking note of Council resolution 2003/49 of 24 July 2003,

Reaffirming the primary and essential role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council in promoting the advancement of women and gender equality, while noting the open debate on women and peace and security held in the Security Council on 28 and 29 October 2002 and on 29 October 2003,

Bearing in mind its relevant resolutions and Security Council resolution 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000,

1. *Reaffirms* the goals, objectives and commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and also in the political declaration and further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the report of the Secretary-General on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

3. *Calls upon* Governments, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to continue to take effective action to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

4. *Reaffirms* its decision that the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with their respective mandates and with General Assembly resolutions 48/162 of 20 December 1993 and 57/270 B of 23 June 2003 and other relevant resolutions, constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that plays the primary role in overall policy-making and follow-up and in coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

5. *Also reaffirms* that the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the twenty-third special session will be undertaken within the framework of an integrated and coordinated follow-up to

major international conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields;

6. *Strongly encourages* Governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women's organizations, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

7. *Calls upon* Governments and all other relevant actors to continue to integrate a gender perspective into the implementation of and follow-up to recent United Nations conferences, summits and special sessions and in future reports on this subject;

8. *Invites* States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to include information on measures taken to implement the outcome of the twenty-third special session, as well as the Beijing Platform for Action, in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women under article 18 of the Convention;

9. *Urges* Member States to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, in particular the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and welcomes the imminent entry into force of that Protocol on 25 December 2003;

10. *Invites* Member States to submit, before 30 April 2004, responses to the questionnaire of the Secretariat on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, in preparation for the review and appraisal mandated in the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women;

11. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council to continue its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all activities in its work and that of its subsidiary bodies, building upon agreed conclusions 1997/2 adopted by the Council on 18 July 1997, and in this regard welcomes the inclusion of the question of gender mainstreaming in its agenda, the consideration of annual progress made in gender mainstreaming and the attention given to the gender perspective in the outcomes of the substantive session of 2003 of the Council;

12. *Encourages* the Economic and Social Council to request the regional commissions, within their respective mandates and resources, to intensify efforts to build up a database, to be updated regularly, in which all programmes and projects carried out in their respective regions by organizations or bodies of the United Nations system are listed, and to facilitate the dissemination of information on such programmes and projects, as well as the evaluation of their impact on the empowerment of women through the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

13. *Welcomes* the contribution of the Commission on the Status of Women to the follow-up and review of the future implementation of the commitments made in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, reaffirms that the Commission will continue to play a central role in this regard, and encourages Governments, the relevant specialized agencies, funds and

programmes of the United Nations system and civil society to continue to support its work;

14. *Recognizes* the importance attached to the regional and subregional monitoring of the global and regional platforms for action and of the implementation of the outcome of the twenty-third special session by regional commissions and other regional or subregional structures, within their mandates, in consultation with Governments, and calls for the promotion of further cooperation in that respect among Governments and, where appropriate, national machineries of the same region;

15. *Also recognizes* that sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels are essential elements for the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

16. *Emphasizes* that the promotion of gender equality and of women's empowerment and participation, together with the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, are among the essential elements for advancing the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, with a view, in particular, to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions;

17. *Recognizes* that adequate mobilization of resources at the national and international levels, as well as new and additional resources for the developing countries, including the least developed countries and countries with economies in transition, from all available funding mechanisms, including multilateral, bilateral and private sources, will also be required;

18. *Emphasizes* that the creation of an enabling environment at the national and international levels, including by ensuring the participation of women on an equal basis with men at all levels of decision-making, is necessary to ensure the full participation of women in economic activities, and calls upon States to remove obstacles to the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

19. *Reaffirms* that, in order to ensure the effective implementation of the strategic objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, the United Nations system should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective, including through the work of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the maintenance of gender units and focal points;

20. *Also reaffirms* that United Nations bodies that focus on gender issues, such as the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Children's Fund, have a critical role to play in the implementation of the objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, and recognizes that gender specialists throughout the United Nations system also have an important role to play in this regard;

21. *Recognizes* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution, and urges the United Nations system and Governments to make further efforts in this regard and to take steps to ensure and support the full participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in development activities and peace processes, including conflict prevention and resolution, post-conflict reconstruction, peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building, as well as through the integration of a gender perspective into those United Nations processes;

22. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts made by all relevant organizations of the United Nations system in promoting the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution;

23. *Welcomes* the convening of the World Summit on the Information Society in Geneva in 2003 and in Tunis in 2005, and encourages Governments and all other stakeholders to integrate a gender perspective into the preparatory processes and outcome documents, taking into account the agreed conclusions on women's participation in and access to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session, and the report of the Secretary-General;

24. *Also welcomes* the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and urges States parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

25. *Requests* all bodies that deal with programme and budgetary matters, including the Committee for Programme and Coordination, to ensure that all programmes, medium-term plans and programme budgets visibly mainstream a gender perspective;

26. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to disseminate the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session as widely as possible in all the official languages of the United Nations;

27. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to integrate a gender perspective in his reporting to the General Assembly, in order to support gender-sensitive policy formulation;

28. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to report annually to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, with an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system, including by providing information on key achievements, lessons learned and best practices, and to recommend further measures and strategies for future action within the United Nations system;

29. *Requests* the Secretary-General to include in his annual and quinquennial reports on the follow-up to

the United Nations Millennium Declaration an assessment of the progress made in promoting the goal of gender equality, in particular in relation to the development goals set forth in the Millennium Declaration, and recommendations to improve the measurement and coverage of indicators so that progress towards gender equality can be evaluated over time;

30. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that all United Nations personnel and officials at Headquarters and in the field, especially in field operations, receive training on mainstreaming a gender perspective in their work, including gender impact analysis, and to ensure appropriate follow-up to such training;

31. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to provide, by the end of 2004, a compilation of updated and substantiated statistics from Member States and other relevant sources on the situation of women and girls, including older women, in countries around the world, including by issuing a new volume of *The World's Women: Trends and Statistics*;

32. *Recognizes* the need to further include a gender perspective in the work of its Main Committees;

33. *Recalls*, in this regard, its request to each functional commission of the Economic and Social Council to examine its methods of work in order to better pursue the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, recognizing that there is no need for a uniform approach since each functional commission has its own specificity, while noting that modern methods of work can better guarantee the review of progress made in implementation at all levels, on the basis of a report containing recommendations to be submitted by the Secretary-General to each functional commission and relevant subsidiary body of the Economic and Social Council on its methods of work, in accordance with the provisions defined by the respective outcomes and relevant decisions taken by each body, bearing in mind the progress recently achieved in this regard by certain commissions, in particular the Commission on Sustainable Development, and recalling that the functional commissions and other relevant bodies of the Economic and Social Council should report to it no later than 2005 on the outcome of this examination;

34. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its fifty-ninth session the item entitled "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled 'Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century'".

Critical areas of concern

Women in power and decision-making

On 22 December [meeting 77], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/501], adopted **resolution 58/142** without vote [agenda item 110].

Women and political participation

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the obligations of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms

as stated in the Charter of the United Nations, and guided by the purposes and principles of human rights instruments,

Reaffirming also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that everyone has the right to take part in the government of his or her country and the right of equal access to public service,

Recalling the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which states, inter alia, that every citizen shall have the right and opportunity to take part in the conduct of public affairs, directly or through freely chosen representatives, to vote and to be elected at genuine periodic elections and to have access, on general terms of equality, to public service in his or her country,

Recalling also the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which states, inter alia, that States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country,

Recalling further the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, which states that women shall be, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, entitled to vote in all elections, eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies established by national law and entitled to hold public office and to exercise all public functions established by national law,

Recalling the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", the United Nations Millennium Declaration and agreed conclusions 1997/2 on women in power and decision-making, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women on 21 March 1997,

Affirming that the empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their political, social and economic status are essential to the achievement of representative, transparent and accountable government, democratic institutions and sustainable development in all areas of life,

Affirming also that the active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy,

Concerned that, despite general acceptance of the need for gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, women are still largely underrepresented at most levels of government, especially in ministerial and other executive bodies, and in legislative bodies,

Recognizing that women have demonstrated considerable leadership in community and informal organizations, as well as in public office,

Recognizing also that women's full and equal participation in the political process and decision-making will provide a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society, is needed to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning, plays a pivotal role in furthering women's equal status, including improving women's socio-economic status, and contributes to redefining political priorities and providing new perspectives on political issues,

Recognizing further that women's participation in decision-making and in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life is negatively affected by poverty, which disproportionately affects women, particularly in developing countries,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing the importance of their full and equal participation in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and the rebuilding of post-conflict society, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000 and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly,

Recognizing the importance of education and training from an early age in government, public policy, economics, civics, information technology and science to ensure that women develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and ethical values needed to participate fully in society and the political process,

1. *Urges* States:

(a) To promote and protect the right of women to associate freely, express their views publicly, openly debate political policy and petition and participate in their Government at all levels, including in the formulation and implementation of government policy, on equal terms with men;

(b) To eliminate laws, regulations and practices that, in a discriminatory manner, prevent or restrict women's participation in the political process and to implement positive measures that would accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women;

(c) To ensure equal access to education, property rights and inheritance rights and to promote equal access to information technology and business and economic opportunities, including in international trade, in order to provide women with the tools that enable them to take part fully and equally in decision-making processes at all levels;

(d) To counter, as appropriate, negative societal attitudes about women's capacity to participate equally in the political process that contribute to the low proportion of women among political decision makers at the local, national and international levels;

(e) To promote the goal of gender balance in all public positions and to take all appropriate measures to encourage political parties to ensure that women have a fair and equal opportunity to compete for all elective and non-elective public positions;

(f) To review the differential impact of their electoral systems on the political representation of women in elected bodies and to adjust or reform those systems where appropriate;

(g) To institute educational programmes, as appropriate, in the school curriculum that sensitize young people about the equal rights of women, teach civic responsibilities, promote confidence-building and counter negative societal attitudes that discourage women's political participation;

(h) To monitor progress in the representation of women through the regular collection, analysis and dissemination of data on the political participation of women and men at all levels and the progress of political parties in providing equal and fair opportunities for women to participate;

(i) To identify and propose more women candidates for senior and decision-making positions in the United Nations system and for appointment or election to intergovernmental expert and treaty bodies, and to encourage more women to apply for those positions;

(j) To promote gender balance for their delegations to United Nations and other international meetings and conferences;

(k) To encourage greater involvement of indigenous and other marginalized women in decision-making at all levels and to address and counter the barriers faced by marginalized women in accessing and participating in politics and decision-making;

(l) To ensure that measures to reconcile family and professional life apply equally to women and men, bearing in mind that the sharing of family responsibilities between women and men creates an enabling environment for women's political participation;

2. *Invites* Governments, as well as the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society:

(a) To develop mechanisms and training programmes that encourage women to participate in the electoral process and improve women's capacity to cast informed votes in free and fair elections;

(b) To encourage political parties to remove all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the participation of women, in order to ensure that women have the right to participate fully at all levels of decision-making in all internal policy-making structures and nominating processes and in the leadership of political parties on equal terms with men;

(c) To encourage political parties to actively seek qualified women candidates, to provide training in conducting campaigns, public speaking, fund-raising and parliamentary procedure and to include qualified women and men on their party lists for elective office, where such lists exist;

(d) To strive to ensure that information about candidates, political party platforms, voting procedures, including voter registration, and electoral law is available to women on an equal basis with men;

(e) To support initiatives, including public-private partnerships and exchange programmes, to expand women's political skills, which include imparting or enhancing skills on how to vote, advocate, manage and govern, run for public office and serve as elected and appointed officials;

(f) To promote the participation of young people, especially women, in civil society organizations to enable them to acquire experience, skills and capacities that are transferable to the field of political participation;

(g) To encourage the establishment of and the support of existing non-governmental organizations that provide training in leadership, decision-making, public-speaking skills, use of information and communication technologies, confidence-building and political campaigning;

(h) To intensify efforts to increase the number of women in public bodies, including through research into barriers to women's access to high-level public appointments;

(i) To promote recruitment and career-development programmes that provide women equal access to managerial, entrepreneurial, technical and leadership training, in order to better enable them to assume legislative, judicial and executive positions in government;

(j) To continue to study links between poverty eradication, the empowerment of women, in particular with

regard to women's political participation, and to compile and widely disseminate good practices and lessons learned;

(k) To promote equal opportunities for women to gain appointment to advisory and decision-making bodies and promotion to senior positions by, inter alia, reviewing the criteria for recruitment, appointment and promotion, to ensure that such criteria are relevant to and do not discriminate against women;

(l) To develop programmes to educate and train women and girls in using the media and information and communication technologies in order to obtain and impart information, be informed voters, network, communicate with potential voters and raise campaign funds;

(m) To encourage the media to recognize the importance of women's participation in the political process, provide fair and balanced coverage of male and female candidates, cover participation in women's political organizations and ensure coverage of issues that have a particular impact on women;

3. *Urges* States and the United Nations system to increase the participation of women at all levels of decision-making in conflict resolution and peace processes;

4. *Invites* non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society:

(a) To advocate at all levels to enable women to influence political, economic and social decisions, processes and systems, including by building and strengthening networks among women;

(b) To establish, consistent with data-protection legislation, databases on women and their qualifications for use in appointing women to senior decision-making and advisory positions, for dissemination to Governments, regional and international organizations and private enterprise, political parties and other relevant bodies;

(c) To increase coordination and cooperation in supporting women and to continue to present women's concerns and experiences to Governments;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in his report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session, to include information on the participation of women in politics at all levels, bearing in mind that in 2006 the Commission will consider the item entitled "Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels", and encourages Governments to cooperate with the Secretary-General by providing precise data on the political participation of women at all levels.

Violence against women

In accordance with the multi-year (2002-2006) programme of work adopted by Economic and Social Council resolution 2001/4 [YUN 2001, p. 1084], the Commission on the Status of Women had before it a report of the Secretary-General [E/CN.6/2003/7 & Corr.1] on women's human rights and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, as defined in the Beijing Platform for Action, [YUN 1995, p. 1170] and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as annexed to Assembly resolutions S/23-2 [YUN 2000, p. 1084] and S/23-3 [ibid., p. 1085]. Owing to

the broad nature of violence, the report focused on the one form of violence that had reached world-wide proportions—trafficking in women and girls.

The report reviewed activities undertaken by the UN system regarding trafficking in women and girls, which, the Secretary-General said, had expanded since the Assembly's 2000 special session. It described regional efforts against trafficking and summarized the discussion and recommendations of an expert group meeting on the issue in November 2002.

Commission action. In March, the Commission on the Status of Women held a panel discussion on women's human rights and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, as defined in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the Assembly's twenty-third special session, which focused on domestic violence and trafficking in women and girls.

On 25 March [E/2003/27 (dec. 47/103)], the Commission took note of the Secretary-General's report (above).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 77], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/501], adopted **resolution 58/147** without vote [agenda item 110].

Elimination of domestic violence against women

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the obligation of all States to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, as stated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as in other relevant international instruments, and reaffirming also that discrimination on the basis of sex is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other international human rights instruments and that its elimination is an integral part of efforts towards the elimination of violence against women,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, as well as the follow-up action by the Commission on the Status of Women on violence against women and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",

Recalling also all its previous resolutions on the elimination of violence against women,

Taking note of Commission on Human Rights resolution 2003/45 of 23 April 2003 on the elimination of violence against women, as well as all its previous relevant resolutions on this issue,

Bearing in mind that domestic violence against women and girls is a human rights issue,

Recognizing that domestic violence against women is, inter alia, a societal problem and a manifestation of unequal power relations between women and men,

Recognizing also that both men and women have and should take responsibility for promoting gender equality,

Recognizing further the serious immediate and long-term implications for health, including sexual and reproductive health, that domestic violence against women can present for individuals and families,

Recognizing the implications of domestic violence for the social and economic development of communities and States,

Underlining the importance of the empowerment of women and their economic independence as critical tools to prevent and eliminate domestic violence against women,

1. *Recognizes:*

(a) That domestic violence is violence that occurs within the private sphere, generally between individuals who are related through blood or intimacy;

(b) That domestic violence is one of the most common and least visible forms of violence against women and that its consequences affect many areas of the lives of victims;

(c) That domestic violence can take many different forms, including physical, psychological and sexual violence;

(d) That domestic violence is of public concern and requires States to take serious action to protect victims and prevent domestic violence;

(e) That domestic violence can include economic deprivation and isolation and that such conduct may cause imminent harm to the safety, health or well-being of women;

2. *Welcomes:*

(a) The activities and initiatives of States aimed at the elimination of domestic violence against women, including legal, educational, economic, social and other measures;

(b) The work of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and takes note of the report entitled "Developments in the area of violence against women (1994-2002)";

(c) The efforts undertaken by United Nations bodies, funds and programmes, including the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Population Fund, to address the issue of domestic violence and encourages them to coordinate their efforts, and, in particular, expresses its appreciation for the initiatives of the United Nations Development Fund for Women to combat violence against women at the international, regional and national levels, as well as the *World Report on Violence and Health* launched by the World Health Organization in 2002, particularly its consideration of gender-based violence;

(d) The work carried out by civil society, including non-governmental organizations, such as women's organizations, and community-based organizations and individuals, aimed at the elimination of domestic violence against women, inter alia, by raising awareness of its harmful effects, and in the provision of support services to women victims of violence;

3. *Strongly condemns* all forms of domestic violence against women and girls, and in this regard, calls for the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence in the family, including where condoned by the State;

4. *Expresses its concern:*

(a) That women continue to be victims of domestic violence and at the continuing occurrence in all regions of the world of domestic violence, which takes many different forms, and at failure to prosecute and punish the perpetrators;

(b) That domestic violence, including sexual violence in marriage, is still treated as a private matter in some countries;

5. *Stresses* that States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of domestic violence against women and to provide protection to the victims, and also stresses that not to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

6. *Reaffirms* the commitment of States to establish legislation and/or strengthen appropriate mechanisms to handle criminal matters relating to all forms of domestic violence, including marital rape and sexual abuse of women and girls, and to ensure that such cases are brought to justice swiftly;

7. *Calls upon* States:

(a) To adopt, strengthen and implement legislation that prohibits domestic violence, prescribes punitive measures and establishes adequate legal protection against domestic violence and periodically to review, evaluate and revise these laws and regulations so as to ensure their effectiveness in eliminating domestic violence;

(b) To make domestic sexual violence a criminal offence and to ensure proper investigation and prosecution of perpetrators;

(c) To adopt and/or strengthen policies and legislation in order to strengthen preventive measures, protect the human rights of victims, ensure proper investigation and prosecution of perpetrators and provide legal and social assistance to victims of domestic violence, and to adopt policies with regard to the rehabilitation of perpetrators;

(d) To intensify measures aimed at preventing domestic violence against women;

(e) To ensure greater protection for women, inter alia, by means of, where appropriate, orders restraining violent spouses from entering the family home, or by banning violent spouses from contacting the victim;

(f) To provide or facilitate the provision of adequate training, inter alia, gender-awareness training, to all professionals who deal with domestic violence, in particular with victims of domestic violence, police officers, judicial and legal personnel, health personnel, educators, youth workers and social workers;

(g) To provide or facilitate the provision of assistance to victims of domestic violence in lodging police reports and receiving treatment and support, which may include the setting up of one-stop centres, as well as the establishment of safe shelters and centres for victims of domestic violence;

(h) To protect women in the process of seeking redress from further victimization because of gender-insensitive laws or practices;

(i) To establish and/or strengthen police response protocols and procedures to ensure that all appropriate actions are taken to protect victims of domestic violence and to prevent further acts of domestic violence;

(j) To take measures to ensure the protection of women subjected to violence, access to just and effective remedies, inter alia, through compensation and indemnification and healing of victims, and the rehabilitation of perpetrators;

(k) To intensify efforts to raise collective and individual awareness about violence against women, including through human rights education, to highlight the role of men and boys in the prevention and elimination of domestic violence against women, and to encourage and support initiatives to promote attitudinal and behavioural change on the part of, and the rehabilitation of, perpetrators of violence against women;

(l) To encourage the efforts of the media to engage in awareness-raising campaigns;

(m) To take all measures to empower women and strengthen their economic independence, including through equal remuneration for equal work, and increased job opportunities for women, as well as equal access to and control over economic resources, including land, credit, microcredit and traditional saving schemes such as women's banks and cooperatives, and by ensuring property rights and the right to inheritance, with a view to reducing women's vulnerability to all forms of violence, including domestic violence;

(n) Not to invoke any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations to eliminate violence against women;

(o) To consider, as a matter of priority, becoming parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(p) That are parties to the Convention to include in their reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women information on legal and policy measures adopted and implemented in their efforts to prevent and eliminate domestic violence against women and to cross-reference that information, where appropriate, in reports to other human rights treaty bodies;

(q) To cooperate closely with relevant specialized agencies and United Nations funds and programmes, as well as with regional intergovernmental organizations, as appropriate, and relevant community and non-governmental organizations, including women's organizations, in an effort to eliminate violence against women;

(r) To collect, update and improve the collection of data on violence against women, including through sex-disaggregated information systems, which should be made public and disseminated widely;

8. *Emphasizes* the need for technical and financial assistance to developing countries in their efforts to eliminate domestic violence against women from United Nations funds and programmes, international and regional financial institutions and bilateral and multilateral donors, and civil society, as well as the need for assistance from the international community to non-governmental organizations and community-based groups active in this field;

9. *Encourages* States to contribute or increase their contribution to the Trust Fund in Support of Actions

to Eliminate Violence against Women managed by the United Nations Development Fund for Women;

10. *Invites:*

(a) Relevant specialized agencies, United Nations bodies, regional intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations to exchange information on the subject of the present resolution, and encourages the exchange of such information between non-governmental organizations active in this field and the relevant human rights treaty bodies;

(b) The relevant human rights treaty bodies to continue to address this issue, where appropriate;

11. *Decides* to continue its consideration of this question at its sixtieth session under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

Also on 22 December [meeting 77], the Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/508/Add.2], adopted **resolution 58/185** without vote [agenda item 117(b)].

In-depth study on all forms of violence against women

The General Assembly,

Affirming that the term "violence against women" means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life,

Requests the Secretary-General:

(a) To conduct an in-depth study, from existing available resources and, if necessary, supplemented by voluntary contributions, on all forms and manifestations of violence against women, as identified in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", and relevant documents, disaggregated by type of violence, and based on research undertaken and data collected at the national, regional and international levels, in particular in the following fields:

- (i) A statistical overview on all forms of violence against women, in order to better evaluate the scale of such violence, while identifying gaps in data collection and formulating proposals for assessing the extent of the problem;
- (ii) The causes of violence against women, including its root causes and other contributing factors;
- (iii) The medium and long-term consequences of violence against women;
- (iv) The health, social and economic costs of violence against women;
- (v) The identification of best practice examples in areas including legislation, policies, programmes and effective remedies, and the efficiency of such mechanisms to the end of combating and eliminating violence against women;

(b) To cooperate closely with all relevant United Nations bodies, as well as with the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, when preparing the study;

(c) To solicit information, including on strategies, policies, programmes and best practices, from Member States as well as relevant non-governmental organizations in the preparation of the study;

(d) To make the study available to all Member States and observers, as well as other United Nations stakeholders, and, on the basis of the study, to submit a report, with the study as an annex, to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session, under the item entitled "Advancement of women", including action-oriented recommendations, for consideration by States, encompassing, inter alia, effective remedies and prevention and rehabilitation measures;

(e) To submit a progress report on the study to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

(See also pp. 777 and 780.)

Women migrant workers

In response to General Assembly resolution 56/131 [YUN 2001, p. 1058], the Secretary-General, in a July report [A/58/161], summarized information received from Member States, UN system entities and intergovernmental bodies on measures they had taken to address the issue of violence against women migrant workers. The Secretary-General stated that, although a number of countries had taken measures to address the violence, information on their impact remained limited. The lack of comprehensive and timely data on the number of women migrants and the violence and discrimination they suffered remained an obstacle to understanding the scale of the phenomenon and made it more difficult to design policies to combat such violence and discrimination. Information was also needed on the gender-specific impact of labour and immigration legislation, especially in respect of the enjoyment by women migrant workers of the full range of human rights. The Secretary-General called for improving access to legal protection for women seeking to migrate in search of work, in order to reduce their vulnerability to exploitation, ill-treatment and trafficking; exploring the link between migration and trafficking and addressing the two issues, with a particular focus on the need to protect women from all forms of violence, irrespective of their immigrant status; encouraging Governments and other actors to provide information on migration and trafficking in their legislative and other measures; and encouraging other actors to place enhanced emphasis on migration and trafficking. Governments were urged to ratify international instruments dealing with migration issues, particularly the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (see p. 676), and the United Nations Convention

against Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocols on trafficking in persons and on migrant smuggling (see p. 1125).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 77], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/501], adopted **resolution 58/143** without vote [agenda item 110].

Violence against women migrant workers

The General Assembly,

Recalling all of its previous resolutions on violence against women migrant workers and those adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women,

Reaffirming the provisions concerning women migrant workers contained in the outcome documents of the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit for Social Development and their five-year reviews,

Noting the various activities initiated by entities in the United Nations system, such as the Hemispheric Conference on International Migration: Human Rights and the Trafficking in Persons in the Americas, organized by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the International Organization for Migration, held at Santiago from 20 to 22 November 2002, as well as other activities that continue to assess and alleviate the plight of women migrant workers,

Emphasizing the need for objective, comprehensive, broad-based information, possibly including a database for research and analysis, and a wide exchange of experience and lessons learned by individual Member States and civil society in the formulation of policies and concrete strategies to address the problem of violence against women migrant workers,

Encouraging the continuing participation of civil society in developing and implementing appropriate measures to support innovative partnerships among public agencies, non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society for combating violence against women migrant workers,

Noting the large numbers of women from developing countries and some countries with economies in transition who continue to venture forth to more affluent countries in search of a living for themselves and their families as a consequence of poverty, unemployment and other socio-economic conditions, and acknowledging the duty of the countries of origin to try to create conditions that provide employment and economic security for their citizens,

Expressing deep concern at the continuing reports of grave abuses and acts of violence committed against women migrant workers,

Realizing that the movement of a significant number of women migrant workers may be facilitated and made possible by means of fraudulent or irregular documentation and sham marriages with the object of migration, that this may be facilitated through, among

other things, the Internet, and that these women migrant workers are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation,

Acknowledging the economic benefits that accrue to both the country of origin and the country of destination from the employment of women migrant workers,

Recognizing the importance of joint and collaborative approaches and strategies at the bilateral, regional, interregional and international levels in protecting and promoting the rights and welfare of women migrant workers,

Recognizing also the importance of exploring the link between migration and trafficking,

Encouraged by some measures adopted by some countries of destination to alleviate the plight of women migrant workers residing in their areas of jurisdiction,

Underlining the important role of relevant United Nations treaty bodies in monitoring the implementation of human rights conventions and the relevant special procedures, within their respective mandates, in addressing the problem of violence against women migrant workers and in protecting and promoting their rights and welfare,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;

2. *Also takes note* of the reports of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the human rights of migrants and of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences, with regard to violence against women migrant workers, and encourages the Special Rapporteurs to continue to address the issue of violence against women migrant workers and their human rights, in particular the problems of gender-based violence and of discrimination, as well as trafficking in women;

3. *Acknowledges with appreciation* the entry into force of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families on 1 July 2003;

4. *Requests* all Governments to continue to cooperate fully with both Special Rapporteurs in the performance of their tasks and mandated duties and to furnish all information requested, including by reacting promptly to the urgent appeals of the Special Rapporteurs;

5. *Encourages* Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin and destination, to make available to the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants information on violence against women migrant workers, with a view to requesting the Special Rapporteur to recommend concrete measures and actions to address the problem;

6. *Also encourages* Governments to give serious consideration to inviting the Special Rapporteur to visit their countries so as to enable her to fulfil the mandate effectively;

7. *Urges* concerned Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin and destination, to strengthen further their national efforts to protect and promote the rights and welfare of women migrant workers, including through sustained bilateral, regional, interregional and international cooperation, by developing strategies and joint action and taking into account the innovative approaches and experiences of individual Member States, and to establish and main-

tain continuing dialogues to facilitate the exchange of information;

8. *Also urges* concerned Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin and destination, to support and allocate appropriate resources for programmes aimed at strengthening preventive action, in particular information for target groups, education and campaigns to increase public awareness of this issue at the national and grass-roots levels, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations;

9. *Notes with appreciation* the adoption by Member States, including countries of origin, transit and destination, of measures to inform women migrant workers of their rights and the benefits to which they are entitled, and encourages other Member States to adopt appropriate measures in this regard;

10. *Calls upon* concerned Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin and destination, if they have not done so, to put in place penal and criminal sanctions to punish perpetrators of violence against women migrant workers and, to the extent possible, to provide and to encourage non-governmental organizations to provide victims of violence with the full range of immediate assistance and protection, such as counselling, legal and consular assistance, temporary shelter and other measures that will allow them to be present during the judicial process, as well as to establish reintegration and rehabilitation schemes for returning women migrant workers to their countries of origin;

11. *Encourages* concerned Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin and destination, to support and, if they have not done so, to formulate and implement training programmes for their law enforcers, prosecutors and service providers with a view to instilling among those public sector workers the necessary skills and attitude to ensure the delivery of proper and professional interventions for women migrant workers who are subjected to abuse and violence;

12. *Also encourages* concerned Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin and destination, to adopt measures or strengthen existing ones to regulate the recruitment and deployment of women migrant workers, and to consider the adoption of appropriate legal measures against intermediaries who deliberately encourage the clandestine movement of workers and who exploit women migrant workers;

13. *Invites* Governments to identify the causes of undocumented migration and its economic, social and demographic impact, as well as its implications for the formulation and application of social, economic and migration policies, including those relating to women migrant workers;

14. *Encourages* concerned Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin, transit and destination, to avail themselves of the expertise of the United Nations, including the Statistics Division of the Secretariat and other relevant bodies, such as the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, to develop appropriate national data-collection methodologies that will generate comparable data on violence against women migrant workers as bases for research and analysis of the subject;

15. *Encourages* Member States to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to relevant International Labour Organization conventions and to consider

signing and ratifying or acceding to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, as well as the Slavery Convention of 1926;

16. *Welcomes* the imminent entry into force of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the adoption by the General Assembly of the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and encourages Governments to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Protocols;

17. *Encourages* the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to consider developing a general recommendation on the situation of women migrant workers;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the problem of violence against women migrant workers and on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account updated information from the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, as well as the International Organization for Migration and other relevant sources, including non-governmental organizations.

(See also pp. 706 and 778.)

Women's health

Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS

In a March resolution on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS [E/2003/27 (res. 47/1)], the Commission on the Status of Women emphasized that the advancement of women was the key to reversing the pandemic. It called for enhanced efforts by all relevant actors to include a gender perspective in developing HIV/AIDS programmes and policies and in training personnel involved in implementing the programmes. The Secretary-General was asked, in his reports on HIV/AIDS (see p. 1241), to take a gender perspective into account.

Traditional practices affecting the health of women and girls

In response to General Assembly resolution 56/128 [YUN 2001, p. 1063], the Secretary-General, in a July report on traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls [A/58/169], summarized information received from 28 Member States regarding measures they had taken to counter the problem. Similar information was provided by UN system entities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The Secretary-General concluded that initiatives at the national, regional and international levels reflected the increased recognition of the need for the prevention and elimination of harmful traditional practices. Consultative and participatory initiatives involving men and women in affected societies, including community and traditional leaders, as well as judicial, legal, health-care, educational and media personnel, had been effective tools in combating harmful traditional practices. Member States, NGOs and UN entities should continue and strengthen measures to eliminate the harmful practices, and strengthen their cooperation with assistance from donor Governments and international organizations. The Secretary-General advocated expanding information and data collection on the trends and prevalence of the practices and conducting progress assessment and impact-monitoring studies on implemented initiatives so that appropriate and effective strategies could be documented and shared, and lessons learned adapted and replicated in other relevant settings.

Women and human rights

Women in Afghanistan

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/4 [YUN 2002, p. 1149], the Secretary-General, in a January report on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan [E/CN.6/2003/4], reviewed developments in 2002, focusing on steps taken by the Afghan Transitional Administration (TA) to raise the status of women and UN system activities to assist the TA. Afghanistan's emergence from 24 years of conflict (see p. 289) had led to positive changes in women's lives. Women were re-emerging as a political and economic force, participated in decision-making on the peace process and reconstruction of the country, appointed to serve in Government and returning to the workforce and gaining access to education. However, many women continued to face gross violations of their rights and were victims of insecurity. In addition, Taliban-like restrictions by local leaders continued to be applied to women in some parts of the country. The Secretary-General made recommendations to the TA and the UN system, donor countries and civil society, in order to further strengthen the status of women and girls in Afghanistan and their full participation in the reconstruction and development of their country.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 22 July [meeting 44], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women [E/2003/27],

adopted **resolution 2003/43** without vote [agenda item 14 (a)].

Situation of women and girls in Afghanistan

The Economic and Social Council,

Guided by the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session, accepted humanitarian rules as set out in the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and other instruments of human rights and international law,

Recalling that Afghanistan is a party to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

Reaffirming that all States have an obligation to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Recalling the importance of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000, on women and peace and security, and Council resolution 1460(2003) of 30 January 2003, on children and armed conflict,

Recalling also the Agreement on Provisional Arrangements in Afghanistan pending the Re-establishment of Permanent Government Institutions, signed in Bonn, Germany, on 5 December 2001,

Recalling further the funding commitments made at the International Conference on Reconstruction Assistance to Afghanistan, held in Tokyo on 21 and 22 January 2002,

Welcoming the establishment of the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission in June 2002,

Welcoming also the holding of the Emergency Loya Jirga in June 2002, establishing the Afghan Transitional Authority, and the participation of more than two hundred women in the meeting,

Welcoming further the continuing commitment of the Afghan Transitional Administration to the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls, to the active participation of Afghan women in political, economic and social life, to the education of girls as well as boys and to the opportunity for women to work outside the home,

Welcoming the return to school of more than 3 million children, including 1 million girls, since March

2002, and the international support that has made it possible,

Welcoming also the inclusion of women in the Transitional Administration, the Judicial Reform Commission, the Independent Human Rights Commission and the Constitutional Drafting Commission, and stressing the importance of the full and effective participation of women in all decision-making processes regarding the future of Afghanistan,

Welcoming further the fact that the National Development Framework of the Transitional Administration reflects the needs of, and the importance of the role to be taken by, women and girls in the process of peace-building, reconstruction and development,

Welcoming the efforts of Afghanistan's neighbouring countries, which have hosted millions of Afghan refugees, especially women and children, and have provided humanitarian assistance in many areas, such as education, health and other basic services,

Recognizing that Afghan women are primary stakeholders and agents of change, who must have the opportunity to identify their own needs, interests and priorities in all sectors of society as full partners in the rebuilding of their society,

Emphasizing that a safe environment, free from violence, discrimination and abuse, for all Afghans, is essential for a viable and sustainable recovery and reconstruction process,

1. *Welcomes:*

(a) The ongoing commitments made by the Transitional Authority to recognize, protect and promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to respect and promote respect for international humanitarian law;

(b) The ratification by the Transitional Authority of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on 5 March 2003;

2. *Also welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General to the Commission on the Status of Women;

3. *Urges* the Transitional Authority:

(a) To ensure that any legislative, administrative and other measures support the full enjoyment of women and girls of human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(b) To enable the full, equal and effective participation of women and girls in civil, cultural, economic, political and social life throughout the country at all levels;

(c) To protect the right to freedom of movement, expression and association for women and girls;

(d) To provide the necessary support and resources to enable the Ministry of Women's Affairs to function effectively, so that the Ministry can fulfil its task in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and develop the capacity to act as a catalyst for gender mainstreaming throughout the Transitional Administration;

(e) To ensure that the Judicial Reform Commission, the Constitutional Drafting Commission and the Independent Human Rights Commission have adequate resources to fulfil their mandates and ensure that gender perspectives are consistent with international standards;

(f) To affirm full support for the full, equal and effective participation of women in the constitutional process and in the Constitutional Loya Jirga, and to

ensure that the principle of equality between men and women and the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls are guaranteed by the new Constitution;

(g) To continue its efforts to re-establish the rule of law, in accordance with international standards, including by ensuring that law enforcement agencies respect and uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms, with particular emphasis on access to justice for women;

(h) To continue its efforts to reflect a gender perspective in the training and activities of its police, prosecutors and judiciary, and to promote the recruitment of Afghan women in all ranks;

(i) To review and improve the practices of law enforcement personnel when dealing with women victims of violence, particularly those accused of offences based on tradition or imprisoned for social reasons to protect them from violence by family members;

(j) To ensure that gender-sensitive approaches are applied in the development and application of procedures during data collection for the census and the registration of voters to deliver universal suffrage and the full participation of women in the national elections in 2004;

(k) To ensure the equal right of women and girls to education, the effective functioning of schools throughout the country and the admission of women and girls to all levels of education;

(l) To respect the equal right of women to work and promote their reintegration into employment in all sectors and at all levels of Afghan society;

(m) To protect the equal right of women and girls to security of person, and to bring to justice those responsible for violence against women and girls;

(n) To initiate rapid demobilization and disarmament and facilitate the reintegration of those, in particular women and girls, who have participated in or have otherwise been affected by war into society and work;

(o) To raise awareness of the need to prevent and eliminate violence, including domestic violence, against women, with the aim of changing the attitudes and behaviour that allow such crimes to take place, and strengthen efforts to prevent and eliminate violence against women by using legislative measures;

(p) To ensure the effective and equal access of women and girls to the facilities necessary to protect the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health in accordance with the obligations of Afghanistan under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;

(q) To ensure the equal right of women to own land and other property, inter alia, through the right to inheritance, and undertake administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital, appropriate technologies and access to and control over natural resources as well as access to markets and information;

4. *Encourages* the continuing efforts of the United Nations and its agencies, donors and civil society, guided by Security Council resolution 1325(2000) on women and peace and security:

(a) To provide financial and technical assistance, including support to the Ministry of Women's Affairs

and the Independent Human Rights Commission, to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls so as to strengthen the capacity of Afghan women to participate fully and effectively in conflict resolution and peace-building efforts and in civil, political, economic, cultural and social life;

(b) To support fully the Transitional Authority regarding the participation of women in society, inter alia, by providing support to ministries to develop their capacity to mainstream gender issues into their programmes;

(c) To provide technical and other relevant assistance so that the judicial system has the capacity to adhere to international standards of human rights;

(d) To support measures to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women and girls, and to hold accountable those who were responsible for gross violations of human rights in the past and ensure that full investigations are conducted and perpetrators brought to justice in accordance with international standards in order to combat impunity;

5. *Invites* the United Nations system, international and non-governmental organizations, and donors:

(a) To ensure a human rights-based approach and coherent policy and resources for gender mainstreaming in all programmes and operations, based on the principles of non-discrimination and equality between women and men, and ensure that women benefit equally with men from such programmes in all sectors;

(b) To ensure the full and effective participation of Afghan women in all stages of humanitarian assistance, recovery, reconstruction and development, including planning, programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation;

(c) To support the elements of civil society active in the field of human rights and encourage the involvement of women therein;

(d) To ensure that all their international and national personnel, prior to beginning their service, receive training in gender equality as well as appropriate training in the history, culture and traditions of Afghanistan and are fully familiar with and guided by international standards of human rights;

(e) To integrate efforts to improve the health status of women within all reconstruction efforts, especially through access to skilled prenatal care, increasing access to skilled birth attendance, education programmes on basic health issues, community information activities and emergency obstetric care;

(f) To continue to support measures for the employment of women and the integration of a gender perspective into all social, development and reconstruction programmes, taking into account the special needs of widows and returning refugee and displaced women and girls as well as those living in rural areas;

6. *Urges* the Secretary-General to ensure that the post of Senior Gender Adviser in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan is filled immediately and with due regard to the need for continuity in this task;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to review the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan and to submit to the Commission on the Status of

Women at its forty-eighth session a report on progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

(See also p. 779.)

Palestinian women

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/25 [YUN 2002, p. 453], a report of the Secretary-General [E/CN.6/2003/3] reviewed the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women during the period from September 2001 to September 2002 (see p. 493).

On 22 July, the Economic and Social Council, in **resolution 2003/42**, took action on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (see p. 494).

Older women in society

In response to General Assembly resolutions 57/167 [YUN 2002, p. 1197] and 57/177 [ibid., p. 1153], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/58/160] on the follow-up to the 2002 Second World Assembly on Ageing [YUN 2002, p. 1193]. The report introduced the road map for the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, which was adopted at the 2002 World Assembly [ibid., p. 1194]; highlighted the Plan's main gender dimensions; reviewed progress in defining the modalities for the review and appraisal of the Plan; and outlined major developments during the first year of the implementation process. (See also p. 1219.)

Women and development

In response to General Assembly resolution 56/188 [YUN 2001, p. 1069], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/58/135], which described the attention paid at UN conferences and summits to the concerns of women and gender equality goals in the context of the implementation of the Millennium Declaration [YUN 2000, p. 49] and the promotion of economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development.

The Secretary-General concluded that recent UN conferences and summits had made progress in integrating women's concerns and gender perspectives into the preparatory processes and final outcomes. However, progress achieved had to be translated into practical action at the national level and a strong focus on implementing policies, norms and recommendations was required. The Secretary-General proposed a series of recommendations to the Assembly regarding increased attention to gender perspectives and more effective monitoring of progress.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 23 December [meeting 78], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee [A/58/483/Add.1 & Corr.1], adopted **resolution 58/206** without vote [agenda item 93 (a)].

Women in development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/195 of 18 December 1997, 54/210 of 22 December 1999 and 56/188 of 21 December 2001 and all its other resolutions on the integration of women in development, and the relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions, including those on women in the economy, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling also the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",

Reaffirming the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which affirms that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and calls for, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as being effective and essential in the combat of poverty, hunger and disease and in stimulating development that is truly sustainable,

Reaffirming also that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained economic growth and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and recent United Nations conferences, and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth,

Recognizing the significant contribution that women make to the economy and the major force that they represent for change and development in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services,

Reaffirming that women are key contributors to the economy and to combating poverty through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that population and development issues, education and training, health, nutrition, the environment, water supply, sanitation, housing, communications, science and technology, and employment opportunities are important elements for effective poverty eradication and the advancement and empowerment of women,

Recognizing also, in this context, the importance of respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and of a national and international environment that promotes, inter alia, justice, gender equality, equity, civil and political participation and political freedom for the advancement and empowerment of women,

Recognizing further that equal access to education and training, in particular in business, trade, administration, information and communication technologies and other new technologies, is essential for gender

equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing also that poverty eradication and the achievement and preservation of peace are mutually reinforcing, and recognizing further that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development,

Aware that, while globalization and liberalization processes have created employment opportunities for women in many countries, they have also made women, especially in developing countries and in particular in the least developed countries, more vulnerable to problems caused by increased economic volatility,

Recognizing that some effects of market liberalization may deepen the socio-economic marginalization of women in the agricultural sector, including through the loss of employment among small-scale farmers, who are more likely to be women than men, and emphasizing that women who are small-scale farmers need special support and empowerment in order to be able to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities of agricultural market liberalization,

Recognizing also that enhanced trade opportunities for developing countries, including through trade liberalization, will improve the economic condition of those societies, including women, which is of particular importance in rural communities,

Aware that, while women represent an important and growing proportion of business owners, their contribution to economic and social development is constrained by, inter alia, the lack of equal access of women and men to, and control over, credit, technology, support services, land and information,

Concerned that the continuing discrimination against women, the denial or lack of equal rights and access to education, training and credit facilities and the lack of control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production impede their full and equal contribution to, and equal opportunity to benefit from, development,

Emphasizing the promotion of programmes aimed at financial intermediation, with a view to ensuring the access of rural women to credit and to agricultural inputs and implements and, in particular, to easing collateral requirements for access to finance by women,

Expressing its concern about the underrepresentation of women in economic decision-making, and stressing the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all policies,

Noting the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes, including the United Nations Development Fund for Women, in facilitating the advancement of women in development, and recognizing the work done by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "The empowerment of women and integra-

tion of gender perspectives in the promotion of economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development”;

2. *Reaffirms* the goals and commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and also in the political declaration and further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-third special session;

3. *Calls upon* Governments, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to continue to take effective action to achieve full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

4. *Stresses* the importance of creating a favourable and conducive national and international environment in all fields of life for the effective integration of women in development;

5. *Urges* all Governments to develop and promote strategies to mainstream a gender perspective in the design and implementation of economic and development policies and in the monitoring and evaluation of related programmes of action;

6. *Recognizes* the need to mainstream a gender perspective in budget policies at all levels, and calls upon Governments to increase women’s full and equal participation in economic decision-making through, inter alia, their engagement in the budgetary process;

7. *Also recognizes* the mutually reinforcing links between gender equality and poverty eradication, as well as the need to elaborate and implement, where appropriate, in consultation with civil society, comprehensive gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies that address social, structural and macroeconomic issues;

8. *Further recognizes* the need to strengthen the capacity of Governments to incorporate a gender perspective in policies and decision-making, and encourages all Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system, and other relevant stakeholders to assist and support developing countries in integrating a gender perspective in all aspects of policy-making, including through the provision of technical assistance and financial resources;

9. *Stresses* the importance of developing national strategies for the promotion of sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities that will generate income among disadvantaged women and women living in poverty;

10. *Urges* all Governments to ensure women’s equal rights with men and their full and equal access to education, training, employment, technology and economic and financial resources, including credit, in particular for rural women and women in the informal sector, and to facilitate, where appropriate, the transition of women from the informal to the formal sector;

11. *Encourages* Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society to promote and protect the rights of women workers, to take action to remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work and to initiate positive steps to promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

12. *Urges* all Governments to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women with regard to their access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, giving special attention to poor, uneducated women, and to support women’s access to legal assistance;

13. *Calls upon* Governments and entrepreneurial associations to facilitate the access of women, including young women and women entrepreneurs, to education and training in business, administration, and information and communication technologies;

14. *Recognizes* the role of microfinance, including microcredit, in the eradication of poverty, the empowerment of women and the generation of employment, notes in this regard the importance of sound national financial systems, and encourages the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacities, including through the support of international financial institutions;

15. *Stresses* the need for assistance to enable women in developing countries, particularly grass-roots women’s groups, to have full access to and use of new technologies, including information technologies, for their empowerment;

16. *Urges* States to design and revise laws that ensure that women are accorded full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through inheritance, and to undertake administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital and appropriate technologies and access to markets and information;

17. *Calls upon* Governments to encourage the financial sector to mainstream a gender perspective in its policies and programmes, in particular by:

(a) Exploring viable options with respect to reaching people living in poverty, in particular women, including through international public and/or private funds;

(b) Designing savings schemes that are attractive to the poor, and to poor women in particular;

(c) Undertaking research to learn more about the characteristics, financial needs and performance of businesses owned by women;

(d) Working towards equal treatment for women clients through comprehensive gender-awareness training for staff at all levels and better representation of women in decision-making positions;

18. *Requests* Governments to ensure the full and equal participation of women in decision-making and in policy formulation and implementation at all levels so that their priorities, skills and potentials can be adequately reflected in national policy;

19. *Calls upon* Governments to promote, inter alia, through legislation, family-friendly and gender-sensitive work environments, the facilitation of breastfeeding for working mothers and the provision of the necessary care for working women’s children and other dependants and to consider promoting policies and programmes, as appropriate, to enable men and women to reconcile their work, social and family responsibilities;

20. *Expresses its concern* that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforces gender inequalities, that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they

have become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis;

21. *Calls upon* the international community to make efforts to mitigate the effects of excess volatility and economic disruption, which have a disproportionately negative impact on women, and to enhance trade opportunities for developing countries in order to improve the economic situation of women;

22. *Urges* the international community, the United Nations system and relevant organizations to give priority to assisting the efforts of developing countries to ensure the full and effective participation of women in deciding and implementing development strategies and integrating gender concerns into national programmes, including by providing adequate resources to operational activities for development in support of the efforts of Governments to ensure full and equal access of women to health care, capital, education, training and technology, as well as full and equal participation in all decision-making;

23. *Recognizes* that a substantial increase in official development assistance and other resources will be required if developing countries are to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, and that in order to build support for official development assistance, cooperation will be needed in further improving policies and development strategies, both nationally and internationally, to enhance aid effectiveness;

24. *Urges* developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001, encourages developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help to achieve development goals and targets, acknowledges the efforts of all donors, commends those donors whose official development assistance contributions exceed, reach or are increasing towards the targets, and stresses the importance of undertaking to examine the means and time frames for achieving the targets and goals;

25. *Encourages* the international community, the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society to continue to provide the necessary financial resources to assist national Governments in their efforts to meet the development targets and benchmarks agreed upon at the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations conferences and summits;

26. *Encourages* the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, as appropriate, to assist Governments, at their request, in building in-

stitutional capacity and developing national action plans or further implementing existing action plans for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

27. *Urges* Governments to create and maintain a non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive legal environment by reviewing legislation, with a view to striving to remove discriminatory provisions as soon as possible, preferably by 2005, and eliminating legislative gaps that leave women and girls without protection of their rights and without effective recourse against gender-based discrimination, and encourages assistance to countries in achieving this aim;

28. *Urges* multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

29. *Welcomes* the convening of the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva from 10 to 12 December 2003, and its second phase, to be held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005, and encourages Governments and all other stakeholders to integrate a gender perspective in the preparatory processes and outcome documents, taking into account the agreed conclusions on women's participation in and access to the media and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 2003/44 of 22 July 2003, and the report of the Secretary-General;

30. *Encourages* Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society to fully incorporate a gender perspective into the implementation of and follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the International Conference on Financing for Development and to implement the specific recommendations on microfinance and microcredit for women and gender budget policies;

31. *Stresses* the importance of collecting all relevant information needed on the role of women in development and statistics disaggregated by sex by all countries, encourages the relevant entities of the United Nations to support national efforts, especially those of developing countries, and in this regard invites developed countries, relevant entities of the United Nations and other international organizations to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems, and encourages all Governments and international organizations, including the United Nations system, to collect information needed on the role of women in development and the disaggregation by sex of all statistics;

32. *Urges* all Governments and international organizations, including the United Nations system, to incorporate a gender perspective in their planning and evaluation, including in common country assessments, the United Nations Development Assistance Frame-

work and poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist;

33. *Encourages* the involvement, as appropriate, of relevant stakeholders, including the private sector and civil society, in mainstreaming a gender perspective in planning and evaluation;

34. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to integrate gender mainstreaming into all its programmes and policies, including in the integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences, in accordance with agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1997, and welcomes the decision of the Council to devote one of the two themes of the co-ordination segment of its substantive session of 2004 to the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of those agreed conclusions;

35. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to update the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* for the consideration of the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session, noting that the survey should focus, as in the past, on selective emerging development issues that have an impact on the role of women in the economy at the national, regional and international levels;

36. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution, including the impact of globalization on the empowerment of women and their integration in development;

37. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixtieth session the sub-item entitled "Women in development".

Women in rural areas

In response to General Assembly resolution 56/129 [YUN 2001, p. 1071], the Secretary-General submitted a July report and September addendum [A/58/167 & Add.1], which reviewed the attention given to the situation of rural women by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, intergovernmental bodies and processes, the UN system and international financial organizations. Also included was a summary of the responses received from Member States on the desirability of convening a high-level policy consultation on the challenges faced by rural women.

The Secretary-General stated that Governments and international organizations, including those of the UN system, should ensure that: the integrated process of follow-up to the major summits and conferences in economic and social areas focused on the situation of rural women; the process of follow-up to the Economic and Social Council high-level segment of the substantive session considered rural women as the key stakeholders in sustainable rural development (see below); the priorities of rural women were addressed in all policies and programmes, and rural women consulted and involved in policy and programme

formulation; the World Summit on the Information Society (see p. 857) addressed the priorities and needs of rural women and ensured their participation in developing and implementing global information and communication technology strategies; and rural women's perspectives were taken into account, and they participated in all areas, including in emergencies, humanitarian activities, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction.

Economic and Social Council action. On 2 July [A/58/3], the Economic and Social Council, at the high-level segment of its substantive session, adopted a ministerial declaration, which, among other things, expressed commitment to the empowerment of rural women at all levels and in all aspects of rural development.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 77], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/501], adopted **resolution 58/146** without vote [agenda item 110].

Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 56/129 of 19 December 2001,

Recalling also the importance attached to the problems of rural women in the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which Member States resolved, inter alia, to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable,

Welcoming the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development, as well as the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"), which called upon Governments to mainstream the gender perspective into development at all levels and in all sectors,

Welcoming also the agreed conclusions on women's participation in and access to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session,

Welcoming further the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2003 of the Economic and Social Council, adopted on 2 July 2003, which stressed the need for rural development to become an integral part of national and international development policies and of the activities and pro-

grammes of the United Nations system, and called for an enhanced role for rural women at all levels of rural development, including decision-making,

Recognizing the critical role and contribution of rural women in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty,

Noting that some effects of globalization may deepen the socio-economic marginalization of rural women,

Noting also that the globalization process has had some benefits by providing opportunities for wage employment for rural women in new sectors,

Mindful of the fact that the available data and existing tools of measurement and analysis are insufficient for a full understanding of the gender implications of the processes of globalization and rural change, and their impact on rural women,

Recognizing the urgent need to take appropriate measures aimed at further improving the situation of women in rural areas,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Requests* the Secretary-General and all relevant United Nations bodies to take into account, while developing future policies, plans and activities, the views expressed by Member States in their replies concerning the desirability of convening a high-level policy consultation at the governmental level, with a view to setting priorities and developing critical strategies that would meet the manifold challenges faced by rural women;

3. *Invites* Member States, in collaboration with the organizations of the United Nations and civil society, as appropriate, to continue their efforts to implement the outcome of and to ensure an integrated and coordinated follow-up to United Nations conferences and summits, including their five-year reviews, and to attach greater importance to the improvement of the situation of rural women in their national, regional and global development strategies by, inter alia:

(a) Creating an enabling environment for improving the situation of rural women, including integrating a gender perspective in macroeconomic policies and developing appropriate social support systems;

(b) Pursuing the political and socio-economic empowerment of rural women by supporting their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels, including in rural institutions through, inter alia, the provision of training and capacity-building programmes, including legal literacy;

(c) Integrating a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and programmes, including budget policies, paying increased attention to the needs of rural women so as to ensure that they benefit from policies and programmes adopted in all spheres and that the disproportionate number of rural women living in poverty is reduced;

(d) Ensuring that the perspectives of rural women are taken into account and that they participate in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and activities related to emergencies, natural disasters, humanitarian assistance, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction;

(e) Investing in and strengthening efforts to meet the basic needs of rural women through capacity-building and human resources development measures

and the provision of a safe and reliable water supply and sanitation, nutritional programmes, education and literacy programmes, and health and social support measures, including in the area of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS treatment, care and support;

(f) Designing and implementing policies that promote and protect the enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and creating an environment that does not tolerate violations of the rights of women and girls, including domestic violence;

(g) Developing specific assistance programmes and advisory services to promote economic skills of rural women in banking, modern trading and financial procedures and providing microcredit and other financial and business services to a greater number of women in rural areas for their economic empowerment;

(h) Taking steps towards ensuring that women's unpaid work and contributions to on-farm and off-farm production, including income generated in the informal sector, are visible, and assessing the feasibility of developing and improving mechanisms, such as time-use studies, to measure in quantitative terms unpaid work, recognizing the potential for it to be reflected in the formulation and implementation of policies and programmes at the national and regional levels;

(i) Designing and revising laws to ensure that, where private ownership of land and property exists, rural women are accorded full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through the right to inheritance, and undertaking administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital, appropriate technologies and access to markets and information;

(j) Promoting programmes to enable rural women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share equally with women household and childcare responsibilities;

4. *Invites* the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to pay due attention to the situation of rural women in the consideration of the priority themes identified in its multi-year programme of work for the period 2002-2006;

5. *Invites* the relevant organizations of the United Nations system dealing with issues of development to address and support the empowerment of rural women and their specific needs in their programmes and strategies, including in the context of globalization;

6. *Stresses* the need to identify the best practices for ensuring that rural women have access to and full participation in the area of information and communication technologies, inter alia, through specific studies, and invites the World Summit on the Information Society, in Geneva and Tunis, to take into consideration, while addressing gender issues, the priorities and needs of rural women and girls as active users of information and ensure their participation in developing and implementing global information and communication technology strategies;

7. *Invites* Member States, the United Nations and the relevant organizations of its system to ensure that the needs of rural women are mainstreamed into the integrated process of follow-up to the major summits and conferences in the economic and social fields, in

particular the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the International Conference on Financing for Development, and the 2005 review of the progress achieved in implementing all the commitments made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”;

8. *Invites* Member States to take into consideration the concluding comments and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning their reports to the Committee when formulating policies and designing programmes focused on the improvement of the situation of rural women, including those to be developed and implemented in cooperation with relevant international organizations;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the implementation of the present resolution, addressing different aspects of the empowerment of rural women, including the impact of macroeconomic policy frameworks on their situation.

Women and the media

In accordance with the multi-year (2002-2006) programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women, adopted by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 2001/4 [YUN 2001, p. 1084], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2003/6] summarizing UN system efforts in the area of women and the media and information and communication technologies (ICT). The report, which was based on the analysis and conclusions of two expert meetings (Seoul, Republic of Korea, 11-14 November 2002; Beirut, Lebanon, 12-15 November 2002) and contributions by UN entities and civil society, focused on the opportunities and challenges to women’s empowerment through ICT and the media.

The Secretary-General’s recommendations to the Commission included the creation of a gender-sensitive enabling environment and integration of gender perspectives in the development and implementation of national policies and strategies in ICT and media and communication policies; the promotion of women’s participation and employment in the information society; the mobilization of resources to promote gender equality in the media and in ICT; inclusiveness and participation in the promotion of gender equality in the information society; and the inclusion of a gender perspective in every facet of the World Summit on the Information Society (see p. 857).

On 14 March, the Commission adopted agreed conclusions on women’s participation in and access to the media and ICT and their impact on and use as an instrument for women’s advancement and empowerment and requested that the

Economic and Social Council endorse them (see below). On 25 March [E/2003/27 (dec. 47/103)], it took note of the Secretary-General’s report.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 22 July [meeting 44], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women [E/2003/27], adopted **resolution 2003/44** without vote [agenda item 14 (a)].

Agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women on women’s participation in and access to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women

The Economic and Social Council,

Endorses the following agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session with respect to women’s participation in and access to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women:

1. The Commission on the Status of Women recalls and reiterates the strategic objectives and actions of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document adopted at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace in the twenty-first century”, on the potential of the media and of information and communication technologies to contribute to the advancement and empowerment of women. It also recalls the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the development goals contained therein to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease, to stimulate development that is truly sustainable and to ensure that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communication technologies, are available to all.

2. The Commission notes that, globally, there are substantial differences in participation in, access to and use of media and information and communication technologies, their content and production. Such differences have important implications for policy development at the national, regional and international levels. A focus on the gender dimensions of information and communication technologies is essential in order to prevent and combat any adverse impact of the digital revolution on gender equality and the perpetuation of existing inequalities and discrimination, including the sexual exploitation of women both through the traditional media and through new technologies. The media and information and communication technologies also offer tools for enhancing women’s full access to the benefits of information and new technologies and can become central tools for the empowerment of women and the promotion of gender equality. Efforts are therefore necessary to increase women’s access to and participation in the media and information and communication technologies, including in their decision-making processes and new opportunities created through information and communication technologies.

3. The Commission welcomes the convening of the World Summit on the Information Society, which is to be held in Geneva in December 2003 and in Tunis in 2005, and urges all participants to take the following recommendations into account and to integrate gender perspectives in every facet of the Summit. It further encourages the participation of women in the Summit, including significant numbers of gender equality experts and women experts in the field of information and communication technologies as members of national delegations, organizations of civil society and the business community.

4. The Commission urges Governments and, as appropriate, the relevant funds and programmes, organizations and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders to take the following actions:

(a) Prioritize the integration of gender perspectives and ensure early and full participation of women in the development and implementation of national policies, legislation, programmes, projects, strategies and regulatory and technical instruments in the field of information and communication technologies and media and communications, and create monitoring and accountability mechanisms to ensure implementation of gender-sensitive policies and regulations as well as to analyse the gender impact of such policies in consultation and collaboration with women information technology specialists, women's organizations and gender equality advocates;

(b) Encourage regulatory bodies, where they exist, to promote full participation of women in ownership, control and management in the information and communication technology and media sectors;

(c) Include gender perspectives and measurable gender-specific targets in all programmes and projects on information and communication technologies for development, as well as specific activities, as appropriate, for women and girls as active users of information;

(d) Remove infrastructural barriers related to information and communication technologies that disproportionately affect women and girls, and promote the establishment of affordable and accessible infrastructure related to information and communication technologies for all women and girls, bearing in mind the specific needs and interests of women and girls living in countries in the process of peace-building and reconstruction;

(e) Invite, as appropriate, through partnerships, or through the use of self-regulatory gender-sensitive guidelines for media coverage and representation, public and community media to work in support of gender equality, bearing in mind the importance of providing financial resources and other support;

(f) Support research into all aspects of the impact of the media and information and communication technologies on women and girls, in particular into their information needs and interests, review existing media and information and communication technologies policies and find ways to adapt information and communication technologies to the needs of poor and, in particular, illiterate women in order to overcome barriers and support the empowerment of women;

(g) Make education, formal and non-formal, a priority, in particular for the development of information and communication technologies, and take measures to promote girls' education so as to enable girls and women to gain access to those technologies;

(h) Include, at appropriate levels of government, education in information and communication technologies for girls and women in curricula at all educational levels, from early childhood to tertiary level, as well as in continuing education, in order to promote and ensure the full participation of women in the information society;

(i) Take concrete steps to increase the number of female students at all educational levels in subjects related to the media and information and communication technologies, including science, mathematics and technology, including through such methods as distance- and e-learning;

(j) Establish or, where they already exist, expand skills training, vocational and employment training and capacity-building programmes for women and girls and women's non-governmental organizations on the use, design and production of information and communication technologies, including preparing them to take on leadership roles and promoting their participation in the political process, and integrate a gender perspective in training programmes in those technologies for teachers and in training programmes for media professionals;

(k) Enable equal access for women to information and communication technology-based economic activities, such as small business and home-based employment, to information systems and improved technologies and to new employment opportunities in this area, and consider developing tele-centres, information centres, community access points and business incubators;

(l) Strengthen partnerships among all stakeholders to build the capacity of women to participate fully in and enjoy the benefits of the information society, including e-governance, where it exists and as it is developed, and participatory approaches;

(m) Ensure equal opportunities for women and monitor gender representation in different categories and levels of work, education and training in the media and information and communication technology areas, with a view to increasing the participation of women in decision-making at all levels of information and communication technology and the media;

(n) Provide management, negotiation and leadership training for women, as well as mentoring systems and other support strategies and programmes to enhance women's capabilities and potential for advancement in the media and information and communication technology sectors;

(o) Take effective measures, to the extent consistent with freedom of expression, to combat the growing sexualization and use of pornography in media content, in terms of the rapid development of information and communication technologies, encourage the media to refrain from presenting women as inferior beings and exploiting them as sexual objects and commodities, combat information and communication technology- and media-based violence against women, including the criminal misuse of information and communication technology for sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and trafficking in women and girls,

and support the development and use of such technologies as a resource for the empowerment of women and girls, including those affected by violence, abuse and other forms of sexual exploitation;

(p) Respect the value of different and local languages and promote and encourage local knowledge systems and locally produced content in media and communications, support the development of a wide range of information and communication technology-based programmes in local languages, as appropriate, with content relevant to different groups of women, and build the capacity of girls and women to develop information and communication technology content;

(q) Encourage South-South cooperation to facilitate transfer and exchange of low-cost technologies and appropriate information and communication technology content between developing countries for the benefit of women and girls;

(r) Strengthen and encourage the use of existing information and communication technologies, such as radio, television, telecommunications and print, in parallel, in order to enhance the use of new technologies for gender equality and the economic, political and social empowerment of women as leaders, participants and consumers, and recognize that women and girls are potentially large-scale consumers, users and producers of information and communication technologies and media;

(s) Collect, share, positively recognize and widely publicize good practices to counter gender stereotyping, negative portrayals and exploitation of women in all forms of the media and information and communication technologies as part of their efforts to eliminate discrimination and violence against women;

(t) Increase efforts to compile, and disaggregate by sex and age, statistics on the use of information and communication technologies, in order to develop gender-specific indicators on information and communication technology use and needs and to collect gender-specific data on employment and education patterns in the media and in information and communication technology professions;

(u) Provide adequate and appropriate resources for innovative, affordable, accessible and sustainable programmes, projects and products on the media and information and communication technologies that support gender equality and gender mainstreaming, are relevant to the concerns of women and girls and provide support to women's online communities and networks that promote gender equality;

(v) Prioritize the allocation of resources to support programmes, projects and strategies that aim at increasing women's participation in and equal access to the information society, including vocational, scientific and technical training, literacy training and capacity-building programmes;

(w) Enhance, for the benefit of women and girls, international cooperation in support of national efforts to create an enabling environment to reduce the digital and information divide between developed and developing countries and promote, develop and enhance access to information and communication technologies, including the Internet infrastructure, by facilitating access to and transfer of knowledge and technology on concessional, preferential and favourable terms for the developing countries, as mutually agreed, taking into

account the need to protect intellectual property rights and the special needs of developing countries;

(x) Strengthen the capacity of national machineries for the advancement of women, including through the allocation of adequate and appropriate resources and the provision of technical expertise, to take a lead advocacy role with respect to media and information and communication technologies and gender equality, support their involvement in national, regional and international processes related to media and information and communication technology issues and enhance coordination among ministries responsible for information and communication technologies, national machineries for the advancement of women, the private sector and national non-governmental organizations working in the field of gender advocacy.

The girl child

On 22 December [meeting 77], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/504], adopted **resolution 58/156** without vote [agenda item 113].

The girl child

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 57/189 of 18 December 2002 and all relevant resolutions, including the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in particular those relevant to the girl child,

Reaffirming the equal rights of women and men as enshrined, inter alia, in the Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Welcoming the entry into force of the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography,

Welcoming also the imminent entry into force, on 25 December 2003, of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration adopted on 8 September 2000,

Reaffirming the outcome document entitled "A world fit for children" adopted by the General Assembly at its special session on children, on 10 May 2002,

Reaffirming also the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session, on 27 June 2001,

Recalling all other relevant United Nations conferences, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", and the outcome documents of the recent five-year reviews of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development,

Reaffirming the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum,

Recalling the Declaration and Agenda for Action adopted at the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held at Stockholm from 27 to 31 August 1996, and welcoming the Yokohama Global Commitment 2001, adopted at the Second World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children, held at Yokohama, Japan, from 17 to 20 December 2001,

Recognizing the efforts of the international community to strengthen the standards for combating sexual abuse and exploitation, and in this regard taking note of the Secretary-General's bulletin on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse and other policies and codes of conduct developed by the United Nations system to prevent and address such incidents,

Recalling the International Conference on War-Affected Children, held at Winnipeg, Canada, from 10 to 17 September 2000, and affirming the ongoing importance of the Winnipeg Agenda for War-Affected Children for all children affected by armed conflict,

Recognizing the need to achieve gender equality to ensure a just and equitable world for girls,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access for girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health care and in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys and often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices, such as female infanticide, incest, early marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

Deeply concerned also that, in situations of poverty, war and armed conflict, girl children are among those most affected and that their potential for full development is thus limited,

Concerned that the girl child has furthermore become the victim of sexually transmitted diseases and increasingly of the human immunodeficiency virus, which have a serious impact on the quality of her life and leave her open to further discrimination,

Concerned also by the increasing number of child-headed households particularly orphan girls, including those orphaned by the HIV/AIDS pandemic,

Convinced that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance reveal themselves in a differentiated manner for women and girls and can be among the factors leading to a deterioration in their living conditions, poverty, violence, multiple forms of discrimination and limitation or denial of their human rights,

1. *Stresses* the need for full and urgent implementation of the rights of the girl child as guaranteed to her under all human rights instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as the need for universal ratification of those instruments;

2. *Urges* States to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

3. *Urges* all States to take all necessary measures and to institute legal reforms to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by the girl child of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to take effective action against violations of those rights and freedoms;

4. *Urges* all Governments and the United Nations system to strengthen efforts bilaterally and with international organizations and private sector donors in order to achieve the goals of the World Education Forum, in particular that of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, and to implement the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative as a means of reaching this goal, and reaffirms the commitment contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration in this regard;

5. *Calls upon* all States to take measures to address the obstacles that continue to affect the achievement of the goals set forth in the Beijing Platform for Action, as contained in paragraph 33 of the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, where appropriate, including the strengthening of national mechanisms to implement policies and programmes for the girl child and, in some cases, to enhance coordination among responsible institutions for the realization of the human rights of girls, as indicated in the further actions and initiatives;

6. *Urges* States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

7. *Also urges* States to fulfil their obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as the commitment to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" and the special session on children;

8. *Urges* all States to promote gender equality and equal access to basic social services, such as education, nutrition, health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, vaccinations, and protection from diseases representing the major causes of mortality, and to mainstream a gender perspective in all development policies and programmes;

9. *Also urges* all States to enact and enforce legislation to protect girls from all forms of violence and exploitation, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, female genital mutilation, rape, domestic violence, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution and child pornography, trafficking and forced labour, and to develop age-appropriate safe and confidential programmes and medical, social and psychological support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence;

10. *Urges* States to formulate comprehensive, multi-disciplinary and coordinated national plans, programmes or strategies to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, which should be widely disseminated and should provide targets and timetables for implementation, as well as effective domestic enforcement procedures through the establishment of monitoring mechanisms involving all parties con-

cerned, including consultations with women's organizations, giving attention to the recommendations relating to the girl child of the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences;

11. *Calls upon* all States and international and non-governmental organizations, individually and collectively, to implement further the Beijing Platform for Action, in particular the strategic objectives relating to the girl child, and the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

12. *Urges* States to ensure that the right of children to express themselves and participate in all matters affecting them, in accordance with their age and maturity, is fully and equally enjoyed by girls;

13. *Recognizes* that a considerable number of children, including orphans, children living on the street, internally displaced and refugee children, children affected by trafficking and sexual and economic exploitation and children who are incarcerated, live without parental support, and in this regard urges States to take special measures to support such children and the institutions, facilities and services that care for them, and to build and strengthen children's abilities to protect themselves;

14. *Urges* States to take appropriate measures to address the needs of orphan girls by implementing national policies and strategies to build and strengthen governmental, family and community capacities to provide a supportive environment for orphans and girls and boys infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS, including by providing appropriate counselling and psychosocial support, and ensuring their enrolment in school and access to shelter, good nutrition and health and social services on an equal basis with other children; and to protect orphans and vulnerable children from all forms of abuse, violence, exploitation, discrimination, trafficking and loss of inheritance;

15. *Also urges* States to take special measures for the protection of girls affected by armed conflicts and in particular to protect them from sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, including rape and sexual abuse, and sexual exploitation, torture, abduction and forced labour, paying special attention to refugee and displaced girls, and to take into account the special needs of girls affected by armed conflict in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation assistance and reintegration processes;

16. *Deplores* all the cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children, especially girls, in humanitarian crises, including those cases involving humanitarian workers and peacekeepers;

17. *Urges* all States and the international community to respect, protect and promote the rights of the child, taking into account the particular vulnerabilities of the girl child in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations, and calls for special initiatives designed to address all of the rights and needs of girls affected by armed conflicts;

18. *Calls upon* Governments, civil society, including the media, and non-governmental organizations to promote human rights education and the full respect for and enjoyment of the human rights of the girl child, inter alia, through the translation, production

and dissemination of age-appropriate information material on those rights to all sectors of society, in particular to children;

19. *Calls upon* States and international and non-governmental organizations to mobilize all necessary resources, support and efforts to realize the goals, strategic objectives and actions set out in the Beijing Platform for Action and the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

20. *Requests* the Secretary-General, as Chairman of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to ensure that all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, in particular the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organization, take into account the rights and the particular needs of the girl child in the country programme of cooperation in accordance with the national priorities, including through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

21. *Requests* all human rights treaty bodies, special procedures and other human rights mechanisms of the Commission on Human Rights and its Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights to adopt regularly and systematically a gender perspective in the implementation of their mandates and to include in their reports information on the qualitative analysis of violations of the human rights of women and girls, and encourages the strengthening of cooperation and coordination in that regard;

22. *Stresses* the importance of a substantive assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action with a life-cycle perspective so as to identify gaps and obstacles in the implementation process and to develop further actions for the achievement of the goals of the Platform for Action;

23. *Requests* Member States to ensure that, in preventing and addressing HIV/AIDS, particular attention is paid to the girl child infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS;

24. *Decides* to review the progress made in the protection and promotion of the rights and well-being of the girl child, and requests the Secretary-General to provide information relating to the girl child in his report on the follow-up to and implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits to be considered during the sixtieth session of the General Assembly.

(See also p. 780.)

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

Inter-Agency Network. The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, at its second session (New York, 24-27 February) [IANWGE/2003/12/Rev.1], endorsed decisions and recommendations made by task forces

and working groups regarding women, peace and security; gender mainstreaming in programme budgets; gender and financing for development; gender and ICT; gender mainstreaming in the common country assessment and United Nations Development Assistance Framework process; database activities including WomenWatch, an Internet portal to UN gender resources; working methods and the link between the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination and the Network; and the regional commissions' projects on gender indicators. The Network established three new task forces on the gender perspectives of the MDGs, gender and trade, and gender and water. It also held a workshop on incorporating gender perspectives into the preparation of and follow-up to global conferences.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 56/132 [YUN 2001, p. 1055], the Secretary-General, in a report [E/CN.6/2003/2] to the Commission on the Status of Women, summarized progress made in mainstreaming gender perspectives within the UN system, based on input received from UN system entities since his 2002 report on the issue [YUN 2002, p. 1154]. He concluded that there had been a marked increase in the number of gender units/focal points, networks, task forces and similar institutional mechanisms established to provide catalytic support and to strengthen capacity for gender mainstreaming in sectoral areas. Other measures included the training of staff and establishment of monitoring mechanisms. Inter-agency activities at global and regional levels remained a vehicle for coordination, information-sharing and joint activities. Further efforts should focus on identifying the remaining gaps in policy frameworks and strategies, and assessing the impact of the strategies, which should provide critical input towards the review of the progress made in implementing Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming [YUN 1997, p. 1186]. The Secretary-General recommended that the Commission request that the following be included in the next report: assessments of the impact of policies and strategies, of the most pertinent gaps in sex-disaggregated data and gender-specific information, by sector, of remaining gaps in the policy and strategy framework for gender equality and mainstreaming in sectoral areas in UN entities, and of the effectiveness of existing institutional mechanisms. He also proposed an overview of monitoring mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in place in the UN system.

Commission on the Status of Women. On 13 March [E/2003/27 (res. 47/2)], the Commission requested the Secretary-General to include in his next report the assessments and overview of

monitoring mechanisms proposed in his report (above). It asked the Economic and Social Council to consider devoting its 2004 coordination segment to a review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of agreed conclusions 1997/2.

Further report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 57/182 [YUN 2002, p. 1137] and Economic and Social Council resolution 2002/23 [ibid., p. 1154], the Secretary-General, in a May report [E/2003/69], described progress made by the Council in mainstreaming a gender perspective in its work during 2002, and that of its functional commissions in 2003. Also reviewed was the work of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (see p. 1187). The Secretary-General concluded that the Council and all subsidiary bodies that had completed their sessions reflected, to some degree, the concerns of women or gender perspectives in their work. However, interaction between the Commission on the Status of Women and other functional commissions, and use of the Commission's work by the Council and its subsidiary machinery had been uneven. Recommendations to the Council proposed devoting its 2004 coordination segment to a review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of agreed conclusions 1997/2; encouraging its subsidiary machinery to strengthen practical guidance provided in resolutions, decisions and agreed conclusions; encouraging relevant commissions to address gender aspects within their mandates; urging the commissions to use more systematically the work of the Commission on related topics under their consideration; and calling for efforts to include attention to gender equality in reports submitted to the Council and its subsidiary machinery.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 24 July [meeting 47], the Economic and Social Council adopted **resolution 2003/49** [draft: E/2003/L.24/Rev.1] without vote [agenda item 7 (f)].

Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 2002/23 of 24 July 2002, and the decision taken in its resolution 2001/41 of 26 July 2001 to establish the regular sub-item entitled "Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system" in order to, inter alia, monitor and evaluate achievements made and obstacles encountered by the United Nations system, and to consider further measures to strengthen the implementation and monitoring of gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system,

Recalling Also its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations

system, and its subsequent decision to devote a coordination segment before 2005 to a review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of those agreed conclusions.

Affirming that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality.

Reaffirming that gender mainstreaming constitutes a critical strategy in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

Underlining the catalytic role played by the Commission on the Status of Women in promoting gender mainstreaming.

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on follow-up to and progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, especially on measures taken by the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies to mainstream a gender perspective into their work;

2. *Decides* to undertake, during the coordination segment of its substantive session in 2004, a review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system;

3. *Calls upon* Member States and all other actors of the United Nations system to continue to mainstream a gender perspective into all activities at all levels;

4. *Decides* to intensify its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all activities in its work, and therefore to give appropriate attention to gender perspectives and the particular obstacles that women face in all its segments and agenda items, both during discussions and in outcomes;

5. *Expresses its appreciation* to its subsidiary bodies for the progress made in giving attention to situations that are specific to women and to the mainstreaming of gender perspectives into their work, for example by:

(a) Reiterating that gender equality is a goal in itself as well as a means in the more effective pursuit of their specific mandates;

(b) Highlighting gender equality as a cross-cutting issue;

6. *Calls upon* its subsidiary bodies to intensify further their efforts to mainstream gender perspectives in their work, and encourages them to strengthen the practical guidance provided in resolutions, decisions, agreed conclusions and other outcomes so as to accelerate the consistent use of gender mainstreaming in all policies and programmes at all levels;

7. *Also calls upon* its subsidiary bodies to continue their efforts to address gender perspectives in relation to the thematic issues of their multi-year programmes of work or in relation to their annual themes;

8. *Calls upon* the bureaux of its subsidiary bodies to consider how best to facilitate the inclusion of a gender perspective in their work;

9. *Emphasizes* the importance of its subsidiary bodies increasing their collaboration with the Commission on the Status of Women, including by making more systematic use of the output of the Commission, and encourages the Commission to continue its efforts to identify gender issues in the work of the Council and its other subsidiary bodies and assist them in pursuing these issues;

10. *Invites* its Bureau to include in the agenda of meetings with the bureaux of its subsidiary bodies an item on progress made and obstacles encountered in gender mainstreaming;

11. *Encourages* the President of the Economic and Social Council to include, in the agenda of meetings with the chairpersons of its subsidiary bodies, an item on enhanced coordination on gender mainstreaming between the Council and its subsidiary bodies;

12. *Encourages* the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated data and other gender-specific studies and information and all gender-analysis budgets by the United Nations system and its subsidiary bodies;

13. *Encourages also* the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat to maintain their efforts to raise awareness of gender issues across the United Nations system;

14. *Notes with appreciation* the expanded efforts of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality to support gender mainstreaming in a growing number of sectors, especially its efforts to ensure that gender perspectives are addressed systematically by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, and in this regard encourages the Board in its efforts to mainstream gender perspectives throughout the United Nations system;

15. *Encourages* United Nations bodies to promote inter-agency arrangements through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality for increased coordination and partnership on gender issues across the United Nations system;

16. *Welcomes* the efforts by the regional commissions to promote gender mainstreaming and improve the situation of women, and encourages the regional commissions to intensify those efforts;

17. *Underlines* the importance of reports to inter-governmental bodies consistently giving attention to gender equality through systematic and rigorous analysis of the issues involved, and presenting issues and approaches in a gender-sensitive manner so as to give concrete and practical recommendations and serve as an analytical basis for those bodies to undertake gender-responsive policy formulation in accordance with its agreed conclusions 1997/2;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report on implementation of and follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, including on progress in gender mainstreaming, to the next substantive session of the Council;

19. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to include in his report recommendations for the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system.

Status of women in the United Nations

In response to General Assembly resolution 57/180 [YUN 2002, p. 1411], the Secretary-General, in a January report [E/CN.6/2003/8], updated information on women's representation in the UN

Secretariat since the submission of his last report [YUN 2002, p. 1410] and focused on the implementation of gender equality goals in the staffing process. He recommended discontinuing the present report and replacing it with a report to the General Assembly at the session immediately preceding that of the Commission on the Status of Women, accompanied by an oral update to the Commission if needed. On 25 March, the Commission took note of the Secretary-General's report [E/2003/27 (dec. 47/103)].

Also in response to resolution 57/180, the Secretary-General submitted a September report [A/58/374] on improving the status of women in the UN system (see p. 1448).

In **resolution 58/144** of 22 December, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to provide a verbal update to the Commission and to report to the Assembly in 2004 (see p. 1449).

CPC action. In June [A/58/16], the Committee for Programme and Coordination (CPC), having considered a report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services [E/AC.51/2003/5 & Corr.1] on the triennial review of the implementation of CPC recommendations on the evaluation of the advancement of women programme in 2000 [YUN 2000, p. 1123], recommended that the review's conclusions be approved and submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women. On 22 December, the General Assembly endorsed CPC's recommendations (**decision 58/532**).

UN machinery

Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women

As at 31 December 2003, 175 States were parties to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 34/180 [YUN 1979, p. 895]. During the year, Afghanistan, San Marino and Sao Tome and Principe ratified the Convention and the Syrian Arab Republic and Timor-Leste acceded to it. At year's end, 42 States parties had also accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention in respect of the meeting time of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which was adopted by the States parties in 1995 [YUN 1995, p. 1178]. The amendment would enter into force when accepted by a two-thirds majority of States parties.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention, adopted by the Assembly in resolution 54/4 [YUN 1999, p. 1100]

and which entered into force in 2000 [YUN 2000, p. 1123], had 59 States parties by year's end.

The Secretary-General submitted his annual report to the Assembly on the status of the Convention as at 31 July [A/58/341].

CEDAW

In 2003, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), established in 1982 [YUN 1982, p. 1149] to monitor compliance with the 1979 Convention, held two regular sessions in New York [A/58/38].

At its twenty-eighth session (13-31 January), CEDAW reviewed the initial or periodic reports of Albania, Canada, the Congo, El Salvador, Kenya, Luxembourg, Norway and Switzerland on measures they had taken to implement the Convention. CEDAW considered a Secretariat report on ways and means of expediting its work [CEDAW/C/2003/1/4] and a note by the Secretary-General on the reports of specialized agencies [CEDAW/C/2003/1/3] and the reports of specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activity [CEDAW/C/2003/1/3/Add.1,3,4]. CEDAW appointed five members to the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol (see below) for a two-year period starting in January [A/58/38 (dec. 28/1)]; decided to convene a meeting during its twenty-ninth session in July with States whose reports under the Convention had been due for over five years [dec. 28/II]; decided, subject to the availability of resources, to nominate two of its members, in addition to its Chairperson, to participate in the May workshop, held by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), on reform proposals for treaty bodies [dec. 28/III] (see p. 668); and, subject to the availability of resources, decided to nominate four members, including the Chairperson, to participate in OHCHR's second (June) inter-committee meeting of treaty bodies [dec. 28/IV] (see p. 668). The Committee decided to change the name of the Working Group on the Optional Protocol to the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol. The Group met (25-27 June) to review its methods of work and to consider cooperation between the UN Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR. It decided to register its first communication.

At its twenty-ninth session (30 June-18 July), CEDAW reviewed the initial or periodic reports of Brazil, Costa Rica, Ecuador, France, Japan, Morocco, New Zealand and Slovenia, and considered the Secretariat report submitted to its twenty-eighth session (above). The Committee decided that those States parties whose initial reports under article 18 were more than five years

overdue as at 18 July would be reminded of their reporting obligations [A/58/38 (dec. 29/1)].

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 77], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/501], adopted **resolution 58/145** without vote [agenda item 110].

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 57/178 of 18 December 2002 and its previous resolutions on the elimination of discrimination against women,

Bearing in mind that one of the purposes of the United Nations, as stated in Articles 1 and 55 of the Charter, is to promote universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all without distinction of any kind, including distinction as to sex,

Reiterating the need to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women throughout the world,

Affirming that women and men should participate equally in social, economic and political development, should contribute equally to such development and should share equally in improved conditions of life,

Recalling the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights on 25 June 1993, in which the Conference reaffirmed that the human rights of women and the girl child were an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights,

Acknowledging the need for a comprehensive and integrated approach to the promotion and protection of the human rights of women, which includes the integration of the human rights of women into the mainstream of United Nations activities system-wide,

Reaffirming the commitments made in the political declaration and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", in particular paragraphs 68 (c) and (d) concerning the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto,

Recalling that, in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, heads of State and Government resolved to implement the Convention,

Recognizing that the equal enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms will promote the realization of the rights of the child, bearing in mind the special needs of girls, and acknowledging the mutual reinforcement of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto,

Welcoming the progress made in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, but expressing concern about the remaining challenges,

Welcoming also the growing number of States parties to the Convention, which now stands at one hundred and seventy-five,

Recalling the entry into force on 22 December 2000 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

Bearing in mind the recommendation of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women that national reports should contain information on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, in accordance with paragraph 323 of the Platform,

Having considered the report of the Committee on its twenty-eighth and twenty-ninth sessions,

Expressing concern at the great number of reports that are overdue and that continue to be overdue, in particular initial reports, which constitutes an obstacle to the full implementation of the Convention,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

2. *Expresses disappointment* that universal ratification of the Convention was not achieved by 2000, and urges all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so;

3. *Urges* States parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto and to take into consideration the concluding comments as well as the general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;

4. *Encourages* all relevant entities of the United Nations system, within their mandates, as well as Governments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and, in particular, women's organizations, as appropriate, to strengthen assistance to States parties, upon their request, in implementing the Convention;

5. *Welcomes* the rapidly growing number of States parties to the Optional Protocol, which now stands at fifty-nine, and urges other States parties to the Convention to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

6. *Notes* the closed meeting held by the Committee on 16 July 2003 with States parties whose reports were more than five years overdue;

7. *Takes note with appreciation* of the fact that the Committee has commenced its work under the Optional Protocol;

8. *Notes* that some States parties have modified their reservations, expresses satisfaction that some reservations have been withdrawn, and urges States parties to limit the extent of any reservations that they lodge to the Convention, to formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible, to ensure that no reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, to review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them and to withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention;

9. *Welcomes* the adoption by the Committee of revised reporting guidelines, and urges States parties to adhere to the revised guidelines, in particular with regard to the content and length of reports;

10. *Recalls* the great number of overdue reports, in particular initial reports, and urges States parties to the Convention to make every possible effort to submit their

reports on the implementation of the Convention in a timely manner in accordance with article 18 thereof;

11. *Encourages* the Secretariat to extend further technical assistance to States parties, upon their request, to strengthen their capacity in the preparation of reports, in particular initial reports, and invites Governments to contribute to those efforts;

12. *Invites* States parties to make use of the technical assistance provided by the Secretariat to facilitate the preparation of reports, in particular initial reports;

13. *Commends* the Committee on its contributions to the effective implementation of the Convention;

14. *Strongly urges* States parties to the Convention to take appropriate measures so that acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention by a two-thirds majority of States parties can be reached as soon as possible so that the amendment may enter into force;

15. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts made so far by the Committee to improve the efficiency of its working methods, and encourages the Committee to continue its activities in this regard;

16. *Encourages* the continued participation of members of the Committee in inter-committee meetings and meetings of persons chairing the human rights treaty bodies, including those on methods of work relating to the State reporting system;

17. *Encourages* the Committee, within its mandate, to continue to contribute to the efforts to strengthen cooperation and coordination between the treaty bodies;

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/4 of 6 October 1999, to provide the resources, including staff and facilities, necessary for the effective functioning of the Committee within its full mandate, taking into account in particular the entry into force of the Optional Protocol;

19. *Urges* Governments, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to disseminate the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto;

20. *Encourages* States parties to disseminate the concluding comments adopted in relation to the consideration of their reports as well as the general recommendations of the Committee;

21. *Encourages* all relevant entities of the United Nations system to continue to build women's knowledge and understanding of and capacity to utilize human rights instruments, in particular the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto;

22. *Urges* the specialized agencies, at the invitation of the Committee, to submit reports on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities;

23. *Welcomes* the contribution of non-governmental organizations to the work of the Committee;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session a report on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the implementation of the present resolution.

Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its forty-seventh session (New York, 3-14 and 25

March) [E/2003/27], recommended three draft resolutions to the Economic and Social Council for adoption on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (see p. 494); the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan (see p. 1175); and its agreed conclusions on the participation in and access of women to the media and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women (see p. 1183). The Commission also adopted and brought to the Council's attention resolutions on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS (see p. 1174); and mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the UN system (see p. 1188). A draft decision for adoption by the Council related to the Commission's report on its forty-seventh (2003) session and the provisional agenda for the forty-eighth (2004) session (see below). The Commission further adopted three decisions, which were brought to the Council's attention, regarding the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women [dec. 47/101] (see p. 1194) and the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women [dec. 47/102] (see p. 1193); and it took note of the documents before it [dec. 47/103], among them, the Secretary-General's report summarizing steps taken by the Commission to follow up on policy guidance provided by the Council to its functional commissions in 2002 [E/CN.6/2003/10]; and on the joint work plan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR for 2003 [E/CN.4/2003/73-E/CN.6/2003/5] (see p. 779).

By **decision 2003/237** of 22 July, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Commission's report on its forty-seventh session and approved the provisional agenda for its forty-eighth session.

Communications on the status of women

Working Group. At three meetings in March, including one closed meeting [E/2003/27], the Commission considered the report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women, established in 1993 [YUN 1993, p. 1050] to consider ways of making the communications procedure more transparent and efficient. The Working Group considered seven confidential communications received directly by the Division for the Advancement of Women and 15 confidential communications received by OHCHR. The Group noted that Governments had replied to three of the seven communications received by the Division and to 14 of the 15 transmitted by OHCHR. Due to the limited number (22) of communications received, the Group was unable to

assess the existence of a consistent pattern of reliably proven injustice and discriminatory practices against women, as defined by its mandate in Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/27 [YUN 1983, p. 923]. However, it ascertained that communications were most frequently submitted on sexual violence against women, including rape, perpetrated by State agents, such as members of the police force, security forces, prison guards and members of the army; violations of the rights of female human rights defenders, in particular the violation of the freedom of expression and assembly; violations of the rights of women belonging to ethnic or religious minorities, including killings, inhuman and degrading treatment and discrimination; and violations of women's human rights in the context of internal conflicts, including killings, torture and enforced or involuntary disappearances. The Group was concerned about a communication received indicating the existence of legal practices that prescribed cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment of women.

In a March decision [E/2003/27 (dec. 47/102)], the Commission decided that at its forty-eighth (2004) session, it would continue to consider the Working Group's future work, and requested the Secretary-General to submit a report for that purpose.

UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

During 2003 [A/59/135], the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) continued to focus on strengthening women's economic security and rights; enhancing women's leadership in governance and peace-building; and promoting women's human rights by highlighting the gender dimensions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and eliminating violence against women. UNIFEM's activities were defined in its 2000-2003 strategy and business plan, endorsed by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA) in 2000 [YUN 2000, p. 1127].

UNIFEM's work in support of women's economic security and rights focused on promoting an enabling environment for women's equal ownership and access to economic resources and assets; incorporating a gender perspective in macro-economic frameworks and building the capacity of countries to manage globalization and economic transition from the perspective of poor women; and strengthening women's economic capacity and rights. Results in those areas were greatly enhanced through gender-responsive budget initiatives and promoting the use of gender-sensitive

data and statistics. UNIFEM's work regarding women's leadership in governance and peace-building achieved significant results in strengthening gender-focused information collection and on conflict prevention and early warning mechanisms; enhancing humanitarian assistance and protection for women in conflict situations; making women and gender perspectives central to peace processes; supporting gender justice in post-conflict peace-building; and strengthening women's political participation. In its programme to promote women's human rights by highlighting the gender dimensions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and eliminating violence against women, UNIFEM expanded capacity for effective implementation at the national level of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (see p. 1190); strengthened policies and programmes to end violence against women and girls; and increased awareness and action in response to the gender and human rights dimensions of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

UNIFEM's initiatives to enhance the capacity of the UN system to support women's empowerment and gender mainstreaming in policies and programmes resulted in increased attention to gender equality in coordination mechanisms and stronger collaboration with strategic UN partner organizations. Strengthening the Fund's effectiveness by incorporating the principles of a learning organization and building strategic partnerships resulted in the refinement of knowledge "products" to capture and make accessible learning in key thematic areas.

In 2003, UNIFEM's resources totalled \$34 million, of which \$21.7 million was in core resources and \$12.3 million in non-core resources. A total of 38 Member States contributed to the core resources. Contributions from bilateral donors accounted for 88 per cent of the resource base, as in 2002.

By a January note [E/CN.6/2003/11-E/CN.4/2003/121], the Secretary-General transmitted to the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on the Status of Women UNIFEM's report on the 2002 activities of its Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women [YUN 2002, p. 1165], prepared pursuant to General Assembly resolution 50/166 [YUN 1995, p. 1188]. On 25 March [E/2003/27 (dec. 47/103)], the Commission on the Status of Women took note of UNIFEM's report. A later report of UNIFEM [E/CN.6/2004/8-E/CN.4/2004/117 & Corr.1] stated that the Fund approved over \$600,000 in grants for eight new projects in 2003, in an enhanced attempt to address diverse forms of violence against women. Since its establishment in 1996, the Trust Fund

had awarded \$8.4 million in grants to 155 projects in more than 70 countries.

The UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board, on 10 September [E/2003/35 (dec. 2003/23)], took note of the UNDP Administrator's report [DP/2003/28] on budget estimates for the 2004-2005 biennium, and approved \$14.9 million for UNIFEM.

In July [A/58/168], the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly a report on UNIFEM's 2002 activities [YUN 2002, p. 1164]. The Assembly noted the report, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/501], by **decision 58/533** of 22 December, and, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/58/487], by **decision 58/551** of 23 December.

International Research and Training Institute (INSTRAW)

A May report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) [E/2003/59] stated that the Board's twenty-second session, which was postponed in 2002 [YUN 2002, p. 1165] pending the recommendations of the Working Group on the Future Operation of INSTRAW (see below), still had not taken place. However, the Board electronically approved a brief on INSTRAW developments and challenges during 2002 and current status, prepared by INSTRAW, which was annexed to the report.

INSTRAW's financial situation remained precarious in 2003 (see p. 1200).

Working Group report. The Working Group on the Future Operation of INSTRAW, established by General Assembly resolution 56/125 [YUN 2001, p. 1089], submitted a preliminary report [A/AC.266/1] in February on activities undertaken pursuant to Assembly resolution 57/175 [YUN 2002, p. 1167] relating to its recommendations [ibid., p. 1166]. The Working Group held a 10 February meeting with UN Secretariat representatives to request the Secretary-General to appoint an INSTRAW Director to provide leadership and initiate fund-raising activities. The Secretariat expressed the view that such an appointment was not currently possible because the funds available for INSTRAW would be sufficient only to cover the salaries of the current staff, contracts and operational expenses until 31 May, after which additional fund-raising would be necessary through voluntary contributions. Following a 12 February meeting on the status of INSTRAW's voluntary contributions, the Secretary-General received a pledge of \$100,000 from Spain, with the promise of a further similar amount once a Director had been appointed, and \$5,520 from Venezuela. INSTRAW's host country, the Dominican Republic, reiterated its support to

the Institute. The Under-Secretary-General of the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) said that the pledges made, together with the existing funds, should be enough to permit the prompt appointment of a Director. He intended to meet with the UN Controller to coordinate the appointment. On 20 February, the Working Group decided to consult with the Secretary-General regarding the appointment of a Director. It also decided to raise with the Secretariat the possibility of postponing the election, scheduled for the Economic and Social Council's resumed 2003 organizational session, of the five members of INSTRAW's Board of Trustees whose mandates would end on 30 June. The Working Group discussed the procedural steps that should be taken to fulfil its mandate and highlighted the need for the Council to amend the Institute's statute.

In March, [E/2003/27 (dec. 47/101)], the Commission on the Status of Women took note of the report and recommended that the Economic and Social Council consider the Group's reports to the Assembly in 2003.

Note by Secretary-General. In an April note [E/2003/L.3/Add.6], the Secretary-General stated that, on 18 March, he informed all Member States that the Council would be called on to appoint five members to serve on INSTRAW's Board of Trustees. He drew the Council's attention to Assembly resolution 57/175, which endorsed and requested the Secretary-General to implement the Working Group's recommendation that the Board of Trustees be abolished and replaced with an advisory board composed of Member States. In the light of that information, the Secretary-General recommended that the Council extend the mandate of the existing members of the Board and postpone the election of Board members until the Council had taken action on the Working Group's recommendation.

Communication. On 20 June [E/2003/93], Spain, as Chairman of the Working Group on the future of INSTRAW, transmitted to the President of the Economic and Social Council a note presenting the Working Group's recommendations regarding the amendment of INSTRAW's statute [YUN 2002, p. 1166]. The Group proposed that the Council adopt a resolution in order to achieve those changes, which would allow the Institute to achieve its mandate properly.

Note by Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 57/175, the Secretary-General submitted a July note [E/2003/101], which contained the Secretariat's comments on the recommendations of the Working Group as transmitted by its Chairman (see above). The Secretariat noted that some of the proposed amendments did not adequately reflect the full

scope of the effect that the Assembly's endorsement of the Working Group's recommendations in resolution 57/175 had on INSTRAW's statute. In particular, the new recommendations did not address the abolition of INSTRAW's autonomous status nor the establishment of institutional linkage to DESA under the direct authority of the Under-Secretary-General of that Department. In addition, the proposed amendments did not address the requirement that the Institute work closely and in close coordination with the other UN bodies involved in gender equality and the advancement of women. Also, the amendment proposed to article III, which referred to an Executive Board, should instead refer to an Advisory Board; article III, which referred to members of the Executive Board, should in fact refer to Member States instead of individual representatives since the Board should be composed of Member States; article IV, which provided that the Director should be appointed by the Secretary-General from a pool of three candidates proposed by the Executive Board, in fact interfered with the Secretary-General's prerogative as the Organization's Chief Administrative Officer; and the same reasoning applied to the amendments proposed in article IV, dealing with the authority vested in the Secretary-General to retain, confirm or replace the Institute's Director. With regard to the appointment of a Director, an understanding could be reached whereby the Secretary-General would present the Board with a list of candidates, from which the Board would select up to three, one of whom should be appointed by the Secretary-General. A revised statute of the Institute was annexed to the note.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 24 July [meeting 48], the Economic and Social Council adopted **resolution 2003/57** [draft: E/2003/L.44] without vote [agenda item 14 (a)].

Revitalization and strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling all of its resolutions aimed at the revitalization and strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, in particular its resolutions 1999/54 of 29 July 1999, 2000/24 of 28 July 2000 and 2001/40 of 26 July 2001,

Recalling also General Assembly resolution 56/125 of 19 December 2001, by which the Assembly decided to establish the Working Group on the Future Operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,

Taking note of the report of the Working Group, which contains a series of recommendations aimed at the revitalization and strengthening of the Institute,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 57/175 of 18 December 2002, in which the Assembly endorsed the recommendations of the Working Group and requested the Secretary-General to implement the measures recommended by the Group in that regard,

Taking note of the preliminary report of the Working Group submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session, which highlights the need for the Economic and Social Council to amend the statute of the Institute,

Recalling Commission on the Status of Women decision 47/101, of 13 March 2003, in which the Commission recommended that the Economic and Social Council should consider the report of the Working Group to the General Assembly under the appropriate agenda item at its substantive session of 2003,

Recalling also General Assembly decision 57/580 of 20 December 2002 and Assembly resolution 57/311 of 18 June 2003 on the financial situation of the Institute,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women;

2. *Takes note with appreciation* of the note by the Chairman of the Working Group on the Future Operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women;

3. *Takes note* of the note by the Secretary-General on the Board of Trustees of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women;

4. *Decides* to amend article III of the statute of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, in order to replace the Board of Trustees with an Executive Board, by replacing paragraphs 1, 2, 3 (c) and 4 with the following:

“1. The Institute and its work shall be governed by an Executive Board composed of ten Member States (hereinafter referred to as ‘the Board’);

“2. The Board shall be composed as follows:

“(a) Two governmental representatives from each of the five regional groups of the United Nations. The Economic and Social Council shall elect the members of the Board and they shall serve in their national capacities for a term of three years. They shall be eligible for reappointment by the Economic and Social Council for one further term. If a casual vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board, the Economic and Social Council shall appoint a new member to serve for the unexpired portion of the term of office of the former member concerned;

“(b) The Director of the Institute, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, a representative of the host country and a representative of each of the regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council shall serve as ex officio members of the Board.

“3. . . .

“(c) Make recommendations for the operations of the Institute;

. . .

“4. The Board shall meet at least once a year, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, in accordance with article VII of the present Statute. It shall elect its own officers, including its President, in accordance with the adopted rules of procedure. It

shall take its decisions for in the manner provided in its rules of procedure.”

“(e) Review the list of candidates for Director of the Institute proposed by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and identify several candidates from the list for the final appointment to be made by the Secretary-General”;

5. *Decides also* to amend article IV of the statute of the Institute, with regard to the Director and the staff, by replacing paragraphs 1, 2 (introductory part and subparagraph (e)) and 5 of with the following:

“1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall appoint the Director, taking into account the list of candidates proposed by the Board.

“2. The Director shall have overall responsibility for the organization, direction and administration of the Institute in accordance with general directives by the Board and within the terms of the authority delegated to the Director by the Secretary-General. The Director shall, including through the delegation of responsibilities, where appropriate, inter alia:

“(e) Appoint and direct the staff of the Institute, including a Deputy Director, on behalf of the Secretary-General;

“5. The terms and conditions of service of the Director, the Deputy Director and the staff shall be those provided in the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, subject to such arrangements for special rules or terms of appointment as may be approved by the Secretary-General after consultations with the Board. The salaries, allowances and other expenses of the Director and the staff shall be borne by the Trust Fund for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women”;

6. *Requests* the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session to consider the final report of the Working Group;

7. *Requests* the Director of the Institute, in consultation with the Board, to report on the implementation of the present resolution to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2004;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Annex

Statute of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

Article I

Status and purposes

The United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women was established by the Economic and Social Council (Council resolution 1998(LX) of 12 May 1976) in conformity with an earlier decision of the General Assembly (resolution 3520(XXX) of 15 December 1975), which was based on a recommendation made by the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held at Mexico City from 19 June to 2 July 1975. The Institute is an autonomous institution within the framework of the United Nations established in accordance with the

Charter of the United Nations to serve as a vehicle on the international level for the purpose of undertaking research and establishing training programmes to contribute to the integration and mobilization of women in development, to raise awareness of women's issues worldwide and better to assist women to meet new challenges and directions. The Institute, as part of the United Nations, enjoys the status, privileges and immunities provided in Articles 104 and 105 of the Charter and other relevant international agreements and United Nations resolutions relating to the status, privileges and immunities of the Organization.

Article II

Objectives and functions

1. The objectives of the Institute are to stimulate and assist, through research, training and the collection and dissemination of information, the advancement of women and their integration in the development process both as participants and as beneficiaries. The Institute is to assist the efforts of intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organizations in this regard. Accordingly, the principal functions of the Institute shall be:

(a) To conduct research and studies which would enhance the effective integration and mobilization of women in development; the research and studies programmes of the Institute, including, in particular, action-oriented ones, shall give particular attention to the problems facing women in developing countries and to the integration of women in the formulation, design and implementation of development activities at all levels;

(b) To establish training programmes, including a fellowship programme and advisory services, through which the Institute shall endeavour to raise awareness on issues concerning women and development and shall strive to achieve equal participation of women in all aspects of economic and social development and to increase the opportunities for women to acquire new skills in order to meet the challenges of rapid change in today's society;

(c) To establish and maintain a system of information, documentation and communication so as to enable the Institute to respond to the need for disseminating information worldwide on women's issues.

2. In view of its catalytic role, the Institute shall make every effort to develop and utilize networking, as appropriate, in carrying out its functions. This should be done at the international, regional and national levels.

3. In the pursuit of its objectives, the Institute shall carry out its activities in close collaboration and coordination with institutes and other bodies within and outside the United Nations system.

Article III

Executive Board

1. The Institute and its work shall be governed by an Executive Board composed of ten Member States (hereinafter referred to as “the Board”).

2. The Board shall be composed as follows:

(a) Two governmental representatives from each of the five regional groups of the United Nations. The Economic and Social Council shall elect the members of the Board and they shall serve in their national capacities for a term of three years. They shall be eligible

for reappointment by the Economic and Social Council for one further term. If a casual vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board, the Economic and Social Council shall appoint a new member to serve for the unexpired portion of the term of office of the former member concerned;

(b) The Director of the Institute, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, a representative of the host country and a representative of each of the regional commissions of the Economic and Social Council shall serve as *ex officio* members of the Board.

3. The Board shall:

(a) Formulate principles, policies and guidelines for the activities of the Institute;

(b) Consider and approve the work programmes and the budget proposals of the Institute on the basis of recommendations submitted to it by the Director of the Institute;

(c) Make recommendations for the operations of the Institute;

(d) Report periodically to the Economic and Social Council and, where appropriate, to the General Assembly;

(e) Review the list of candidates for Director of the Institute proposed by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and identify several candidates from the list for the final appointment to be made by the Secretary-General.

4. The Board shall meet at least once a year, at United Nations Headquarters in New York, in accordance with article VII of the present statute. It shall elect its own officers, including its President, in accordance with the adopted rules of procedure. It shall take its decisions in the manner provided for in its rules of procedure.

5. The Board shall consider methods for enhancing the financial resources of the Institute with a view to ensuring the effectiveness of its future operations, their continuity and the Institute's autonomous character within the framework of the United Nations.

6. Members of the Board, in furtherance of the principles and policies of the Institute, may be invited to help in achieving the goals of the Institute by attending meetings on behalf of the Institute, raising funds for the Institute's operations and helping to establish national support teams, if possible, in their respective countries for the attainment of the objectives of the Institute.

7. Organizations of the United Nations system and other institutions may be represented, as appropriate, at meetings of the Board in respect of activities of interest to them under the conditions outlined in the rules of procedure of the Board.

Article IV

The Director and the staff

1. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall appoint the Director, taking into account the list of candidates proposed by the Board.

2. The Director shall have overall responsibility for the organization, direction and administration of the Institute in accordance with general directives by the Board and within the terms of the authority delegated to the Director by the Secretary-General. The Director

shall, including through the delegation of responsibilities, where appropriate, *inter alia*:

(a) Submit the work programmes and the budget estimates of the Institute to the Board for its consideration and adoption;

(b) Oversee the execution of the work programmes and make the expenditures envisaged in the budget of the Institute as adopted by the Board;

(c) Submit to the Board annual and *ad hoc* reports on the activities of the Institute and the execution of its work programmes;

(d) Submit to the Economic and Social Council or to the General Assembly, as appropriate, reports approved by the Board;

(e) Appoint and direct the staff of the Institute, including a Deputy Director, on behalf of the Secretary-General;

(f) Coordinate the work of the Institute with that of other organs and bodies of the United Nations, the specialized agencies and international, regional and national institutions in similar fields;

(g) Negotiate arrangements with Governments and intergovernmental organizations as well as non-governmental organizations, academic and philanthropic institutions with a view to offering and receiving services related to the activities of the Institute;

(h) Actively seek appropriate funding for the implementation of the work programme of the Institute;

(i) Accept, subject to the provisions of article VI, paragraph 2, of the present Statute, voluntary contributions to the Institute;

(j) Make the necessary arrangements for securing established and continuous contact with and support from United Nations Headquarters;

(k) Undertake other assignments or activities as may be determined by the Board or requested by the Secretary-General, provided that any such requests are consistent with the programme budget approved by the Board.

3. The staff of the Institute shall be appointed by the Director on behalf of the Secretary-General and in accordance with modalities established by the Secretary-General, within the staffing table approved by the Board. Such appointment shall be limited to service with the Institute. The staff shall be responsible to the Director in the exercise of their functions.

4. The staff of the Institute shall be recruited on as wide a geographical basis as possible, full consideration being given to the particular requirements of and qualifications for each post needed by the Institute.

5. The terms and conditions of service of the Director, the Deputy Director and the staff shall be those provided in the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, subject to such arrangements for special rules or terms of appointment as may be approved by the Secretary-General after consultations with the Board. The salaries, allowances and other expenses of the Director and the staff shall be borne by the Trust Fund for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

6. The Director and the staff of the Institute shall not seek or receive instructions from any Government or from any authority external to the United Nations. They shall refrain from any action which might reflect on their position as international officials responsible only to the Organization.

7. The Director and the staff of the Institute are officials of the United Nations and are therefore covered by Article 105 of the Charter of the United Nations and by other international agreements and United Nations resolutions defining the status of officials of the Organization.

Article V

Fellows, consultants, correspondents and focal points

1. The Board may designate as honorary fellows individuals who could contribute substantively to the Institute's objectives.

2. The Director may designate a limited number of especially qualified persons to serve as senior fellows of the Institute, for a period not longer than one year, in accordance with criteria established by the Board and procedures formulated by the Secretary-General. Such persons, who may be invited to participate as lecturers or research scholars, shall be selected on the basis of outstanding contributions they have made in fields germane to the work of the Institute.

3. The Director may also designate junior fellows as part of the Institute's ongoing fellowship programmes. All fellowships will be granted within the financial provisions of the Institute's programme budget.

4. The Director may also arrange for the services of consultants for the purpose of contributing to the analysis and planning of the activities of the Institute or for special assignments in connection with the Institute's programmes. Such consultants shall be engaged in accordance with policies established by the Secretary-General.

5. Correspondents and focal points in countries or regions may be used by the Institute to assist in maintaining contact with national or regional institutions and in carrying out or advising on studies and research.

6. Honorary, senior or junior fellows, consultants and correspondents shall not be considered to be members of the staff of the Institute.

Article VI

Finance

1. The activities of the Institute shall be funded by voluntary contributions from States, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, foundations, including the United Nations Foundation, private sources and other sources in accordance with article VII of the present Statute.

2. Contributions to the Institute may be accepted provided that they are consistent with the purposes and policies of the Institute. Voluntary contributions that are unrestricted or that are designated for the implementation of an activity approved by the Board may be accepted by the Director after obtaining the concurrence of the Controller of the United Nations. Other voluntary contributions may be accepted only with the approval of the Board, which shall take into account the comments of the Secretary-General. Contributions which may directly or indirectly involve an immediate or ultimate financial liability for the United Nations may be accepted only with the approval of the General Assembly.

3. The funds of the Institute derived from voluntary contributions shall be kept in the Trust Fund for the International Research and Training Institute for

the Advancement of Women established by the Secretary-General in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations.

4. The funds in the Trust Fund of the Institute shall be held and administered solely for the purposes of the Institute. The Controller of the United Nations shall perform all necessary financial and accounting functions for the Institute, including the custody of its funds, and shall prepare and certify the annual accounts of the Institute.

5. The Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and the financial policies and procedures established by the Secretary-General shall apply to the financial operations of the Institute. Funds of the Institute shall be subject to audit by the United Nations Board of Auditors.

6. The Institute may, in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, enter into contracts with organizations, institutions or firms for the purpose of carrying out its operations. The Institute may acquire or dispose of real and movable property in accordance with the same Regulations and Rules.

Article VII

Administrative and other support

The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall provide the Institute with appropriate administrative and other support, including financial and personnel services, in accordance with the Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations and on conditions determined after consultations between the Secretary-General and the Director of the Institute, it being understood that no extra costs to the regular budget of the United Nations are incurred.

Article VIII

Cooperation with other organizations and institutions

1. The Institute shall develop arrangements for active and close cooperation with the specialized and related agencies of the United Nations as well as with other organs, programmes and institutions within the United Nations system.

2. The Institute shall endeavour to develop arrangements for cooperation with other organizations or institutions involved in training and research activities which are relevant to the work of the Institute and which may be of assistance to the Institute in the performance of its functions.

Article IX

Location

The headquarters of the Institute shall be located in the Dominican Republic at Santo Domingo. The Institute may, with the approval of the Board and after consultations with the Secretary-General of the United Nations, establish other offices elsewhere.

Article X

Amendments

1. Amendments to the present Statute may be made by the Economic and Social Council.

2. The Board may review the provisions of the present Statute and propose to the Economic and Social Council such amendments as it may consider necessary.

3. The Secretary-General may submit to the Board or, if necessary, to the Economic and Social Council,

after consultation with the President of the Board, proposals for the revision of the present Statute.

Future operation of INSTRAW

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 57/175 [YUN 2002, p. 1167], the Secretary-General submitted an October report [A/58/417], which reviewed progress in the implementation of reform measures proposed by the Working Group on the Future Operation of INSTRAW in 2002 [YUN 2002, p. 1166], including the revision of INSTRAW's statute (see p. 1195), the implementation of its work programme, the creation of the post of Deputy Director with specific fund-raising responsibilities and the establishment of a liaison function for INSTRAW in DESA, the appointment of a Director (see below), increased coordination between INSTRAW and other relevant UN bodies and the management of INSTRAW. An external audit was conducted (26-30 May) on follow-up to audit recommendations, including recommendations made by the Office of Internal Oversight Services [YUN 2002, p. 1165] and progress in the implementation of the work programme for 2002 [ibid., p. 1166], the results of which would be reported to Member States once a management letter had been received.

The Secretary-General said that, as requested by Assembly resolution 57/311 (see p. 1200), the Secretariat had transferred \$250,000 to the Trust Fund for INSTRAW in June, which represented the second tranche of the regular budget subsidy of \$500,000 that was set aside in the contingency fund for the 2002-2003 biennium, in accordance with Assembly decision 57/580 [YUN 2002, p. 1167]. Largely due to the subsidy and savings from vacancies in INSTRAW, the Institute would be able to continue to operate at a minimal level until the end of May 2004. INSTRAW's precarious financial situation precluded long-term planning and programming, and its capacity to contribute to the advancement of women and gender equality continued to deteriorate. He concluded that, despite the efforts of the Working Group and the Secretariat, no progress had been made in the implementation of INSTRAW's institutional reform.

Working Group report. In response to General Assembly resolution 57/175, the Working Group on the Future Operation of INSTRAW, in an October report [A/58/540], updated the status of implementation of its recommendations. The Economic and Social Council had decided to amend the INSTRAW statute in order to transform the Board of Directors into an Executive Board (see p. 1195), the \$500,000 subsidy was allocated (see above) and the creation of a post of Deputy

Director had been enabled by the changes to the statute.

By **decision 58/533** of 22 December, the Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's and the Working Group's reports on the future operation of INSTRAW.

Appointment. In December, the Secretary-General announced the appointment of Carmen Moreno as Director of the Institute.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 23 December [meeting 79], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/58/501], adopted **resolution 58/244** by recorded vote (126-5-30) [agenda item 110].

Future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

The General Assembly,

Recalling its previous resolutions on the subject, in particular resolutions 55/219 of 23 December 2000, 56/125 of 19 December 2001 and 57/175 of 18 December 2002,

Recalling also that, in its resolution 56/125, it decided to establish a working group mandated to make recommendations to the General Assembly on the future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,

Reaffirming its resolution 57/311 of 18 June 2003 on the financial situation of the Institute,

Welcoming Economic and Social Council resolution 2003/57 of 24 July 2003, in which the Council decided to amend articles III and IV of the statute of the Institute,

Welcoming also the efforts and the consistency in the work of the Working Group on the Future Operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women in promoting a comprehensive approach to the revitalization and strengthening of the Institute, which has led to the adoption of important institutional and political changes that are contributing to the strengthening of the Institute,

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Working Group on the Future Operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, in which the Working Group, inter alia, reaffirmed the mandate of the Institute in the field of gender equality and the advancement of women and stressed the need for it to be reformed and revitalized, as recommended in its previous report and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/175;

2. *Decides* to continue monitoring the implementation of the measures recommended by the Working Group in its report, in close consultation with the Secretary-General;

3. *Stresses* the critical importance of voluntary financial contributions by Member States to the United Nations Trust Fund for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women to enable it to carry out its mandate;

4. *Urges* Member States to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund, particularly during this critical transitional period;

5. *Decides* to continue to provide its full support to the current efforts to revitalize the Institute and, in this regard, to provide funds complementary to the existing ones, if needed, to ensure that the Institute will have adequate resources to function for a period of one year and to submit its report to the General Assembly as requested in resolution 57/311, in the light of the delay in appointing a Director to implement a feasible work programme and fund-raising activities;

6. *Also decides* to request the Working Group to continue monitoring the implementation of the recommendations and measures contained in its report until the new executive board convenes its first session;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its fifty-ninth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

RECORDED VOTE ON RESOLUTION 58/244:

In favour: Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belarus, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Cape Verde, Central African Republic, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Dominica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Ghana, Greece, Grenada, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran, Italy, Jamaica, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Somalia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Suriname, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Tuvalu, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, United States.

Abstaining: Albania, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Korea, San Marino, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan.

Financial situation

During 2003, INSTRAW's financial situation remained precarious. In an April report [A/57/797] on INSTRAW's financial situation, submitted in response to General Assembly decision 57/580 [YUN 2002, p. 1167], the Secretary-General stated that, in accordance with the decision, \$250,000 was transferred to the Institute's Trust Fund in January, resulting in a balance of \$687,780, which was sufficient to finance the Institute's operations and related operating expenses until 31 May. However, contributions pledged during the Pledging Conference for Development Activities (New York, November 2002) had not been received. The Trust Fund's income during the first four months of 2003 amounted to \$138,919, including \$127,925 in government contributions and \$10,994 in miscellaneous income. On that basis, and taking into account that the Institute's Director was expected to be appointed as from 1 May, it was estimated that the Trust Fund's balance as at 31 May would amount to approximately \$481,900, which was considered sufficient for

maintaining its operations until the end of November. An additional amount of \$100,000 would, however, be required to sustain the Institute's operations until 31 December. The Secretary-General concluded that it was not possible to be definitive as to any contributions that might be made subsequent to the issuance of the current report. He recommended that the General Assembly take note of the current report and request a further report on the Institute's financial situation at its fifty-eighth (2003) session.

In May [A/57/7/Add.27], the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions endorsed the Secretary-General's recommendation.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 June [meeting 90], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Fifth (Administrative and Budgetary) Committee [A/57/649/Add.2], adopted **resolution 57/311** without vote [agenda item 112].

Financial situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

The General Assembly,

Recalling its decision 57/580 of 20 December 2002,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General on the financial situation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,

Having also considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the audit of the Institute,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General and of the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions;

2. *Takes note also* of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services;

3. *Regrets* that the nomination of a Director of the Institute, a post classified at the D-2 level, has not yet taken place, impairing the capacity of the Institute to function properly;

4. *Urges* the Secretary-General to appoint immediately a Director at the D-2 level, to be based at the headquarters of the Institute in the Dominican Republic, and thereafter to inform the Working Group on the Future Operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women of the designation of the nominee;

5. *Approves* the release of the amount of 250,000 United States dollars that was set aside in the contingency fund for the biennium 2002-2003, in conformity with the provisions of General Assembly decision 57/580, as an additional provision for the continuation of the core activities of the Institute in 2003, and decides to appropriate the amount of 250,000 dollars for this purpose;

6. *Recalls* its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, and in this connection stresses that the contingency fund is not in-

tended to be used as a recurring source of programme funding;

7. *Requests* the Institute to report to the General Assembly, one year after the appointment of a Director, on its programme of work and on the implementation of the recommendations contained in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report further to the General Assembly at its fifty-eighth session on the financial situation of the Institute.

As requested by Assembly resolution 57/311 (above), the Secretary-General submitted an October report [A/58/426] on INSTRAW's financial situation. During the reporting period (17 April-

30 September), additional income to the Trust Fund amounted to \$10,421, which included \$2,999 in government contributions and \$7,452 in miscellaneous income. As at 30 September, unpaid pledges to the Institute amounted to \$76,074. The level of expenditures for the period from 1 January to 30 September was lower than expected. That, coupled with the additional grant of \$250,000 from the UN regular budget, resulted in the Trust Fund's projected unencumbered balance as at 31 December 2003 being \$450,000, an amount that would allow the Institute's operations to continue until the end of May 2004.