

## Chapter X

**Women**

In 2006, United Nations efforts to promote the advancement of the status of women worldwide continued to be directed by the principles and guidelines of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth (1995) World Conference on Women, and the outcome of the General Assembly's twenty-third (2000) special session (Beijing+5), which reviewed progress in their implementation. In July, the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly an in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, which provided recommendations for making measurable progress in preventing and eliminating violence against women. During the year, both the Economic and Social Council and the Assembly adopted resolutions on violence against women. The Assembly also adopted a resolution on trafficking in women and girls. Progress was achieved in gender mainstreaming, with the October endorsement by the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination of a draft system-wide policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women. In November, the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment submitted its report entitled "Delivering as one", which addressed gender equality and recommended the establishment of a new UN gender architecture, with an Executive Director at the level of Under-Secretary-General to head the new proposed office.

At its fiftieth session in March, the Commission on the Status of Women convened a high-level panel discussion on the gender dimensions of international migration, a summary of which was transmitted to the Assembly for its high-level dialogue on international migration in September. The Commission recommended to the Council for adoption draft resolutions on women and girls in Afghanistan, assistance to Palestinian women, and the future organization and methods of the Commission's work. It also adopted resolutions on women and children taken hostage in armed conflict; women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS; and the advisability of appointing a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women. In July, the Economic and Social Council adopted a resolution on the organization and working methods of the Commission.

The United Nations Development Fund for Women continued to focus on the implementation of its multi-year funding framework, which targeted goals in four key areas: feminized poverty, violence against women, the spread of HIV/AIDS and gender equality in democratic governance and in post-conflict countries. Efforts by the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality resulted in progress in the areas of performance indicators for country teams and an action learning process to devise UN models for gender equality programmes.

In 2006, the United Nations continued to strengthen and revitalize the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW). In May, the Executive Board considered the report of its Subcommittee on the Resource Mobilization Strategy on a proposed fund-raising strategy, which had been submitted by the INSTRAW Director as part of the continuing efforts to strengthen the Institute.

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

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During 2006, 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 both instruments, adopted at the twenty-third (2000) special session of the Assembly (Beijing+5) by resolution S/23-2 [YUN 2000, p. 1084]. The 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 outlined 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 of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and

the girl child (see pp. 1333-1354 for action taken regarding the critical areas of concern). The issue of mainstreaming a gender perspective into UN policies and programmes continued to be addressed (see World Summit Outcome below and p. 1350).

**World Summit Outcome implementation.** In response to mandates in the 2005 World Summit Outcome document [YUN 2005, p. 48] to take further steps in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the Organization's policies and decisions, the Secretary-General, in his report on implementation of the outcome decisions [YUN 2005, p. 77], requested all UN entities to review and strengthen their gender mainstreaming programmes with a view to developing a system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming with related accountability mechanisms. In June 2006 [E/2006/83], the Secretary-General reported on progress achieved and UN system efforts to develop such an instrument, including consultations through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE) (see p. 1349) and the High-Level Committees on Programme and on Management of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Consequently, a number of broad principles and practical elements were established, which would be further developed and refined through a system-wide survey of UN system capacity on gender mainstreaming and the findings of the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence (see p. 1352).

The Secretary-General concluded that achieving gender equality and empowerment of women was central to realizing internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [YUN 2000, p. 51], and to the pursuit of peace, human rights and poverty alleviation. In that context, UN entities had made significant progress in supporting Member States to attain gender equality. He highlighted the role of senior managers in creating an environment that supported gender mainstreaming and said that that element would form part of his compact with senior managers, where their management goals were set. A report on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all UN policies and programmes with a focus on training activities was issued in a separate document (see p. 1350).

On 24 July, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Secretary-General's report (**decision 2006/227**).

**Report of Secretary-General.** Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 60/140 [YUN 2005, p. 1248], the Secretary-General, in a July report [A/61/174], reviewed steps taken by the Assembly and its Main Committees during its sixtieth (2005) ses-

sion to promote the achievement of gender equality through the gender mainstreaming strategy, by assessing the extent to which resolutions had taken into account gender perspectives or had made specific recommendations for action. The report also reviewed from a gender perspective the resolutions submitted by the Assembly's Main Committees as well as outcomes of major events, including the 2005 World Summit [YUN 2005, p. 47], the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society [ibid., p. 933], and the High-Level Meeting on HIV/AIDS (New York, 31 May-2 June) (see p. 1410). It also assessed the extent to which reports and notes of the Secretary-General had supported attention to gender perspectives in the Assembly's deliberations and outcomes.

The Secretary-General concluded that gender perspectives had not been fully incorporated into resolutions adopted by the Assembly's Main Committees and into the outcomes of major events over the past year. Approximately 25 per cent of all resolutions included gender perspectives, and only half of those made gender-specific, action-oriented recommendations. As in previous years, resolutions submitted by the Second (Economic and Social) and Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committees, as well as those adopted without reference to a Main Committee, paid greater attention to gender perspectives than other Assembly Committees. Similarly, increased attention was given to gender perspectives in documentation prepared for major events, and in reports submitted to the Second and Third Committees. Some correlation also existed between the inclusion of gender perspectives in reports of the Secretary-General and their integration into Assembly resolutions. The Secretary-General recommended that the Assembly should ensure the integration of gender perspectives in the implementation of and follow-up to major international conferences and summits by its subsidiary bodies, particularly the 2005 World Summit, as well as in the outcomes of the High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (see p. 1261) and the high-level meeting on the midterm comprehensive global review of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the decade 2001-2010 (see p. 1011). The Assembly should also ensure gender mainstreaming in the preparation and follow-up to the special session on children (see p. 1361); encourage its Committees and subsidiary bodies to pay more attention to gender perspectives by including action-oriented recommendations on gender equality in their resolutions and decisions, and enhance monitoring of gender mainstreaming

progress through systematic reviews; ensure that the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council include gender perspectives in the development of their work methods and in consideration of the issues on their respective agendas; and request that reports submitted to the Assembly facilitate gender-sensitive policy development, based on qualitative gender analysis, with concrete conclusions and recommendations for further action.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 81], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/61/438], adopted **resolution 61/145** without vote [agenda item 61 (b)].

#### **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 60/140 of 16 December 2005,

*Deeply convinced* that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action 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” are important contributions to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned,

*Reaffirming* the commitments to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions, and reaffirming also that their full, effective and accelerated implementation are integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

*Welcoming* progress made towards achieving gender equality, but stressing that challenges and obstacles remain in the 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 session rests primarily at the national level and that strengthened efforts are necessary in this respect, and reiterating that enhanced international cooperation is essential for full, effective and accelerated implementation,

*Reaffirming* that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting the empowerment of women and achieving gender equality by transforming structures of inequality, and reaffirming also the commitment to actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender

perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, as well as the commitment to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender equality,

*Bearing in mind* the challenges and obstacles to changing discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes, and stressing that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of international standards and norms to address the inequality between men and women,

*Expressing serious concern* that the urgent goal of 50/50 gender balance in the United Nations system, especially at senior and policymaking levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, remains unmet, and that the representation of women in the United Nations system has remained almost static, with negligible improvement in some parts of the system, and in some cases has even decreased, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system,

*Reaffirming* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding,

*Reaffirming also* the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS adopted at the High-level Meeting on AIDS, held from 31 May to 2 June 2006, which, inter alia, acknowledged the feminization of the pandemic,

*Noting with appreciation* the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming,

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

2. *Reaffirms* 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, and the declaration adopted on the occasion of the ten-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and also reaffirms its commitment to their full, effective and accelerated implementation;

3. *Recognizes* that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are mutually reinforcing in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, and in this regard welcomes the contributions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to promoting the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, and invites States parties to the Convention to include information on measures taken to enhance implementation at the

national level in their reports to the Committee under article 18 of the Convention;

4. *Calls upon* Governments, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, and all sectors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as all women and men, to fully commit themselves and to intensify their contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

5. *Calls upon* States parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto and to take into consideration the concluding comments as well as the general recommendations of the Committee, urges States parties to consider limiting the extent of any reservations that they lodge to the Convention, to formulate any reservations as precisely and narrowly as possible, and to regularly review such reservations with a view to withdrawing them so as to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, also urges all Member States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to consider doing so, and calls upon those Member States that have not yet done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

6. *Encourages* all actors, inter alia, Governments, the United Nations system, other international organizations and civil society, to continue to support the work of the Commission on the Status of Women in fulfilling its central role in the follow-up to and review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, and, as applicable, to carry out its recommendations, and welcomes, in this regard, the revised programme and methods of work of the Commission adopted at its fiftieth session, which give particular attention to the sharing of experiences, lessons learned and good practices in overcoming challenges to full implementation at the national and international levels as well as to the evaluation of progress in the implementation of priority themes;

7. *Calls upon* Governments, and the relevant funds and programmes, organs and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and invites the international financial institutions and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to intensify 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, through, inter alia:

(a) Sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels to take further action, inter alia, through the mainstreaming of gender perspectives, including through the development and use of gender equality indicators, as applicable, in all policies and programmes and the promotion of full and equal participation and empowerment of women, and enhanced international cooperation;

(b) Promotion and protection of, and respect for, the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental

freedoms by women and girls, including through the full implementation by States of their obligations under all human rights instruments, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(c) Ensuring full representation and full and equal participation of women in political, social and economic decision-making as an essential condition for gender equality, and the empowerment of women and girls as a critical factor in the eradication of poverty;

(d) Respect for the rule of law, including legislation, and continued efforts to repeal laws and eradicate policies and practices that discriminate against women and girls, and to adopt laws and promote practices that protect their rights;

(e) Strengthening the role of national institutional mechanisms for gender equality and the advancement of women, including through financial and other appropriate assistance, to increase their direct impact on women;

(f) Undertaking socio-economic policies that promote sustainable development and ensure poverty eradication programmes, especially for women and girls, and strengthening the provision of and ensuring equal access to adequate, affordable and accessible public and social services, including education and training at all levels, as well as to all types of permanent and sustainable social protection/social security systems for women throughout their life cycle, and supporting national efforts in this regard;

(g) Taking further steps to ensure that the educational system and the media, to the extent consistent with freedom of expression, support the use of non-stereotypic, balanced and diverse images of women presenting them as key actors of the process of development as well as promoting non-discriminatory roles of women and men in their private and public life;

(h) Incorporating gender perspectives and human rights in health-sector policies and programmes, paying attention to women's specific needs and priorities, ensuring women's right to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health and their access to affordable and adequate health-care services, including sexual, reproductive and maternal health care and lifesaving obstetric care, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and recognizing that the lack of economic empowerment and independence has increased women's vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, involving the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other poverty-related diseases;

(i) Eliminating gender inequalities, gender-based abuse and violence; increasing the capacity of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and services, including, inter alia, sexual and reproductive health, and the provision of full access to comprehensive information and education; ensuring that women can exercise their right to have control over, and decide freely and responsibly on, matters related to their sexuality in order to increase their ability to protect

themselves from HIV infection, including their sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence; and taking all necessary measures to create an enabling environment for the empowerment of women and to strengthen their economic independence, while, in this context, reiterating the importance of the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality;

(j) Strengthening national health and social infrastructures to reinforce measures to promote women's access to public health and taking action at the national level to address shortages of human resources for health, by, inter alia, developing, financing and implementing policies, within national development strategies, to improve training and management and effectively govern the recruitment, retention and deployment of health workers, including through international cooperation in this area;

(k) 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;

(l) Increased partnerships among Governments, civil society and the private sector;

(m) Encouraging joint responsibility of men and boys with women and girls in the promotion of gender equality, based on the conviction that this is essential to the achievement of the goals of gender equality, development and peace;

(n) Removing structural and legal barriers, as well as eliminating stereotypic attitudes, to gender equality at work, promoting equal pay for equal work, and promoting the recognition of the value of women's unremunerated work, as well as developing and promoting policies that facilitate the reconciliation of employment and family responsibilities;

8. *Reaffirms* that States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent violence against women and girls, provide protection to the victims and investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls, and that failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and calls upon Governments to eliminate violence against women and girls and to elaborate and implement strategies in this regard;

9. *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;

10. *Resolves* to intensify the efforts of its Main Committees and subsidiary bodies to fully mainstream a gender perspective in their work, as well as in all United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions and in their follow-up processes;

11. *Requests* that reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly and its subsidiary bodies systematically address gender perspectives

through qualitative gender analysis and, where available, quantitative data, in particular through concrete conclusions and recommendations for further action on gender equality and the advancement of women, in order to facilitate gender-sensitive policy development;

12. *Urges* Governments and all entities of the United Nations system, including United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, and all relevant actors of civil society, to ensure the integration of gender perspectives in the implementation of and follow-up to all United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions and to give attention to gender perspectives in preparation for such events, including the upcoming special session on children;

13. *Reaffirms its call* to recently established subsidiary bodies, namely, the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council, to integrate attention to gender perspectives into their consideration of all issues in their respective agendas, including the development of their methods of work;

14. *Encourages* the Economic and Social Council to continue its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of its work and that of its subsidiary bodies, through, inter alia, implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 and its resolution 2004/4 of 7 July 2004;

15. *Welcomes* the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2006 of the Economic and Social Council, which, inter alia, underlined the need for the consistent use of a gender mainstreaming strategy for the creation of an enabling environment for women's participation in development, and calls upon all stakeholders to work to ensure the full incorporation of gender perspectives in the implementation of the declaration;

16. *Requests* all bodies that deal with programme and budgetary matters, including the Committee for Programme and Coordination, to ensure that programmes, plans and budgets visibly mainstream gender perspectives;

17. *Reaffirms* the primary and essential role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the central role of the Commission on the Status of Women, in promoting the advancement of women and gender equality;

18. *Also reaffirms* the commitment made at the 2005 World Summit to the full and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000, while noting the sixth anniversary of its adoption and the open debates in the Council on women and peace and security;

19. *Urges* Governments and the United Nations system to take further steps to ensure the integration of a gender perspective and the full and equal participation of women in all efforts to promote peace and security, as well as to increase their role in decision-making at all levels, including through the development of national action plans and strategies;

20. *Calls upon* all parts of the United Nations system to continue to play an active role in ensuring the full,

effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, through, inter alia, the work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women and the maintenance of gender specialists in all entities of the United Nations system, as well as by ensuring that all personnel, especially in the field, receive training and appropriate follow-up, including tools, guidance and support, for accelerated gender mainstreaming, and reaffirms the need to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender;

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General to review and redouble his efforts to make progress towards achieving the goal of 50/50 gender balance at all levels in the Secretariat and throughout the United Nations system, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, considering in particular women from developing and least developed countries, from countries with economies in transition and from unrepresented or largely underrepresented Member States, and to ensure managerial and departmental accountability with respect to gender balance targets, and strongly encourages Member States to identify and regularly submit more women candidates for appointment to positions in the United Nations system, especially at more senior and policymaking levels;

22. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to report annually to the General Assembly, under the item entitled "Advancement of women", as well as to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council, 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 in gender mainstreaming, including information on key achievements, lessons learned and good practices, and recommendations on further measures to enhance implementation.

## Critical areas of concern

### Violence against women

In compliance with General Assembly resolution 50/166 [YUN 1995, p. 1188], the Secretary-General transmitted a report [A/HRC/4/469-E/CN.6/2007/6] of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on its 2006 activities to eliminate violence against women and manage the UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. Implementation of the 2005-2008 revised strategy for the Trust Fund [YUN 2005, p. 1251] continued, including measures to enhance UN system-wide involvement with the Fund, increase the resources available for end-violence work, and target the critical areas of support for national-level implementation and the intersection of violence against

women with cross-cutting issues. In addition to convening global meetings, UNIFEM convened 12 sub-regional project appraisal committees. While efforts to increase the Trust Fund's resource base yielded significant results totalling \$3.5 million during the year, demand for support greatly exceeded available funds, with \$190 million in requests. Grant-making focused on supporting the implementation of laws, policies and plans to eliminate violence against women and innovative approaches for addressing the interlinkages between HIV/AIDS and violence against women. In 2006, the Trust Fund, under its eleventh grant-making cycle, provided \$2.8 million to 28 initiatives in 20 countries, bringing the total awarded since its inception in 1997 to nearly \$13 million in grants to 226 initiatives in more than 100 countries. The Secretary-General stressed the need to increase resources for end-violence work and recommended that States, donors and international organizations significantly increase their support to the Trust Fund.

### *In-depth study on violence against women*

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 58/185 [YUN 2003, p. 1172], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/61/122/Add.1 & Corr.1] containing an in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, which was prepared by the UN Division for the Advancement of Women to highlight the persistence and unacceptability of violence against women worldwide, strengthen the political commitment and joint efforts of stakeholders to prevent and eliminate violence against women, and identify ways to ensure more sustained and effective implementation of State obligations to address such violence and increase State accountability. The study provided an overview of the emergence of violence against women as a public concern and responsibility, discussed the context where such violence occurred and its causes, and reviewed forms and manifestations of violence, as well as its consequences and costs. Data availability, States' responsibilities and promising practices for addressing violence against women were also covered.

The study concluded that violence against women was a widespread and serious problem that affected the lives of countless women and hampered progress towards the achievement of equality, development and peace everywhere. It endangered women's lives, impeded the full development of their capabilities and was a violation of human rights, rooted in historically unequal power relations between men and women and the systemic discrimination against women that pervaded both the public and private spheres. While violence against women was uni-

versal and present in every society and culture, it took various forms and was experienced differently, shaped by the intersection of gender with other factors, such as race, ethnicity, class, age, sexual orientation, disability, nationality, legal status, religion and culture. Significant progress had been made over the past two decades in elaborating and agreeing on international standards and norms to address violence against women. States had a duty to prevent violence against women, investigate and prosecute such acts when they occurred, punish perpetrators, and provide remedies and redress to victims. However, those obligations were not being met and there was a significant gap between the international standards on violence against women and the commitment of political capital and resources to implement those standards. A series of recommendations for action at the national level focused on six key areas: securing gender equality and protecting women's human rights; exercising leadership to end violence against women; closing the gaps between international standards and national laws, policies and practices; strengthening the knowledge base on all forms of violence against women to inform policy and strategy development; building and sustaining multisectoral strategies, coordinated nationally and locally; and allocating adequate resources and funding. Recommendations directed at the international level centred on the leadership role of intergovernmental bodies and UN system entities, and on other aspects related to the UN system, such as coordination and institutional support, collection of data and research, as well as operational activities at the country level, including humanitarian assistance and peacekeeping missions.

In July [A/61/122], the Secretary-General transmitted the in-depth study (see above) to the General Assembly for consideration and action, and provided a summary of the mandate, preparatory process, content and recommendations of the study. The inputs and contributions of many actors were reflected in the study, including among others, 129 Member States, 150 States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) (see p. 1354), as well as UN system entities, human rights treaty bodies and special procedures, in particular, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other civil society actors. Voluntary contributions to support the preparation of the study had been received from eight Member States. The Secretary-General stressed the need for the elimination of violence

against women to become a local, national, regional and global priority, and for the effective and accelerated implementation of actions to prevent and respond to such violence. He commended the study and its recommendations, which he said constituted a clear strategy for Member States and the UN system to make measurable progress in preventing and eliminating violence against women.

#### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 81], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/61/438], adopted **resolution 61/143**, without vote [agenda item 61 (a)].

#### **Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women**

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming* the obligation of all States to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, 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 all forms of violence against women,

*Reaffirming also* the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, 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", and the declaration adopted at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women,

*Reaffirming further* the international commitments in the field of social development and to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the World Summit for Social Development and the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, as well as those made in the United Nations Millennium Declaration and at the 2005 World Summit,

*Recalling* all its previous resolutions on the elimination of violence against women and on the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, and Security Council resolution 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security,

*Recalling also* Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/41 of 19 April 2005 on the elimination of violence against women,

*Recalling further* the inclusion of gender-related crimes and crimes of sexual violence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

*Recognizing* that violence against women is rooted in historically unequal power relations between men and

women and that all forms of violence against women seriously violate and impair or nullify the enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and constitute a major impediment to the ability of women to make use of their capabilities,

*Recognizing also* that women's poverty and lack of empowerment, as well as their marginalization resulting from their exclusion from social policies and from the benefits of sustainable development, can place them at increased risk of violence,

*Recognizing further* that violence against women impedes the social and economic development of communities and States, as well as the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

*Recognizing* the serious immediate and long-term implications for health, including sexual and reproductive health, as well as an increased vulnerability to HIV/AIDS, and the negative impact on psychological, social and economic development that violence against women represents for individuals, families, communities and States,

*Deeply concerned* about the pervasiveness of violence against women and girls in all its forms and manifestations worldwide, and reiterating the need to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls throughout the world,

*Taking note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, and having considered with interest the recommendations contained therein,

1. *Recognizes* that violence against women and girls persists in every country in the world as a pervasive violation of the enjoyment of human rights and a major impediment to achieving gender equality, development and peace;

2. *Welcomes* the efforts and important contributions at the local, national, regional and international levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and takes note with appreciation of the work done by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences;

3. *Stresses* that "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;

4. *Strongly condemns* all acts of violence against women and girls, whether these acts are perpetrated by the State, by private persons or by non-State actors, calls for the elimination of all forms of gender-based violence in the family, within the general community and where perpetrated or condoned by the State, and stresses the need to treat all forms of violence against women and girls as a criminal offence, punishable by law;

5. *Stresses* that it is important that States strongly condemn violence against women and refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination as

set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women;

6. *Stresses also* that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of international standards and norms to address the inequality between men and women and violence against women in particular, and pledges to intensify action to ensure their full and accelerated implementation;

7. *Stresses further* that States have the obligation to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls and must exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and to provide protection to the victims, and that failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms;

8. *Urges* States to take action to eliminate all forms of violence against women by means of a more systematic, comprehensive, multisectoral and sustained approach, adequately supported and facilitated by strong institutional mechanisms and financing, through national action plans, including those supported by international cooperation and, where appropriate, national development plans, including poverty eradication strategies and programme-based and sector-wide approaches, and to this end:

(a) To ensure that all human rights and fundamental freedoms are respected and protected;

(b) To consider ratifying or acceding to all human rights treaties, including, as a particular matter of priority, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto, limit the extent of any reservations that they lodge and regularly review such reservations with a view to withdrawing them so as to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the relevant treaty;

(c) To review and, where appropriate, revise, amend or abolish all laws, regulations, policies, practices and customs that discriminate against women or have a discriminatory impact on women, and ensure that provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, commitments and principles, including the principle of non-discrimination;

(d) To exercise leadership to end all forms of violence against women and support advocacy in this regard at all levels, including at the local, national, regional and international levels, and by all sectors, especially by political and community leaders, as well as the public and private sectors, the media and civil society;

(e) To empower women, particularly poor women, through, inter alia, social and economic policies that guarantee them full and equal access to all levels of quality education and training and to affordable and adequate public and social services, as well as full and equal rights to own land and other property, and to take further appropriate measures to address the increasing rate of homelessness or inadequate housing for women in order to reduce their vulnerability to violence;

(f) To take positive measures to address structural causes of violence against women and to strengthen prevention efforts that address discriminatory practices and social norms, including with regard to women who need special attention in the development of policies to address violence, such as women belonging to minority groups, including those based on nationality, ethnicity, religion or language, indigenous women, migrant women, stateless women, women living in underdeveloped, rural or remote communities, homeless women, women in institutions or in detention, women with disabilities, elderly women, widows and women who are otherwise discriminated against;

(g) To ensure that diverse strategies that take into account the intersection of gender with other factors are developed in order to eradicate all forms of violence against women;

(h) To exercise due diligence to prevent all acts of violence against women, including by improving the safety of public environments;

(i) To end impunity for violence against women, by prosecuting and punishing all perpetrators, by ensuring that women have equal protection of the law and equal access to justice and by holding up to public scrutiny and eliminating those attitudes that foster, justify or tolerate violence;

(j) To strengthen national health and social infrastructure to reinforce measures to promote women's equal access to public health and address the health consequences of violence against women, including by providing support to victims;

(k) To recognize that gender inequalities and all forms of violence against women and girls increase their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and ensure that women can exercise their right to have control over, and decide freely and responsibly on, matters related to their sexuality in order to increase their ability to protect themselves from HIV infection, including their sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence;

(l) To ensure that men and women and boys and girls have access to education and literacy programmes and are educated on gender equality and human rights, particularly women's rights and their responsibility to respect the rights of others, inter alia, by integrating women's rights into all appropriate curricula and by developing gender-sensitive teaching materials and classroom practices, especially for early childhood education;

(m) To provide training and capacity-building on gender equality and women's rights for, inter alia, health workers, teachers, law enforcement personnel, military personnel, social workers, the judiciary, community leaders and the media;

(n) To promote awareness and information campaigns on women's rights and the responsibility to respect them, including in rural areas, and encourage men and boys to speak out strongly against violence against women;

(o) To protect women and girls in situations of armed conflict, post-conflict settings and refugee and internally displaced persons settings, where women are at greater

risk of being targeted for violence and where their ability to seek and receive redress is often restricted, bearing in mind that peace is inextricably linked with equality between women and men and development, that armed and other types of conflicts and terrorism and hostage-taking still persist in many parts of the world and that aggression, foreign occupation and ethnic and other types of conflicts are an ongoing reality affecting women and men in nearly every region, undertake efforts to eliminate impunity for all gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict, bearing in mind relevant General Assembly resolutions and Security Council resolution 1325(2000) on women and peace and security, and adopt, consistent with their obligations under the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto, international human rights norms and relevant conclusions of the Executive Committee of the Programme of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and General Assembly resolutions, a gender-sensitive approach to the consideration of claims for the granting of asylum and refugee status;

(p) To integrate a gender perspective into national plans of action and establish or strengthen specific national plans of action on the elimination of violence against women, supported by the necessary human, financial and technical resources, including, where appropriate, time-bound measurable targets, to promote the protection of women against any form of violence, and accelerate the implementation of existing national action plans that are regularly monitored and updated by Governments, taking into account inputs by civil society, in particular women's organizations, networks and other stakeholders;

(q) To allocate adequate resources to promote the empowerment of women and gender equality and to prevent and redress all forms and manifestations of violence against women;

9. *Calls upon* the international community, including the United Nations system and, as appropriate, regional and subregional organizations, to support national efforts to promote the empowerment of women and gender equality in order to enhance national efforts to eliminate violence against women and girls, including, upon request, in the development and implementation of national action plans on the elimination of violence against women and girls, through, inter alia, and taking into account national priorities, official development assistance and other appropriate assistance, such as facilitating the sharing of guidelines, methodologies and best practices;

10. *Urges* States to integrate gender perspectives into the comprehensive national development plans and poverty eradication strategies that address social, structural and macroeconomic issues, and to ensure that such strategies address violence against women and girls, and urges the United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies and invites the Bretton Woods institutions to support national efforts in this regard;

11. *Also urges* States to ensure the systematic collection and analysis of data on violence against women,

including with the involvement of national statistical offices and, where appropriate, in partnership with other actors, taking note of the World Health Organization multi-country study on women's health and domestic violence against women and its recommendation to enhance capacity and establish systems for data collection to monitor violence against women;

12. *Urges* the United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, and invites the Bretton Woods institutions, in accordance with their mandates, to support, upon request and within existing resources, the strengthening of national capacities and efforts on the collection, processing and dissemination of data, including data disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant information, for their possible use for legislative, policy and programme development and in the national plans of action against all forms of violence against women;

13. *Notes* the work carried out for the elimination of all forms of violence against women by relevant United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and relevant specialized agencies, including those responsible for the promotion of gender equality and women's rights, and urges them and invites the Bretton Woods institutions:

(a) To enhance the coordination of and intensify their efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in a more systematic, comprehensive and sustained way, inter alia, through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality supported by the newly established Task Force on Violence against Women, in close collaboration with relevant civil society, including non-governmental organizations;

(b) To enhance coordination in a more systematic, comprehensive and sustained way of their assistance to States in their efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, including in the development or implementation of national action plans and, where appropriate, national development plans, including poverty reduction strategies where they exist, and programme-based and sector-wide approaches and in close collaboration with relevant civil society, including non-governmental organizations;

14. *Calls upon* the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality to consider ways and means to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women as a system-wide funding mechanism for preventing and redressing all forms of violence against women and girls;

15. *Strongly encourages* States to increase significantly their voluntary financial support for activities related to preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women, the empowerment of women and gender equality carried out by the specialized agencies and the United Nations funds and programmes, including the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women;

16. *Stresses* that within the United Nations system adequate resources should be assigned to those bodies,

specialized agencies, funds and programmes responsible for the promotion of gender equality and women's rights and to efforts throughout the United Nations system to eliminate violence against women and girls;

17. *Invites* the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and other relevant United Nations bodies to discuss, by 2008, within their respective mandates, the question of violence against women in all its forms and manifestations, bearing in mind the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women, and to set priorities for addressing this issue in their future efforts and work programmes and to transmit the outcome of those discussions to the Secretary-General for his annual report to the General Assembly;

18. *Requests* the Statistical Commission to develop and propose, in consultation with the Commission on the Status of Women, and building on the work of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, a set of possible indicators on violence against women in order to assist States in assessing the scope, prevalence and incidence of violence against women;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General to establish a coordinated database, containing data provided by States, in particular national statistical offices, including, where appropriate, through relevant United Nations entities and other relevant regional intergovernmental organizations, disaggregated by sex, age and other relevant information, on the extent, nature and consequences of all forms of violence against women, and on the impact and effectiveness of policies and programmes for, including best practices in, combating such violence;

20. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit an annual report to the General Assembly on the implementation of the present resolution, addressing the question of violence against women, and requests that the report include:

(a) At the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, information provided by the United Nations bodies, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies on their follow-up activities to implement the resolution;

(b) At the sixty-third session of the General Assembly, information provided by States on their follow-up activities to implement the resolution;

21. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the question at its sixty-second session under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

### *Crime prevention and criminal justice response to violence against women*

On 25 April, the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice [E/2006/30 & Corr.1] (see p. 1289) convened a thematic discussion on maximizing the effectiveness of technical assistance provided to Member States in crime prevention and

criminal justice. In a statement at the opening of the debate, the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on violence against women, its causes and consequences (see p. 888) highlighted the importance of an adequate response to violence against women, at both the international and national level. She indicated that the international legal framework aimed at ending violence against women was being progressively strengthened, particularly with the inclusion of sexual offences in a range of international conventions. Given the mandate of the UN Office on Drugs and Crime in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice, there was scope for greater coordination between her work and that of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. The Commission recommended a draft resolution to the Economic and Social Council for adoption on crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women and girls.

#### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 27 July [meeting 41], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice [E/2006/30 & Corr.1], adopted **resolution 2006/29**, without vote [agenda item 14 (c)].

#### Crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women and girls

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* that, at the 2005 World Summit held at United Nations Headquarters from 14 to 16 September 2005, Heads of State and Government underscored the importance of eliminating all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls,

*Recalling also* the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995, and, in particular, the determination of Governments to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls,

*Bearing in mind* that, in the Vienna Declaration on Crime and Justice: Meeting the Challenges of the Twenty-first Century, adopted by the Tenth United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, held in Vienna from 10 to 17 April 2000, Member States committed themselves to taking into account and addressing, within the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, as well as within national crime prevention and criminal justice strategies, any disparate impact of programmes and policies on women and men,

*Recalling* that, in the plans of action for the implementation of the Vienna Declaration, specific national and international measures on the special needs of women

as criminal justice practitioners, victims, prisoners and offenders were recommended,

*Recalling also* that the Bangkok Declaration on Synergies and Responses: Strategic Alliances in Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, adopted at the high-level segment of the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Bangkok from 18 to 25 April 2005, emphasized the importance of promoting the interests of victims of crime, including taking account of their gender,

*Reaffirming* General Assembly resolution 52/86 of 12 December 1997 on crime prevention and criminal justice measures to eliminate violence against women, in which the Assembly adopted the Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and called upon the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice to continue to consider the elimination of violence against women within the training and technical assistance efforts of the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme,

*Noting* Security Council resolution 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000 on women, peace and security, in which the Council recognized the serious impact of armed conflict and resulting violence directed against women in such situations,

*Recalling* its resolution 1996/12 of 23 July 1996 on the elimination of violence against women, in which it urged Member States to review or monitor legislation and legal principles, procedures, policies and practices relating to criminal matters to determine if they had an adverse or negative impact on women and, if they had such an impact, to modify them in order to ensure that women were treated fairly by the criminal justice system,

*Recalling also* its resolution 2005/20 of 22 July 2005, in which it adopted the Guidelines on Justice in Matters Involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime, which contain a gender perspective,

*Reaffirming* its resolution 2005/21 of 22 July 2005 on strengthening the rule of law and the reform of criminal justice institutions, in which it encouraged the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to continue to develop tools and training manuals on criminal justice reform, based on international standards and best practices,

*Noting* previous and ongoing work of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in the area of violence against women and children,

*Noting also* the holding of the Workshop on Violence against Women in the Twenty-first Century, organized by the Government of France, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe in Paris on 28 and 29 April 2005,

*Recognizing* the challenge of developing effective criminal justice initiatives targeting violence against women and girls, in particular in the area of designing appropriate law enforcement responses in developing countries and countries with societies in transition, which would ensure the protection of victims while guaranteeing that perpetrators are effectively prosecuted and held accountable for their acts,

*Noting* the progress made by the independent expert in preparing the study on violence against children, requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/190 of 18 December 2002, which will pay particular attention to the situation of girls, and the contribution of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to that study,

*Welcoming* the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women requested by the General Assembly in its resolution 58/185 of 22 December 2003 and looking forward to its publication, and also welcoming the contribution of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to that study in the form of the co-sponsoring, with the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Secretariat, of an expert group meeting held in May 2005 on good practices in combating and eliminating violence against women,

*Expressing concern* at the high levels of violence against women and girls in many societies,

1. *Urges* Member States to consider, to the utmost extent possible, using the Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Women in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in developing and undertaking strategies and practical measures to eliminate violence against women and in promoting women's equality within the criminal justice system;

2. *Strongly encourages* Member States to promote an active and visible policy for integrating a gender perspective into the development and implementation of policies and programmes in the field of crime prevention and criminal justice in order to assist with the elimination of violence against women and girls;

3. *Requests* the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, within available extrabudgetary resources, not excluding the use of existing resources from the regular budget of the Office, and invites the institutes comprising the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme Network to consider providing assistance, upon request, to Member States in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women and girls, in cooperation with other relevant entities of the United Nations system, and to integrate the elimination of violence against women and girls into their training and technical assistance efforts, including their crime prevention activities;

4. *Welcomes* the development by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime of a handbook for law enforcement officials on effective responses to violence against women, and encourages the Office, within available extrabudgetary resources, not excluding the use of existing resources from the regular budget of the Office, to continue to develop tools and training manuals on criminal justice reform, with a gender perspective, and targeting the special needs of women in the criminal justice system, including women in prison settings;

5. *Also welcomes* the work already carried out by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in providing assistance to victims of violence, in particular women and children, by setting up one-stop centres and supporting non-governmental organizations active in that area, and

invites the Office, within available extrabudgetary resources, not excluding the use of existing resources from the regular budget of the Office, to draw on its experience to expand such activities;

6. *Invites* Member States to provide resources to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to enable it to provide effective assistance to Member States in the area of crime prevention and criminal justice responses to violence against women and girls;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its seventeenth session, in 2008, on the implementation of the present resolution.

## Women and armed conflict

### *Women, peace and security*

**Report of Secretary-General.** In response to the Security Council request in presidential statement S/PRST/2005/52 [YUN 2005, p. 1255] to annually review the implementation and integration of the System-wide Action Plan developed in 2005 [ibid.] for the implementation of resolution 1325(2000) [YUN 2000, p. 1113], the Secretary-General submitted a September report on women, peace and security [S/2006/770]. The Action Plan, which covered virtually all major areas of action in the field of women, peace and security, encompassed a total of 269 actions and provided a framework for inter-agency activities during the period 2005-2007. The review focused on implementation of the Plan by UN entities, the assessment of institutional capacities, including monitoring, reporting and accountability procedures, and ways of strengthening implementation of resolution 1325(2000) and mainstreaming a gender perspective in all areas of action of the Plan. Progress achieved, including examples of good practices, was summarized in the report, in addition to gaps and challenges in capacity to implement the Plan and lessons learned. Recommendations for future action were also provided.

The Secretary-General observed that, while gender equality was increasingly recognized as a core issue in the maintenance of international peace and security, the role of women in peace processes continued to be viewed as a side issue rather than a fundamental element in the development of viable democratic institutions and the establishment of sustainable peace. Significant progress had been made in many areas of the Plan, particularly in peacekeeping, peacemaking and peacebuilding, but more could be done by the UN system at all levels, both at Headquarters and in the field. He concluded that the review had confirmed the benefit of the Action Plan and the revisions proposed in the report were essential to make it a more effective tool for strength-

ened inter-agency coordination, enhanced accountability and ownership, and improved organizational culture supportive of the goals and ideals contained in resolution 1325(2000). In that connection, the Secretary-General recommended that the Action Plan be renewed beyond 2007 and prepared in line with the report's findings and actions.

**Communications.** On 4 October [S/2006/793], Japan indicated that the Security Council was scheduled to hold a debate on "The roles of women in the consolidation of peace" on 26 October, which would also mark the sixth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325(2000). On 23 October [A/61/541-S/2006/848], Sweden forwarded the report of the High-level meeting on "Gender justice in Liberia: the way forward" (Monrovia, 9-10 October), which was organized by the Partners for Gender Justice in Conflict Affected Societies, in cooperation with the Ministry of Gender and Development and the Ministry of Justice of Liberia and discussed priority requirements and assistance needs in the area of justice, particularly gender justice in a post-conflict society.

#### SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION

On 26 October [meeting 5556], following consultations among Security Council members, the President made statement **S/PRST/2006/42** on behalf of the Council:

The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325(2000) and recalls the statements by its President of 31 October 2001, 31 October 2002, 28 October 2004 and 27 October 2005, as reiterating that commitment.

The Council recalls the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the declaration of the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

The Council recognizes the vital roles of and contributions by women in consolidating peace. The Council welcomes the progress made in increasing the participation of women in decision-making in several countries emerging from conflict and requests the Secretary-General to collect and compile good practices and lessons learned and identify remaining gaps and challenges in order to further promote the efficient and effective implementation of resolution 1325(2000).

The Council recognizes that the protection and empowerment of women and support for their networks and initiatives are essential in the consolidation of peace to promote the equal and full participation of women and to improve their human security, and encourages Member States, donors and civil society to provide support in this respect.

The Council recognizes the importance of integrating gender perspectives into institutional reform in post-conflict countries at both the national and the local levels. The Council encourages Member States in post-conflict situations to ensure that gender perspectives are mainstreamed into institutional reform, ensuring that the reforms, in particular

of the security sector, justice institutions and restoration of the rule of law, provide for the protection of women's rights and safety. The Council also requests the Secretary-General to ensure that United Nations assistance in this context appropriately addresses the needs and priorities of women in the post-conflict process.

The Council requests the Secretary-General to ensure that disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes take specific account of the situation of women ex-combatants and women associated with combatants, as well as their children, and provide for their full access to these programmes.

The Council welcomes the role that the Peacebuilding Commission can play in mainstreaming gender perspectives into the peace consolidation process. In this context, the Council welcomes in particular the Chairman's summaries of the country-specific meetings of the Commission on Sierra Leone and Burundi held on 12 and 13 October 2006.

The Council remains deeply concerned by the pervasiveness of all forms of violence against women in armed conflict, including killing, maiming, grave sexual violence, abductions and trafficking in persons. The Council reiterates its utmost condemnation of such practices and calls upon all parties to armed conflict to ensure full and effective protection of women, and emphasizes the necessity to end the impunity of those responsible for gender-based violence.

The Council reiterates its condemnation, in the strongest terms, of all acts of sexual misconduct by all categories of personnel in United Nations peacekeeping missions. The Council urges the Secretary-General and troop-contributing countries to ensure the full implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations. In this connection, the Council expresses its support for further efforts by the United Nations to fully implement codes of conduct and disciplinary procedures to prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, and enhance monitoring and enforcement mechanisms based on a zero-tolerance policy.

The Council requests the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Council progress in gender mainstreaming throughout United Nations peacekeeping missions as well as on other aspects relating specifically to women and girls. The Council emphasizes the need for the inclusion of gender components in peacekeeping operations. The Council further encourages Member States and the Secretary-General to increase the participation of women in all areas and at all levels of peacekeeping operations, civilian, police and military, where possible.

The Council reiterates its call to Member States to continue to implement resolution 1325(2000), including through the development and implementation of national action plans or other national-level strategies.

The Council recognizes the important contribution of civil society to the implementation of resolution 1325(2000) and encourages Member States to continue to collaborate with civil society, in particular with local women's networks and organizations, in order to strengthen implementation.

The Council looks forward to the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment and hopes that this will play a role in ensuring a coordinated United Nations approach to women and peace and security.

The Council welcomes the first follow-up report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325(2000) across the United Nations system. The Council requests the Secretary-General to continue to update, monitor and review the imple-

mentation and integration of the Action Plan and report to the Council as stipulated in the statement by the President of the Council of 27 October 2005.

### *Women and children taken hostage*

**Report of Secretary-General.** In response to Commission on the Status of Women resolution 48/3 [YUN 2004, p. 1156], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2006/6] on the release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts, which included information provided by seven Member States, 12 UN system entities and one international organization. It outlined actions taken by Governments in the development of policies and legislation, as well as the provision of humanitarian support to women and children taken hostage. UN entities continued to provide technical assistance and capacity-building to all actors, and focused efforts on providing health services, including reproductive health services, and psychosocial support; preventing and dealing with the consequences of violence, including sexual exploitation; and supporting reintegration processes, particularly in relation to child soldiers. The Secretary-General indicated that the lack of sex-disaggregated data was a constraint that needed to be addressed.

**Commission action.** In a March resolution [E/2006/27 (res. 50/1)], the Commission reaffirmed that hostage-taking was an illegal act aimed at the destruction of human rights and called for an effective response to such acts, in particular the immediate release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts. It requested the Secretary-General to ensure the widest possible dissemination of relevant material, in particular material relating to Security Council resolution 1325(2000), facilitate the immediate release of civilian women and children who had been taken hostage, and report to the Commission at its fifty-second (2008) session on implementation of the resolution.

### **Women and health**

#### *Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS*

In a March resolution on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS [E/2006/27 & Corr.1 (res. 50/2)], the Commission on the Status of Women stressed that the HIV/AIDS pandemic, with its devastating scale and impact, required urgent action in all fields and at all levels. It called on Governments and the international donor community to integrate a gender perspective into all matters of international assistance and cooperation, and ensure that resources commensurate with the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and

girls were made available, in particular funding to national HIV/AIDS programmes to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls in the context of the epidemic. The Commission requested the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), other UN agencies responding to the HIV/AIDS pandemic, and the Global Fund to Fight HIV/AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to integrate a gender and human rights perspective throughout their HIV/AIDS-related operations. It also requested the Secretary-General to direct the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), as lead agency on technical support on gender and human rights within UNAIDS, to develop the HIV-related gender and human rights capacity for all UN staff providing technical assistance to Governments, advance the national response to AIDS, and report on those efforts in 2008.

### **The girl child**

In March [E/2006/27 & Corr.1], the Commission on the Status of Women submitted the draft provisional agenda and documentation for its fifty-first (2007) session to the Economic and Social Council for consideration. On 25 July, by **decision 2006/235**, the Council approved the agenda and documentation, and on the same date, decided that the priority theme in 2007 would be "The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child" (**resolution 2006/9**) (see p. 1356).

### **Women and human rights**

#### *Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR activities*

On 6 October, the newly established Human Rights Council, by decision 2/102 (see p. 756), requested the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner for Human Rights to continue their activities in accordance with the previous decisions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights, including the update of relevant reports and studies. In December, the Secretary-General transmitted a report [A/HRC/4/68-E/CN.6/2007/5] on implementation of the 2006 joint workplan of the UN Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which also contained the joint workplan for 2007.

#### *Special Rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women*

In response to Commission resolution 49/3 [YUN 2005, p. 1259], the Secretary-General submit-

ted a report [E/CN.6/2006/8] on the advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women, which presented an overview of international human rights instruments, policy documents and mechanisms aimed at eliminating laws that discriminated against women, as well as the views of 26 Member States and observers, CEDAW and OHCHR. Nine Member States supported the appointment of a special rapporteur, as did OHCHR. The remaining replies included four that supported it, provided there was no duplication of the work of existing mechanisms; eight that did not support it or considered it necessary; one that had no objection; one that said it would be useful; and two that could not comment definitely without a specific proposal or draft mandate for a special rapporteur. Concerns included the ongoing reform discussions on UN human rights machinery; the relationship between a special rapporteur and UN mechanisms; the criteria for selecting a special rapporteur; and the financial implications. The report concluded that, while *de jure* discrimination persisted in many areas, its elimination would not require significant investment of resources or the longer time periods needed to modify social and cultural patterns of behaviour. Moreover, with the exception of CEDAW, none of the mechanisms had a specific mandate to address laws that discriminated against women. A dedicated mechanism to tackle such laws from a global perspective could provide the necessary momentum for change. The Secretary-General made recommendations on the matter and indicated that the Commission's consideration of its working methods and future multi-year programme constituted a timely opportunity to consider the question of such a mechanism and its mandate.

**Commission action.** In a March resolution [E/2006/27 (res. 50/3)] on the advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women, the Commission invited the Secretary-General to bring his report (see above) to the attention of CEDAW and other relevant treaty bodies, as well as OHCHR, to elicit their views on ways to best complement the work of the existing mechanisms and enhance the Commission's capacity with respect to discriminatory laws. It also decided to consider the issue at its fifty-first (2007) session, bearing in mind the existing mechanisms, with a view to avoiding duplication.

### *Trafficking in women and girls*

In July, the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly an in-depth study [A/61/122/Add.1 & Corr.1] on all forms of violence against women

(see p. 1333), which contained information on trafficking in women and girls. The report indicated that trafficking was a form of violence that took place in multiple settings, involving many different actors, including families, local brokers, international criminal networks and immigration authorities. Women and children comprised the majority of human trafficking victims, and were often trafficked for sexual exploitation purposes. According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) database, there were 127 countries of origin and 137 countries of destination for trafficking in human beings. Although sources suggested that hundreds of thousands of people were trafficked globally every year, few came to the attention of the authorities. Available statistics were unreliable and trafficking legislation was either inadequate or non-existent in many countries. Trafficked women rarely reported their situation to authorities and were unwilling to cooperate with law enforcement officials if identified and rescued due to fear of reprisals, lack of trust in the authorities, rejection by their families, and lack of opportunities in their home countries. Most estimates on trafficking were difficult to compare or verify because the methodology for computing them were rarely given and the coverage of the estimates was often unclear. Several regional and national initiatives had begun to develop comprehensive databases to provide information on international trafficking routes, sources, transit and destination countries, and on the number of trafficked victims and offenders. With regard to laws, 93 States had some legislative provision regarding trafficking in human beings, of which ten had provisions that applied only to children. The report also summarized the obstacles faced by trafficking victims in accessing services, including protection, medical care, legal advice and counselling. The study proposed recommendations for action in a number of key areas.

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 81], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/61/438], adopted **resolution 61/144** without vote [agenda item 61 (a)].

### **Trafficking in women and girls**

*The General Assembly,*

*Recalling* all international conventions that deal specifically with the problem of trafficking in women and girls, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol thereto on the

sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others, 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 the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, as well as previous resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Human Rights on the issue,

*Reaffirming* the provisions pertaining to trafficking in women and girls contained in the outcome documents of relevant international conferences and summits, in particular the strategic objective on the issue of trafficking contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women,

*Reaffirming also* the commitment made by world leaders at the Millennium Summit and the 2005 World Summit to devise, enforce and strengthen effective measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in persons to counter the demand for trafficked victims and to protect the victims,

*Recalling* the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, as well as the information that deals with trafficking in women and girls contained in the report of the Secretary-General on the in-depth study on all forms of violence against women,

*Recalling also* the report of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime entitled "Trafficking in Persons: Global Patterns", and the attention paid in it to the situation of trafficked women and girls,

*Acknowledging* the inclusion of gender-related crimes in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which entered into force on 1 July 2002,

*Bearing in mind* that all States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish perpetrators of trafficking in persons, to rescue victims as well as provide for their protection and that not doing so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the victims,

*Recognizing* the need for a stronger gender- and age-sensitive approach in all efforts to fight trafficking and protect its victims, taking into account that women and girls are particularly vulnerable to trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation, as well as for forced labour or services,

*Recognizing also* the need to address the impact of globalization on the particular problem of trafficking in women and children, in particular girls,

*Recognizing further* the challenges to combating trafficking in women and girls owing to the lack of adequate legislation and implementation of existing legislation, the lack of availability of reliable sex-disaggregated data and statistics, as well as the lack of resources,

*Seriously concerned* that an increasing number of women and girls from developing countries and from some countries with economies in transition are being trafficked to developed countries, as well as within and between regions and States, and that men and boys are also victims of trafficking, including for sexual exploitation,

*Concerned* about the use of new information technologies, including the Internet, for purposes of exploitation of the prostitution of others, for trafficking in women as brides, for sex tourism exploiting women and children and for child pornography, paedophilia and any other forms of sexual exploitation of children,

*Concerned also* about the increasing activities of transnational criminal organizations and others that profit from international trafficking in persons, especially women and children, without regard to dangerous and inhuman conditions and in flagrant violation of domestic laws and international standards,

*Recognizing* that victims of trafficking are particularly exposed to racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and that women and girl victims are often subject to multiple forms of discrimination and violence, including on the grounds of their gender, age, ethnicity, culture and religion, as well as their origins, and that these forms of discrimination themselves may fuel trafficking in persons,

*Noting* that some of the demand for prostitution and forced labour is met by trafficking in persons in some parts of the world,

*Acknowledging* that women and girl victims of trafficking, on account of their gender, are further disadvantaged and marginalized by a general lack of information or awareness and recognition of their human rights and by the stigmatization often associated with trafficking, as well as by the obstacles they meet in gaining access to information and recourse mechanisms in cases of violation of their rights, and that special measures are required for their protection and to increase their awareness,

*Recognizing* the importance of bilateral, subregional, regional and international cooperation mechanisms and initiatives, including information exchanges on best practices, of Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to address the problem of trafficking in persons, especially women and children,

*Recognizing also* that global efforts, including international cooperation and technical assistance programmes, to eradicate trafficking in persons, especially women and children, demand the strong political commitment, shared responsibility and active cooperation of all Governments of countries of origin, transit and destination,

*Recognizing further* that policies and programmes for prevention, rehabilitation, repatriation and reintegration should be developed through a gender- and age-sensitive, comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach, with

concern for the security of the victims and respect for the full enjoyment of their human rights and with the involvement of all actors in countries of origin, transit and destination,

*Convinced* of the need to protect and assist all victims of trafficking, with full respect for the victims' human rights,

1. *Welcomes* the efforts of Governments, United Nations bodies and agencies and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to address the particular problem of trafficking in women and girls, and encourages them to continue doing so and to share their knowledge and best practices as widely as possible;

2. *Calls upon* Governments to eliminate the demand for trafficked women and girls for all forms of exploitation;

3. *Also calls upon* Governments to take appropriate measures to address the factors that increase vulnerability to being trafficked, including poverty and gender inequality, as well as other factors that encourage the particular problem of trafficking in women and girls for prostitution and other forms of commercialized sex, forced marriage and forced labour, in order to eliminate such trafficking, including by strengthening existing legislation with a view to providing better protection of the rights of women and girls and to punishing perpetrators, through both criminal and civil measures;

4. *Urges* Governments to devise, enforce and strengthen effective gender- and age-sensitive measures to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual and economic exploitation, as part of a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy that integrates a human rights perspective and takes into account the situation of trafficked victims, and to draw up, as appropriate, national action plans in this regard;

5. *Also urges* Governments to consider signing and ratifying and States parties to implement relevant United Nations legal instruments, such as 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, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as well as the Convention concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour, 1930 (Convention No. 29), the Convention concerning Discrimination in respect of Employment and Occupation, 1958 (Convention No. 111) and the Convention concerning the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, 1999 (Convention No. 182), of the International Labour Organization;

6. *Encourages* Member States to conclude bilateral, subregional, regional and international agreements, as

well as to undertake initiatives, including regional initiatives, to address the problem of trafficking in persons, and to ensure that such agreements and initiatives pay particular attention to the problem of trafficking in women and girls;

7. *Calls upon* all Governments to criminalize all forms of trafficking in persons, recognizing its increasing occurrence for purposes of sexual exploitation and sex tourism, and to condemn and penalize all those offenders involved, including intermediaries, whether local or foreign, through the competent national authorities, either in the country of origin of the offender or in the country in which the abuse occurs, in accordance with due process of law, as well as to penalize persons in authority found guilty of sexually assaulting victims of trafficking in their custody;

8. *Urges* Governments to take all appropriate measures to ensure that victims of trafficking are not penalized for being trafficked and that they do not suffer from revictimization as a result of actions taken by government authorities, and encourages Governments to prevent, within their legal framework and in accordance with national policies, victims of trafficking in persons from being prosecuted for their illegal entry or residence;

9. *Recognizes* the urgent need for broad and concerted cooperation among all relevant actors, including States, intergovernmental organizations and civil society, to counter effectively the threat of trafficking in persons, particularly women and girls;

10. *Invites* Governments to strengthen bilateral, regional and international cooperation aimed at preventing and combating corruption and the laundering of proceeds derived from trafficking, including for purposes of commercialized sexual exploitation;

11. *Also invites* Governments to consider setting up or strengthening a national coordinating mechanism, for example, a national rapporteur or an inter-agency body, with the participation of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to encourage the exchange of information and to report on data, root causes, factors and trends in violence against women, in particular trafficking;

12. *Encourages* Governments and relevant United Nations bodies, within existing resources, to take appropriate measures to raise public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, particularly in women and girls; to discourage, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation and forced labour; to publicize the laws, regulations and penalties relating to this issue; and to emphasize that trafficking is a serious crime;

13. *Encourages* Governments to take appropriate measures to eliminate sex tourism demand, especially of children, through all possible preventive actions;

14. *Urges* concerned Governments, in cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to support and allocate resources for programmes to strengthen preventive action, in particular education for women and men, as well as for boys and girls, on gender equality, self-respect and mutual respect, and

campaigns to increase public awareness of the issue at the national and grass-roots levels;

15. *Calls upon* concerned Governments to allocate resources, as appropriate, to provide comprehensive programmes for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims of trafficking, including through job training, legal assistance, including in a language that they can understand, and health care, including for HIV/AIDS, and by taking measures to cooperate with inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations to provide for the social, medical and psychological care of the victims;

16. *Encourages* Governments, in cooperation with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, to undertake or strengthen campaigns aimed at clarifying opportunities, limitations and rights in the event of migration, as well as information on the risks of irregular migration and the ways and means used by traffickers so as to enable women to make informed decisions and to prevent them from becoming victims of trafficking;

17. *Also encourages* Governments to intensify collaboration with non-governmental organizations to develop and implement gender- and age-sensitive programmes for effective counselling, training and reintegration into society of victims of trafficking and programmes that provide shelter and helplines to victims or potential victims;

18. *Calls upon* Governments to take steps to ensure that the treatment of victims of trafficking, as well as all measures taken against trafficking in persons, in particular those that affect the victims of such trafficking, pay particular attention to the needs of women and girls, are applied with full respect for the human rights of those victims and are consistent with internationally recognized principles of non-discrimination, including the prohibition of racial discrimination and the availability of appropriate legal redress, which may include measures that offer victims the possibility of obtaining compensation for damage suffered;

19. *Invites* Governments to take steps to ensure that criminal justice procedures and witness protection programmes are sensitive to the particular situation of trafficked women and girls and that they are supported and assisted, as appropriate, in making complaints to the police or other authorities, without fear, and being available when required by the criminal justice system, and to ensure that during this time they have access to protection and social, medical, financial and legal assistance, as appropriate;

20. *Also invites* Governments to encourage media providers, including Internet service providers, to adopt or strengthen self-regulatory measures to promote the responsible use of media, particularly the Internet, with a view to eliminating the exploitation of women and children, in particular girls, which could foster trafficking;

21. *Invites* the business sector, in particular the tourism and telecommunications industries, including mass media organizations, to cooperate with Governments in eliminating trafficking in women and children, in particular girls, including through the dissemination by the

media of information regarding the dangers of trafficking, the rights of trafficked persons and the services available to victims of trafficking;

22. *Stresses* the need for the systematic collection of sex- and age-disaggregated data and comprehensive studies at both the national and the international levels and the development of common methodologies and internationally defined indicators to make it possible to develop relevant and comparable figures, and encourages Governments to enhance information-sharing and data-collection capacity as a way of promoting cooperation to combat the trafficking problem;

23. *Urges* Governments to strengthen national programmes to combat trafficking in persons, especially women and girls, through increased bilateral, regional and international cooperation, taking into account innovative approaches and best practices, and invites Governments, United Nations bodies and organizations, inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations and the private sector to undertake collaborative and joint research and studies on trafficking in women and girls that can serve as a basis for policy formulation or change;

24. *Invites* Governments, with the support of the United Nations, when necessary, and other intergovernmental organizations, taking into account best practices, to formulate training manuals and other informational materials and provide training for law enforcement, judicial and other relevant officers, and medical and support personnel, with a view to sensitizing them to the special needs of women and girl victims;

25. *Urges* Governments to provide or strengthen training for law enforcement, judicial, immigration and other relevant officials in the prevention and combating of trafficking in persons, including the sexual exploitation of women and girls, which should focus on methods used in preventing such trafficking, prosecuting the traffickers and protecting the rights of victims, including protecting the victims from traffickers, to ensure that the training includes human rights and gender- and age-sensitive perspectives, and to encourage cooperation with non-governmental organizations, other relevant organizations and other elements of civil society;

26. *Encourages* Governments, relevant intergovernmental bodies and international organizations to ensure that military, peacekeeping and humanitarian personnel deployed in conflict, post-conflict and other emergency situations are provided training on conduct that does not promote, facilitate or exploit trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual exploitation, and to raise the awareness of such personnel of the potential risks to victims of conflict and other emergency situations, including natural disasters, of being trafficked;

27. *Invites* States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the International Covenants on Human Rights to include information and statistics on trafficking in women and girls as part of their national reports to their respective committees and to work towards developing a common methodology and statistics to obtain comparable data;

28. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session a report that compiles successful interventions and strategies, as well as challenges, in addressing the gender dimensions of the problem of trafficking in persons, that identifies gender-related aspects of anti-trafficking efforts that remain unaddressed or inadequately addressed, and that evaluates the measures taken through appropriate indicators; and invites the Secretary-General to take into account in his report the work of Governments, relevant United Nations agencies and mechanisms and other international organizations.

### *Women in Afghanistan*

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/8 [YUN2005, p. 1260], the Secretary-General submitted to the Commission a report [E/CN.6/2006/5] on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan, which provided an update on their situation, and focused, in particular, on the electoral process; efforts to promote and protect women's rights; and social and economic reconstruction and rehabilitation. It included activities undertaken by the UN system in support of the Government of Afghanistan towards the advancement of women and gender equality. The September 2005 elections to the Wolesi Jirga (Lower House of Parliament), which resulted in women representing 27 per cent in national parliament and 29 per cent in the provincial councils, had significantly increased the participation of Afghan women in public life. Other progress achieved included: increased awareness of gender equality issues within the Government and among the public at large; the reduction of child and maternal mortality; and improved literacy of women and girls, and access to education. In addition, the Government had increasingly addressed matters previously considered private, such as violence against women.

The Secretary-General observed that, despite those gains, Afghan women and girls continued to face formidable security, human rights, social and economic challenges. The security situation and basic human rights conditions remained poor in many parts of the country, especially outside of Kabul. Armed factions, including the remaining Taliban forces, routinely abused women's human rights. Many of the advances made by women in the economic, employment and educational spheres were offset by the effects of widespread poverty. Moreover, continuing discrimination against women in access to education, health care, land, credit and productive means stifled reconstruction and development efforts. The Secretary-General concluded that promoting an inclusive, participatory and gender equal society that responded to the

aspirations of all Afghan women and men continued to offer the best prospect for improving the overall security and development situation. Steps taken by the Afghan Government, with support from UN entities, needed to be strengthened. Prompt action on behalf of the Government, civil society and the international community was needed to promote and protect the human rights of women and girls and to end gender-based discrimination. Economic and social assistance programmes needed to build on women's acquired *de jure* rights, encourage women to participate in public life and new economic activities, and ensure more gender balance in accessing productive resources and labour markets.

The Secretary-General made a number of recommendations for the Afghan Government and the UN system, donor Governments and civil society to further strengthen the status of women and girls in Afghanistan.

### **ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION**

On 25 July [meeting 38], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women [E/2006/27 & Corr.1], adopted **resolution 2006/7** without vote [agenda item 14 (a)].

#### **Situation of women and girls in Afghanistan**

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* General Assembly resolutions 60/32 A and B of 30 November 2005, on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security and emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan, in particular the references to the situation of women and girls,

*Recalling also* Security Council resolutions 1589(2005) of 24 March 2005 and 1659(2006) of 15 February 2006 on the situation in Afghanistan, and resolution 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security,

*Recalling further* its resolution 2005/8 of 21 July 2005 on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan,

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

2. *Welcomes* the references to the situation of women and girls in General Assembly resolutions 60/32 A and B;

3. *Invites* the Secretary-General to take into account a gender perspective when preparing the reports requested by the General Assembly in its resolutions 60/32 A and B and to include a specific and substantive section focusing on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan in those reports;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit those reports to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-first session.

### *Palestinian women*

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/43 [YUN 2005, p. 534], the Secretary-General reported [E/CN.6/2006/4] to the Commission on the Status of Women on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women during the period from October 2004 to September 2005 (see p. 1355).

On 25 July, the Council took action on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women in **resolution 2006/8** (see p. 546).

## **Women and poverty**

### *Participation of women in development*

On 28 February [E/2006/27 & Corr.1], the Commission on the Status of Women held a panel discussion on the enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account education, health and work. It had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the topic [E/CN.6/2006/12], which noted that the uneven progress in implementing the international commitments on gender equality and empowerment of women, and the large gap between policy and practice, highlighted the importance of a more coherent, integrated approach to ensuring an enabling environment. The lack of integrated policies and mechanisms to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women into national development policy frameworks and programmes presented a major challenge to the creation of such an environment. Systematic efforts to strengthen the capabilities of women and girls, as measured by health and education status, were required. Other challenges identified included the lack of coherence between national development policies and gender equality policies and strategies; gaps between policy and implementation; underrepresentation of women in decision-making; insufficient protection and promotion of women's human rights; discriminatory socio-cultural practices and attitudes; and persistent violence against women. Progress was further hampered by institutional hindrances, such as the lack of political will and resources, inadequate implementation of gender mainstreaming, insufficient mechanisms for monitoring and accountability, and lack of coordination and strategic partnerships. The report concluded with a series of recommendations for action by Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations, civil society

and other relevant stakeholders, with an emphasis on the areas of education, health and work.

By decision 50/101, the Commission took note of the Secretary-General's report. On 16 March, the Commission adopted its agreed conclusions on the enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work, which it also brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council.

### *Gender dimensions of international migration*

On 2 March [E/2006/27 & Corr.1], the Commission on the Status of Women held a high-level panel discussion on the gender dimensions of international migration, which examined various aspects of international migration from a gender perspective, such as linkages between migration and development; the impact of migration on families; the empowerment of migrant women; the brain drain; demand for specific types of labour; living and working conditions of women migrant workers, including mistreatment and abuse; human rights of women migrant workers; gender and remittances; and trafficking of women and its impact on development, as well as on families, health and education. The discussion revealed that women were active participants in migration within and between countries, representing 51 per cent of international migrants in more developed regions. While most women moved voluntarily—either as the principal wage earners or for family reunification purposes—forced migration of women and girls occurred due to conflict and violence. Gender biases in the migration process resulted in women's experiences differing from those of men, including with regard to the causes and outcomes of migration.

The meeting observed that a holistic and comprehensive approach was needed to address the multi-dimensional aspects of international migration. As poverty and the lack of economic resources were identified as the main factors influencing migration, increased socio-economic development and gender equality within countries of origin could lead to disincentives for migration. Attention was drawn to the need to address the social challenges related to migration and to raise awareness on the contributions of women migrants in destination countries. In the area of trafficking, it was recommended that organizations, such as the International Organization for Migration, investigate its causes and develop comprehensive indicators for cross-country analyses. The need for effective legal measures to address trafficking in women and girls, as well as for cross-

border collaboration, including on monitoring and prosecution, was also highlighted.

A summary of the high-level panel meeting, submitted by the Commission, was brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council to provide input to the General Assembly at its High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development (see p. 1261). On 25 July, by **decision 2006/234**, the Council transmitted the Commission's summary to the Assembly.

(For more information on international migration, see pp. 1259 and 1263.)

## Women and the economy

### *Economic advancement for women*

Responding to Commission resolution 49/8 [YUN 2005, p. 1268], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2006/7] on economic advancement for women, which was based on information provided by Member States in 2004 in response to a questionnaire on the 10-year review and appraisal of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, and inputs from Member States to update that information. The report examined issues relating to the status of women in the labour market, including occupational segregation, wage gaps between women and men, economic decision-making, harmonization of work and family responsibilities, and pensions and taxes. It also highlighted women's access to information and communication technologies, rural women's income-generating potential, employment opportunities of migrant women and the importance of gender-sensitive statistics and information for informed decision-making on the economic advancement of women.

The Secretary-General concluded that most countries had made progress in promoting women's economic rights and independence. A wide range of gender-sensitive legislation, policies and programmes had facilitated women's participation in both wage employment and self-employment. However, progress had been slow and uneven. The problems related to women's over-representation in part-time work and in the informal sector needed to be addressed. Further efforts were needed to fully utilize the potential of information and communication technologies for women's economic advancement. In addition, further research and strengthened data-collection efforts were needed to understand the employment situations of and opportunities for rural women and migrant women. To address those issues, as well as others raised in the report, the Secretary-General outlined a series

of recommendations that the Commission might wish to encourage Governments to undertake, with the support of the UN system, civil society and other stakeholders. On 10 March, the Commission took note of the report [E/2006/27 (dec.50/101)].

## Women in power and decision-making

### *Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes*

In accordance with the 2002-2006 programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women [YUN 2001, p. 1084] and in response to General Assembly resolution 58/142 [YUN 2003, p. 1167], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2006/13] on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels, which analysed the current situation of women in decision-making processes, with emphasis on their political participation and leadership at the international, national and local levels. It proposed policy recommendations for achieving that objective, based on the identification of the most promising practices and lessons learned. In that connection, conditions identified for attaining that goal included increasing both the numerical and substantive representation of women in decision-making. The report also highlighted the significant impact that women's participation and leadership in political processes had on promoting gender equality.

The Secretary-General observed that, despite incremental changes over the past decade, women continued to face persistent challenges to their participation in decision-making. Serious obstacles included their underrepresentation in such male-dominated domains as the military, economic policy and foreign affairs; the absence of gender-sensitive enabling environments in parliaments and legislatures; and the persistence of traditional stereotypical attitudes and behaviour. The lack of sex-disaggregated data on women's access to decision-making at all levels of the economy, the judiciary, the media, academia and international affairs, remained a serious constraint to monitoring progress. The Secretary-General made recommendations for increasing the participation of women in decision-making and enhancing the impact of their increased presence in Governments, international actors, including the United Nations, parliaments, political parties, NGOs, the media and other stakeholders, and election management bodies.

**Commission action.** On 28 February, during its fiftieth session [E/2006/27 & Corr.1], the Commission on the Status of Women held a panel discussion on

equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels and on 10 March, adopted its agreed conclusions on the topic, which it brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council (see p. 1355).

### **Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women**

**Inter-Agency Network.** The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), at its fifth session (New York, 22-24 February) [IANWGE/2006/REPORT], focused on identifying key elements of a UN system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy. The outcome of the deliberations would serve as input to the joint session of the High-level Committee on Management (HLCM) and the High-Level Committee on Programmes (HLCF) of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), and to the substantive (2006) session of the Economic and Social Council in July. The Network noted that UN reform presented both challenges and opportunities to gender mainstreaming and women's empowerment. Concerns were raised that gender equality might be sidelined in the reform process and human and financial resources allocated to gender issues reduced. Nevertheless, strong support was expressed for a system-wide gender strategy with clear benchmarks and timelines and a focus on results that would include the required accountability mechanisms and mainstreaming resource allocations. Participants agreed that the system should include accountability mechanisms; results-based management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting; financial and human resources allocation; capacity-building for all staff; coherence and coordination; and joint programming among entities.

The report also presented the analysis of the preliminary survey on Gender Mainstreaming in Programming, Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting in Results-based Management Systems by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), provided an update on the Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women (see p. 1333), and highlighted the conclusions of the joint biennial workshop convened by the Network and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)/Development Assistance Committee (DAC) Network on Gender Equality on the topic "Aid modalities and the promotion of gender equality" (Nairobi, 30-31 January). In conclusion, it was agreed that the ILO/OIOS preliminary

survey would be expanded to collect and analyse responses from the entire UN system and that the Network would establish a new Task Force on violence against women.

**Report of Secretary-General.** Responding to Commission resolution 49/4 [YUN 2005, p. 1269], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2006/2] on measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the General Assembly's twenty-third special session in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes. The report provided an analysis of activities carried out by Governments toward that aim and presented examples of how UN system entities supported gender mainstreaming at the national level.

The Secretary-General concluded that an increasing number of Member States utilized gender mainstreaming and specific interventions to promote gender equality and empowerment of women. Policy frameworks had improved at the national level, with some action plans having time-bound goals and targets, and many countries providing guidance on the implementation of policies on gender mainstreaming. Considerable advances were made in methodologies and tools, and in incorporating gender perspectives into sector policies, strategies and programmes. However, gaps between policy and practice remained. Constraints to full implementation included lack of clear mandates and enforcement of accountability mechanisms; insufficient allocation of gender-mainstreaming resources; lack of practical implementation strategies and skills; and underutilization or non-systematic use of methodologies and tools. Moreover, few countries had reported on successful implementation of accountability mechanism. The need to strengthen efforts to compile and disseminate sex-disaggregated data for use in monitoring and reporting was highlighted, as well as the catalytic role of national mechanisms, such as ministries, gender equality commissions and committees, and parliamentary bodies in supporting gender mainstreaming. The Secretary-General made recommendations to the Commission for encouraging UN entities, civil society and other stakeholders to ensure that action plans included concrete targets, indicators and clearly allocated responsibilities; incorporate gender perspectives in the budget process; institutionalize the use of gender analysis, gender impact assessment and evaluation for all policy areas; strengthen accountability systems in all government bodies; systematically document and disseminate

lessons learned and good practices; and develop and strengthen the roles of national mechanisms.

**Commission action.** On 27 February [E/2006/27 & Corr.1], the Commission on the Status of Women held high-level round tables on the theme "Incorporating gender perspectives into national development strategies, as requested at the 2005 World Summit, for achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)". On 10 March, the Commission took note of the summary of the meetings [E/CN.6/2006/CRP.7] and, by decision 50/101, took note of the Secretary-General's report (see above).

**Further report of Secretary-General.** Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2005/31 [YUN 2005, p. 1270] on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all UN system policies and programmes, the Secretary-General submitted a May report [E/2006/65], which provided an overview of the gender training efforts of UN entities, emphasized the importance of training for capacity-building for gender mainstreaming and identified some of the critical elements for conducting successful training, including institutional context, support structures, systematic monitoring and evaluation and follow-up mechanisms. It highlighted examples of gender-specific training provided within the UN system for managers, field-level staff, gender specialists and focal points, and personnel working in the area of peace and security, as well as the use of the Internet as a tool for building capacity on gender mainstreaming. The UN system response to the increasing demand for technical support and capacity-building on gender mainstreaming at the national level was also covered.

The Secretary-General observed that, although policies and strategies on gender equality were in place in many entities, a large gap remained between policy and practice. Many training programmes had been organized on an ad hoc basis, with little institutional follow-up, an approach that underestimated the knowledge and skills required for effective gender mainstreaming. Noting that considerable effort had been made to develop new approaches and introduce important innovations, he advocated further assessment of such initiatives. Insufficient mechanisms to ensure accountability among staff to utilize the skills acquired in training, limited regular budget resources, and the lack of mechanisms and tools for evaluating its impact were also constraints to the provision of effective gender training and assessment.

The Secretary-General recommended that the Economic and Social Council encourage UN enti-

ties to make specific commitments to training in all gender equality policies, strategies and action plans; make gender mainstreaming training mandatory for all staff; integrate gender perspectives in all training courses; develop innovative forms of capacity-building, in addition to formal training; ensure that managers provide the leadership and support required; ensure that offices of human resource management advocate for gender mainstreaming capacity-building and provide resources; develop more effective forms of follow-up to training; strengthen accountability systems for all staff; allocate sufficient resources to ensure mandatory training, follow-up and evaluation and monitoring of training activities; strengthen inter-agency collaboration, including through IANWGE; and strengthen capacity-building activities for national mechanisms for the advancement of women.

On 24 July, by **decision 2006/227**, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Secretary-General's report.

**UNDP consideration.** In response to United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA) Executive Board decision 2005/27 [YUN 2005, p. 1270], UNDP presented its gender action plan for 2006-2007 [DP/2006/9] and a progress report on implementation of the 2005 gender action plan [DP/2006/8]. It also submitted the findings of an independent evaluation of gender mainstreaming in UNDP [DP/2006/5], as well as the response of UNDP management to the evaluation [DP/2006/7]. The Executive Board endorsed [E/2006/35 (dec. 2006/3)] the 2006-2007 gender action plan and requested UNDP to report in 2007 on progress in implementing it and the commitments in the management response, particularly those concerning clarification of the role and responsibilities of UNDP and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) (see p. 1359).

#### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 27 July [meeting 41], the Economic and Social Council adopted **resolution 2006/36** [draft: E/2006/L.30] without vote [agenda item 7 (e)].

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

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Reaffirming* 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 recalling its resolutions 2001/41 of 26 July 2001, 2002/23 of 24 July 2002, 2003/49 of 24 July 2003, 2004/4 of 7 July 2004 and 2005/31 of 26 July 2005,

*Reaffirming* also the commitment made at the 2005 World Summit to actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres and to further undertake to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender,

*Acknowledging* that enhancing women's opportunities, potential and activities requires a dual focus, namely, programmes aimed at meeting the basic needs and the specific needs of women for capacity-building, organizational development and empowerment, together with gender mainstreaming in all programme formulation and implementation activities,

*Reaffirming* that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting gender equality and 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,

*Recognizing* that training is critical for increasing the awareness, knowledge, commitment and capacity of staff to mainstream a gender perspective into United Nations policies and programmes and that the provision of effective gender training requires adequate financial and human resources,

*Underlining* the catalytic role played by the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as the important role played by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, in promoting and monitoring gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system,

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 in regard to mainstreaming a gender perspective in entities of the United Nations system;

2. *Notes with appreciation* the progress and continued efforts made by United Nations entities to address gaps between policy and practice in mainstreaming a gender perspective in their respective fields of work, including through the development of training, methodologies and tools;

3. *Expresses concern* at the large gap remaining between policy and practice, with the result that a gender equality perspective is not yet fully integrated into the work of the United Nations;

4. *Recognizes* that training is critical for increasing the awareness, knowledge, commitment and capacity of staff in respect of mainstreaming a gender perspective into United Nations policies and programmes, and, in this regard, calls upon all entities of the United Nations system, including United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, within the United Nations Staff Development Programme budget and other existing United Nations training budgets, without prejudice to the achievement of other training priorities:

(a) To make specific commitments annually to gender mainstreaming training, including in core competence development, and ensure that all gender equality

policies, strategies and action plans include such commitments;

(b) To provide specific ongoing capacity-building, inter alia, through training, for gender specialists and gender focal points, including in the field;

(c) To make gender training mandatory for all staff and personnel and develop specific training for different categories and levels of staff;

(d) To ensure the integration of gender perspectives in relevant training courses, including in induction courses, training on results-based management frameworks and training on the project and programme cycle;

(e) To develop innovative forms of capacity-building, in addition to formal training, including by using information and communication technologies, and systematically assess the effectiveness of new approaches;

(f) To ensure that managers provide the leadership and support required, including by enhancing awareness, commitment and capacity through innovative approaches specifically developed for management levels;

(g) To ensure that, as relevant, offices of human resources management advocate for gender training and the enhancement of pertinent skills for all trainers within the United Nations;

(h) To develop more effective forms of follow-up to training to ensure full utilization of best practices and maximum impact on work programmes;

(i) To strengthen accountability systems for both management and staff, through, inter alia, the inclusion of objectives and results related to gender mainstreaming in personnel workplans and appraisals;

(j) To develop effective means of impact assessment, including the use of indicators for the systematic monitoring and evaluation of training and the performance of trainers;

(k) To create or expand electronic knowledge networks on gender mainstreaming to increase effective support for and follow-up to capacity-building activities;

(l) To strengthen inter-agency collaboration, including through the work of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, to ensure systematic exchange of resources and tools across the system to promote cross-fertilization of ideas;

(m) To ensure that resident coordinators systematically promote, monitor and report on capacity-building activities related to gender mainstreaming within their country teams;

(n) To strengthen country team collaboration on gender training at the country level, including through sharing methodologies and tools, undertaking joint activities and strengthening the capacity of gender theme groups to support such activities;

5. *Recognizes* the important role that senior management plays in creating an environment that actively supports gender mainstreaming, and strongly encourages it to do so;

6. *Takes note* of the work already undertaken to implement General Assembly resolution 59/164 of 20 December 2004 on the improvement of the status of women

in the United Nations system, and urges continued efforts towards its full implementation;

7. *Encourages* all relevant United Nations entities to maintain their efforts to raise awareness of gender issues within their organizations and across the United Nations system;

8. *Requests* that the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality continue to provide practical support to its members in gender mainstreaming, explore possibilities for developing an accessible and consolidated database of trained facilitators at the country and regional levels, in consultation with Member States, and report regularly to the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination through its High Level Committee on Programmes and its High Level Committee on Management in order to facilitate the incorporation of gender mainstreaming perspectives into their work;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2007 on the implementation of the present resolution.

**System-wide gender policy and strategy.** On 27 October [CEB/2006/2], at the second regular session of CEB, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women introduced the draft system-wide gender mainstreaming policy and strategy, which the joint meeting of HLCF and HLCM (Paris, 27 March-1 February) had recommended to the Board for endorsement. The six main elements of the strategy focused on: accountability; results-based management for gender equality; oversight through monitoring, evaluation, audit and reporting; human and financial resources; capacity development; and coherence, coordination and knowledge and information management. She cited accountability, commitment at the highest level, and overall leadership as key ingredients for progress addressed in the policy and strategy. Following their adoption by the Board, she indicated that IANWGE would develop a system-wide action plan to operationalize the strategy. The action plan, which was expected to be ready for consideration at the joint HLCF/HLCM meeting in 2007, would specify actions required to implement the six main elements of the strategy, with time frames and indicators, allocation of responsibilities and accountability mechanisms and resources. CEB endorsed the draft policy and strategy entitled "UN system wide-policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women: focusing on results and impact", which was included as an annex to the report of the session.

### **Strengthening of UN gender equality architecture**

During 2006, United Nations efforts toward strengthening the gender architecture of the

Organization continued. In follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit [YUN 2005, p. 48], the Secretary-General submitted a March report [A/60/733 & Corr.1] on mandating and delivering, which contained analyses and recommendations to facilitate the review of UN mandates older than five years originating from the General Assembly and other organs, and provided a framework and the initial tools to undertake that exercise. He stated that gender issues deserved the same consideration as other cross-cutting priorities in the work of the Organization and that there was need for a thorough review of mandates on gender equality. Of particular concern was the large number of reports on the status of women prepared on an annual, biennial or triennial basis, which could be consolidated. He recommended an examination of overlapping mandates for reports on gender, as well as an overall assessment and evaluation of institutional resources on gender equality across the UN system. He also called on the High-level Panel on System-wide Coherence to include in its work an assessment of how gender equality could be better and more fully addressed in the work of the United Nations, particularly in its operational activities (see below).

**Report of High-level Panel.** By a 20 November note [A/61/583] (see p. 1060), the Secretary-General transmitted the report of the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment entitled, "Delivering as one", which also addressed the cross-cutting issues of sustainable development, gender equality and human rights. The report presented a set of recommendations for delivering as one and overcoming systemic fragmentation in the Organization. In the section of the report dealing with gender issues, the Secretary-General stated that, within the UN framework, the international community had made strong commitments to the advancement of women over the past six decades and had entrusted the Organization with an important mandate in that area. However, based on input from Governments, civil society representatives, and UN staff at headquarters and at regional and country offices, the Panel indicated that, while the United Nations remained a key actor in supporting countries to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, there was a strong sense that the UN system's contribution had been incoherent, under-resourced and fragmented. There were inspiring examples of UN initiatives that helped change women's lives, but those were isolated best practices.

The Panel concluded that the United Nations needed to replace its weak structures with a much stronger voice on women's issues to ensure that gender equality and women's empowerment were taken seriously throughout the UN system and that the United Nations worked more effectively with Governments and civil society. The Panel recommended the consolidation of the three existing UN gender institutions—Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI), the Division for the Advancement of Women, and UNIFEM—into one enhanced and independent gender entity, headed by an Executive Director with the rank of Under-Secretary-General. The gender entity would have a dual mandate, combining normative, analytical and monitoring functions with policy advisory and targeted programming functions and should be fully funded. The Panel also recommended that gender equality should be a component of all One United Nations country programmes and that commitment to gender equality should remain a mandate of the entire UN system. The report also outlined the mandate, structure and funding of the proposed gender entity.

The Secretary-General indicated that he had decided to move forward on some of the Panel's recommendations, and had started the process to implement the Panel's recommendation on strengthening the UN gender architecture and taken steps to request the establishment of the Under-Secretary-General for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women post. He added that a detailed proposal to the General Assembly was forthcoming and urged Member States to support it.

**Report of Secretary-General.** In a November report [A/61/590] on the UN gender architecture, the Secretary-General said that a critical analysis of the UN system-wide capacities for gender equality and gender mainstreaming showed that the existing architecture was too incoherent, under-resourced and fragmented to provide effective support to Member States, particularly at the country level where it was difficult to integrate norms and standards into policy and operational support. Fragmented inter-governmental and national decision-making institutions further exacerbated the situation. In order to address those challenges, a new gender architecture was needed that would enhance the links between norms and standards, and policies and operational work; and would have sufficient status, authority and resources to effectively carry out its mandate.

The proposed institutional arrangements for the new office on gender equality and the advancement of women entailed consolidating OSAGI, the Division for the Advancement of Women

and UNIFEM into one entity, to be headed by an Executive Director, who would also serve as the chief adviser to the Secretary-General on gender issues. The office would combine the normative, analytical, monitoring and focused operational mandates and responsibilities of the existing gender architecture and be the catalyst for technical and policy matters, and the authority on gender equality and women's empowerment issues, with the support of high-quality technical and substantive expertise. The Executive Director would report through the Secretary-General to the Economic and Social Council, the Commission on the Status of Women and the General Assembly on its normative and analytical work and to the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA on its programmatic work. Functions carried out by OSAGI regarding improvement of the status of women would be transferred to the Office of Human Resources Management. The office would also play an integral role in the UN country teams, as well as the "One Country Programme" arrangements. The office would be funded from a combination of assessed and voluntary contributions.

In his proposal to establish the post of Executive Director at the level of Under-Secretary-General to head the new office, the Secretary-General indicated that the Executive Director would work on the details of the basic structure of the new office and would oversee the development of the new entity in consultation with the relevant intergovernmental bodies and institutions of the UN system. The proposed terms of reference for the Executive Director were annexed to the report. In conclusion, the Secretary-General recommended that the General Assembly endorse the creation of an office on gender equality and advancement of women; approve the establishment of a post of Executive Director at the Under-Secretary-General level; and appropriate additional resources in the amount of \$306,500 of the programme budget for the 2006-2007 biennium to cover the estimated resource requirements to establish the new office.

### *Status of women in the United Nations*

In response to General Assembly resolution 59/164 [YUN 2004, p. 1429], the Secretary-General submitted a report [A/61/318] on progress made in the representation of women in the organizations and agencies of the UN system as at 31 December 2004 and in the UN Secretariat from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2006 (see p. 1700). In addition, OSAGI provided an oral update to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth (2006) session [E/2006/27 & Corr.1,2] in March.

On 19 December, the General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report (**decision 61/525**).

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## UN machinery

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### Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women

As at 31 December 2006, 185 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, Brunei Darussalam, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands and Oman acceded to the Convention; while Montenegro succeeded to it. At year's end, 49 States parties had 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 83 States parties as at 31 December 2006.

### CEDAW

In 2006, 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 three regular sessions in New York [A/61/38].

At its thirty-fourth session (16 January–3 February), CEDAW reviewed the initial or periodic reports of Australia, Cambodia, Eritrea, Mali, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Togo and Venezuela on measures taken to implement the Convention. CEDAW considered a Secretariat report on ways of expediting its work [CEDAW/C/2006/I/4 & Add.1] and a report on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention, including a list of reports that had been submitted but not considered by the Committee [CEDAW/C/2006/I/2]. Three specialized agencies, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and ILO, had submitted reports in accordance with article 21 of the Convention [CEDAW/

C/2006/I/3 & Add.1,3,4]. With regard to treaty body reform, the Committee decided that no decision should be taken on the question of a possible transfer of the Committee and its secretariat. Instead, it recommended that further reflection should take place once the details of the reform proposals were available and that the inputs of the Committee should be taken into consideration in the decision-making process [A/61/38 (dec. 34/1)].

At its thirty-fifth session (15 May–2 June), CEDAW reviewed the initial or periodic reports of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cyprus, Guatemala, Malawi, Malaysia, Romania, Saint Lucia and Turkmenistan. The Committee considered a report on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/2006/II/2]. It also considered the report on ways of expediting its work [CEDAW/C/2006/II/4] and the reports of specialized agencies [CEDAW/C/2006/II/3 & Add.3,4] on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activity. By two decisions, CEDAW adopted working methods of the Committee pertaining to its meetings in parallel chambers [A/61/38 (dec. 35/I)] and a statement entitled, "Towards a harmonized and integrated human rights treaty bodies system", which it also decided to bring to the attention of the fifth Inter-Committee Meeting for discussion and support [A/61/38 (dec. 35/II)]. In respect of issues arising from article 2 of the Optional Protocol, the Committee continued its consideration of matters arising in conjunction with its work and decided to take action at its next session. On the views adopted under article 7, paragraph 3 of the Optional Protocol in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1271], CEDAW agreed to request further information from the State party on follow-up steps taken in response to the Committee's recommendations.

At its thirty-sixth session (7–25 August), the Committee met for the first time in parallel chambers, where it reviewed the initial or periodic reports of Cape Verde, Chile, China, Cuba, Czech Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Denmark, Georgia, Ghana, Jamaica, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, the Philippines and Uzbekistan. It also considered reports on: ways of expediting the Committee's work [CEDAW/C/2006/III/4]; the status of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/2006/III/2]; and implementation by specialized agencies of the Convention [CEDAW/C/2006/III/3 & Add. 1,3,4]. The Committee concluded that the first experience with parallel chambers had allowed for a more in-depth and careful consideration of the status of implementation of, and compliance with the Convention in the reporting States. It was satisfied with the working

methods in the parallel chambers, and confirmed that their flexible use enhanced constructive dialogue. The Committee intended to further build on the experience gained and improve its working methods in parallel chambers at future sessions, including its time management [A/61/38 (dec. 36/I)]. The Committee also reported that the extension of its meeting time in 2006 and 2007 would allow CEDAW to reduce significantly the backlog of reports awaiting consideration and it anticipated that effective and timely implementation of its responsibilities after the 2006–2007 biennium would require extended meeting time in 2008 and beyond. In that connection, the Committee intended to submit a further proposal for extended meeting time to the General Assembly at its sixty-second (2007) session, based on an assessment of existing requirements. The Committee also adopted a statement on the situation of women in the Middle East [A/61/38 (dec. 36/II)].

In other action, the Committee, in respect of issues arising under article 2 of the Optional Protocol, took note of the report of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol on its eighth session (annexed to the report). It also adopted views under article 7, paragraph 3, of the Optional Protocol in respect of communications 3/2004 and 4/2004 (annexed to the report).

On 19 December, by **decision 61/525**, the General Assembly took note of the report of CEDAW on the work of its thirty-fourth to thirty-sixth sessions.

### Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its fiftieth session (New York, 22 March 2005, 27 February–10 March and 16 March, 2006) [E/2006/27 & Corr.1,2] recommended three draft resolutions to the Economic and Social Council for adoption on the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan (see p. 1346); the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (see p. 1347); and the future organization and methods of work of the Commission (see p. 1356). It further recommended a draft decision for Council adoption on the report of the Commission's fiftieth (2006) session and the provisional agenda for its fifty-first (2007) session (see below), and brought to the Council's attention the High-level panel discussion on the gender dimensions of international migration (see p. 1261). The Commission also adopted and brought to the Council's attention three resolutions on the release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts (see p. 1341); women,

the girl child and HIV/AIDS (see p. 1341); and the advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminate against women (see p. 888); the Commission's agreed conclusions on enhanced participation of women in development (see p. 1347) and on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels (see p. 1348); as well as decisions on the future work of the Working Group on Communications [dec. 50/102] (see below) and on documents before the Commission under agenda item 3, of which it took note [dec. 50/101], among them the UNIFEM report on the elimination of violence against women [E/CN.6/2006/10-E/CN.4/2006/60] and the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR [E/CN.4/2006/59-E/CN.6/2006/9].

**Election of officers.** Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/21 [YUN 1987, p. 843] and decision 2002/234 [YUN 2002, p. 1163], the Commission held the first meeting of its fiftieth (2006) session on 22 March 2005 [E/CN.6/2006/1], during which it elected its Chairperson and other Bureau members of the fiftieth (2006) and fifty-first (2007) sessions of the Commission.

By **decision 2006/235** of 25 July, the Council took note of the Commission's report on its fiftieth session and approved the provisional agenda for its fifty-first (2007) session.

**Communications.** In a letter dated 10 April [E/2006/52], the Commission brought to the attention of the Economic and Social Council the note [E/CN.6/2006/CRP.4] prepared by the Secretariat entitled "Creating an environment at the national and international levels, conducive to generating full and productive employment and decent work for all, and its impact on sustainable development", as action-oriented input to the Council's 2006 high-level segment. The note highlighted recommendations for action to promote women's full employment and access to decent work.

In a letter dated 2 November [E/CN.6/2007/7] to the Commission, the Council detailed the outcome of its 2006 substantive session, including its discussion during the humanitarian affairs segment on gender-based violence (see p. 1053), and attached a list of resolutions adopted by the Council calling for action by the functional commissions.

### Future organization and working methods

In response to General Assembly resolution 60/140 [YUN 2005, p. 1248], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2006/3] on proposals for a multi-year programme of work for the period 2007–2009, which would enhance the working methods of the Commission. The proposals were based on the

Commission's work since 1996, the outcome of the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action [YUN 2005, p. 1247], the 2005 World Summit [ibid.], as well as the experience of other functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council. The Secretary-General proposed that the Commission continue its practice of developing a fixed multi-year programme of substantive themes, which would allow for in-depth reviews of progress in implementation of the critical areas of concern in the Platform for Action, and provide substantive input to intergovernmental processes and their follow-up, such as major UN conferences and summits. One theme per year should be selected, with a sustained focus over two sessions: the first session would be devoted to policy development and the second (two years later) to a review of the implementation of the agreed conclusions adopted after consideration of the theme at the first session. Therefore, in the proposed multi-year (2007-2009) work programme, the Commission would undertake policy development of a substantive theme in 2007 and review its implementation in 2009. The cycle of policy development followed by a review after two years would allow the Commission to enhance its follow-up on the implementation of its agreed conclusions more systematically and effectively.

Substantive themes proposed for 2007-2009 included the elimination of discrimination against the girl child (2007), with a review in 2009; financing for gender equality and empowerment of women (2008), with a review in 2010; and sharing of responsibilities for home and family, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS (2009), with a review in 2011. During 2007 and 2008, the Commission would follow up on implementation of its agreed conclusions adopted in the 2002-2006 multi-year programme of work. It was further proposed that the Bureau of the Commission identify an emerging issue to be considered by the Commission prior to each session.

#### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 25 July [meeting 38], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Commission on the Status of Women [E/2006/27 & Corr.1], adopted **resolution 2006/9** without vote [agenda item 14 (a)].

#### Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolution 2005/48 of 27 July 2005, in which the Council welcomed the progress made in the

review of the working methods of several functional commissions and invited those functional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies that had not yet done so to continue to examine their methods of work, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, in order to better pursue the implementation of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits, and to submit their reports to the Council in 2006,

*Reaffirming* the primary responsibility of the Commission on the Status of Women for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,

*Recognizing* that the organization of work of the Commission should contribute to advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,

*Recognizing also* that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are mutually reinforcing in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women,

*Reaffirming* that gender mainstreaming constitutes a critical strategy in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and underlining the catalytic role of the Commission in promoting gender mainstreaming,

*Recognizing* the importance of non-governmental organizations, as well as other civil society actors, in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and, in this respect, the work of the Commission,

#### A. Methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

1. *Decides* that, from its fifty-first session, the Commission on the Status of Women will consider one priority theme at each session, based on the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

2. *Also decides* that the Commission will continue to hold, on an annual basis, a general discussion on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", and recommends that statements identify goals attained, achievements, gaps and challenges in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme;

3. *Further decides* that the annual interactive high-level round table will focus on experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme;

4. *Decides* that each year the Commission will discuss ways and means to accelerate the implementation of the previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme through:

(a) An interactive expert panel to identify key policy initiatives in order to accelerate their implementation;

(b) An interactive expert panel on capacity-building for gender mainstreaming in relation to the priority theme, based on an exchange of national and regional experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, with the participation of technical experts and statisticians;

5. *Also decides* that there will be one outcome to the annual discussions on the priority theme, in the form of agreed conclusions, negotiated by all States, which shall both identify gaps and challenges in the implementation of previous commitments and make action-oriented recommendations for all States, relevant intergovernmental bodies, mechanisms and entities of the United Nations system and other relevant stakeholders, in order to accelerate their implementation, and which would be widely disseminated to the United Nations system, where relevant, and made widely available by all States to the public in their own countries, as appropriate;

6. *Further decides* that each year the Commission will evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on a priority theme from a previous session through an interactive dialogue among all States and observers to identify means to accelerate their implementation, focusing on national and regional activities in support of the implementation of the agreed conclusions, including, where appropriate, supported by reliable statistics, sex-disaggregated data and other quantitative and qualitative information to illustrate monitoring and reporting;

7. *Decides* that the outcome of this evaluation will be in the form of a summary submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau;

8. *Also decides* that the Commission will continue to discuss emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that require urgent consideration;

9. *Requests* the Bureau of the Commission, prior to each session, to identify, in consultation with all States, through their regional groups, an emerging issue for consideration by the Commission, taking into account developments at the global and regional levels as well as planned activities within the United Nations, where increased attention to gender perspectives is required;

10. *Decides* that the emerging issue will be addressed by an interactive expert panel focusing on achievements, gaps and challenges through an exchange of national and regional experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, and that the outcome of this discussion will be in the form of a summary submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission, prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau;

11. *Requests* that, from the fifty-first session of the Commission, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat will organize a panel event in the margins of each annual session to enable a preliminary discussion on the priority theme of the subsequent session;

12. *Invites* all gender-specific United Nations entities and other relevant United Nations entities, including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, to contribute, where appropriate, to the discussion on the priority theme of the Commission;

13. *Decides*, in view of the traditional importance of non-governmental organizations in the advancement of women, that, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolutions 1996/6 of 22 July 1996 and 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, such organizations should be encouraged to participate, to the maximum extent possible, in the work of the Commission and in the monitoring and implementation process related to the Fourth World Conference on Women, and requests the Secretary-General to make appropriate arrangements to ensure full utilization of existing channels of communication with non-governmental organizations in order to facilitate broad-based participation and dissemination of information;

14. *Notes with appreciation* the continuation of the annual parliamentary meetings organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as well as the programme of side events held on the occasion of the sessions of the Commission;

15. *Invites* the regional commissions to continue to contribute to the work of the Commission;

16. *Encourages* all States to consider having technical experts and statisticians, including from ministries with expertise relevant to the themes under consideration, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors, as appropriate, on their delegations to the Commission;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on an annual basis, a report on the priority theme, including proposals for possible indicators, elaborated in cooperation with the Statistical Commission, to measure progress made in implementation, with regard to the priority theme;

18. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, on an annual basis, a report on progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme;

19. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to include in the annual report to the General Assembly on measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly and the annual report to the Council on the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United

Nations system, an assessment of the impact of the Commission's input to discussions within the United Nations system;

20. *Welcomes* the continuation of the biennial consideration by the Commission of the proposed programme of work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women;

21. *Decides* that the Commission, at its fifty-third session, should review the functioning of its revised methods of work, in the light of the outcome of the discussions on strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, in order to ensure the effective functioning of the Commission;

22. *Also decides* that, at its fifty-third session, the Commission will discuss the possibility of conducting in 2010 a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

## **B. Themes for the period 2007–2009**

23. *Further decides* that:

(a) In 2007, the priority theme will be “The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child”, and progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the forty-eighth session of the Commission on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality;

(b) In 2008, the priority theme will be “Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women”, and progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the forty-eighth session of the Commission on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding;

(c) In 2009, the priority theme will be “The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS”, and progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the fiftieth session of the Commission on the equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.

## **Communications on the status of women**

**Working Group.** At a closed meeting in March [E/2006/27 & Corr.1,2] the Commission considered the report of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women, established in 1993 [YUN 1993, p. 1050], which considered 18 confidential communications received directly by the Division for the Advancement of Women and 11 by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). No non-confidential communications were received. The Group noted that Governments had replied to five of the 18 communications received directly by the Division and to 10 of the 11 transmitted by OHCHR. The Group also noted that a number of communications of a general nature had been submitted, as opposed

to communications alleging specific cases of discrimination or injustice against individual women. Several communications had brought to light the issue of harmful traditional practices, including female genital mutilation, and their adverse effects on the sexual and reproductive health of women, including possible HIV/AIDS transmission.

The Group ascertained that communications were most frequently submitted on abuse of power, arbitrary detention and inhumane treatment in detention and lack of due process; sexual violence, including rape and gang rape, committed by law enforcement personnel, private individuals and military personnel; discriminatory legislation against women in the areas of family, health, employment, social benefits, voting rights and the right to own and inherit property; other forms of violence against women, including domestic violence and sexual harassment, forced and early marriage and harmful traditional practices; abduction of women and girls by parties in armed conflict; torture and other cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment; differential application of punishments in law based on sex; the impact of armed conflicts on women and girls and the failure of States to abide by international humanitarian law and international human rights law, and to protect and assist them; and threatening or pressuring of victims of violence by members of security forces to force retraction of complaints or control and suppress potential opposition. The Working Group was concerned about the abuse of power by government officials in conducting arbitrary detention, torture and ill-treatment; violence against women, especially sexual violence, and the apparent lack of commitment by some States to tackle impunity; the failure by some States, in contravention of their human rights obligations, to exercise due diligence to prevent violence against women, adequately investigate such crimes and punish perpetrators; and the continued existence of legislation or practices intended to or with the effect of discriminating against women, despite the international obligations and commitments of States and their constitutional provisions to outlaw such discrimination.

From the replies received, the Working Group noted that some Governments had already adopted or were in the process of adopting new legislation, amending discriminatory legislation, making efforts to harmonize legislation with relevant international standards, removing gender bias in the administration of justice, bringing perpetrators to justice and/or providing remedies to the victims.

In a March decision [E/2006/27 (dec. 50/102)], the Commission decided to postpone until its fifty-

second (2008) session further consideration of the Secretary-General's report on the future work of the Working Group [YUN 2004, p. 1170].

### UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

During 2006 [A/62/188], the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) continued to focus on four key goals: reducing feminized poverty; ending violence against women; halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS; and achieving gender equality in democratic governance and in post-conflict countries, which were defined in its 2004-2007 multi-year funding framework (MYFF), endorsed by the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board in 2004 [YUN 2004, p. 1172]. The strategic framework also comprised four outcomes: implementation of legislation and policies at the national and regional levels; demonstrated leadership, commitment and accountability for gender equality by mainstream institutions; increased capacity of gender equality advocates; and changes in attitudes and practices to support gender equality.

Over the 2004-2006 period, UNIFEM contributed to strengthening legal and policy frameworks in 89 countries; contributed to reducing feminized poverty through support to efforts in 36 countries and ending violence against women through increased number of laws and policies, registering progress in 35 countries; supported initiatives to bring a gender equality dimension to Millennium Development Goal processes in 42 countries and in four regions; and supported 94 catalytic initiatives related to capacity development of national, regional and global governmental and non-governmental organizations and networks of gender equality advocates. UNIFEM contributed to multi-stakeholder initiatives in 22 countries; identified a total of 75 countries that were engaged in some form of gender-responsive budgeting; worked with national AIDS councils to mainstream gender into the plans and policies of 16 countries and to provide training in gender analysis and women's human rights approaches in 19 countries; supported training for women to enhance their participation in elections in 15 countries; and supported efforts in 50 countries to enhance media coverage of gender equality issues. The UN Development Group Task Team on Gender Equality, chaired by UNIFEM, secured UN Development Group endorsement of a process to finalize country team performance indicators on gender equality programming and the pilot of an action learning process to devise UN models for gender equality programmes. The Task Team also

completed its second review of the resident coordinator annual reports.

In 2006, UNIFEM resources totalled \$56.3 million, an increase of \$6 million over the 2005 figure, of which \$25 million was in core resources and \$31.3 million in non-core resources. While the rise in non-core resources during 2004-2006 was double or triple the projections, the increase in core resources fell short of MYFF projections and was a concern. During the year, 54 Governments, 15 NGOs and private organizations, five national committees and four UN entities contributed resources.

In August [A/61/292], the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly a report on UNIFEM activities in 2005 [YUN 2005, p. 1276]. On 19 December, the Assembly took note of the report by **decision 61/525**.

**UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board action.** In January, the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board [E/2006/35 (dec. 2006/5)] took note of the report commissioned by the UNIFEM Consultative Committee "Organizational assessment: UNIFEM past, present and future" [YUN 2005, p. 1275] and requested the UNDP Administrator to report to the Executive Board on the assessment at the annual 2006 session; ensure that UNIFEM gained access to relevant UN forums and report on progress in 2006; and strengthen collaboration at the programme level between UNDP and UNIFEM.

In June [E/2006/35 (dec. 2006/21)], the Board took note of the UNIFEM report on implementing its multi-year funding framework, 2005 [DP/2006/25] and the Administrator's report on the organizational assessment [DP/2006/26]; and requested the UNDP Administrator and the UNIFEM Executive Director to explore ways to cooperate on strategic planning, funding, programming arrangements and the results framework in the context of the preparation of the 2008-2011 MYFF.

### INSTRAW

The report of the Executive Board of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) (third session, New York, 18 May) [E/2006/80] provided a review of the implementation of the programme of work during the period November 2005-April 2006; the presentation of the proposed workplan and operational budget for 2007; and the report of its Subcommittee on the Resource Mobilization Strategy on the proposed fund-raising strategy for INSTRAW [INSTRAW/EB/2006/R.2], which was contained in an annex to the report. The Board approved the workplan and operational

budget for 2007, recommended that INSTRAW take measures to increase its visibility both within and outside the United Nations and with the general public, and agreed that INSTRAW should seek closer coordination with UN regional commissions. It stressed the need to increase fund-raising efforts in order to guarantee the activities of the Institute and requested the Director to strengthen her efforts in that regard. The Board requested the Director to fully implement the Subcommittee's recommendations on the proposed fund-raising strategy to enhance INSTRAW's visibility and decided to review progress at its 2007 session.

In July, by **decision 2006/250**, the Economic and Social Council took note of the report of the INSTRAW Executive Board.

**Commission on the Status of Women.** In response to Commission resolution 49/6 [YUN 2005, p. 1278], the Secretary-General transmitted the report [E/CN.6/2006/11] of the INSTRAW Director on strengthening the Institute, which provided information on the implementation of its 2004-2007

programme of work and focused on its three strategic areas: applied research, information gathering and dissemination and capacity-building on gender issues. The report also detailed INSTRAW contribution to the review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action through an analysis and identification of future work, and its development of a pioneer initiative to include gender in the analysis of remittances and development, as well as policy recommendations to improve women's economic benefits.

The Director concluded that, as a result of the revitalization process, INSTRAW was better positioned to contribute to women's empowerment, gender equality, mainstreaming gender issues in the MDGs, and gender mainstreaming throughout the UN system. She added that the commitment of sufficient resources by Member States was indispensable to securing the medium- and long-term sustainability for the Institute to comply with its mandate.

On 10 March, the Commission [dec.50/101] took note of the Director's report on INSTRAW.