

Women

In 2007, United Nations efforts to advance the status of women worldwide continued to be guided by 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, which reviewed progress in their implementation (Beijing+5). The Secretary-General decided to spearhead a multi-year system-wide campaign to eliminate violence against women and girls through 2015, coinciding with the target date of the Millennium Development Goals, and the Assembly adopted three resolutions addressing violence against women, including sexual violence and violence against migrant workers. The Assembly also adopted resolutions on the girl child, ending obstetric fistula, women in development and the situation of women in rural areas, and proclaimed 15 October as the International Day of Rural Women. On the issue of women, peace and security, the Security Council urged the Secretary-General to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys. Attention also focused on rape and sexual violence in armed conflict. In March, 12 UN system entities launched the "United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict". Progress was achieved in gender mainstreaming with the establishment by the United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women of an ad hoc working group, which would facilitate efforts to develop a system-wide action plan to operationalize the policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming endorsed in 2006 by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination. In April, the Secretary-General issued a report on the 2006 recommendations of the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence, including the proposed new UN gender architecture, and suggested ways to take forward intergovernmental consideration of the Panel's report.

At its fifty-first session in March, the Commission on the Status of Women convened high-level panel discussions and adopted agreed conclusions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child, which was the priority theme of the session. The Commission recommended to the Economic and Social Council for adoption a draft resolution on assistance to Palestinian women. It also adopted resolutions on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS; ending female genital mutilation; and the forced marriage of the girl child. Informal discussions were held on the

role of men and boys in achieving gender equality and financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women.

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, HIV/AIDS, and gender equality and democratic governance. Efforts to enlarge and diversify its regular resource base were successful and the Fund exceeded its target in regular resources for 2007, reaching \$44 million, nearly double the 2004 total. In December, the General Assembly decided on the terms of office of the Consultative Committee for the Fund with a view to maintaining its institutional memory.

The United Nations continued to strengthen and revitalize the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women. The Executive Board took decisions to enhance the Institute's strategic framework for the period 2008-2011. Although projected income for the 2006-2007 biennium was sufficient to cover projected expenditures through 31 December, the financial situation of the Institute remained precarious. In October, the Executive Board presented solutions for securing sustained resources to fund core activities and placing the Institute's financial situation on a more stable basis.

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

During 2007, 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. 1157-1176 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 p. 1185).

Report of Secretary-General. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/145 [YUN 2006, p. 1330], the Secretary-General, in an August report [A/62/178], provided information on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women by examining the extent to which intergovernmental bodies had taken into account gender perspectives in their work, focusing on the sixty-first (2006) session of the General Assembly, the 2006 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council and the fiftieth (2006) session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The report also assessed, as requested by the Economic and Social Council in resolution 2006/9 [YUN 2006, p. 1356], the impact of the input of the Commission on the Status of Women to discussions within the UN System.

The Secretary-General concluded that effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly required the incorporation of gender perspectives in social, political and economic development at all levels. In addition, it was important for intergovernmental bodies to systematically examine the gender dimensions of thematic issues in all policy areas to facilitate gender-sensitive policy development and develop effective means of follow-up at the international level. Approximately 25 per cent of the Assembly's outcomes included gender perspectives, and only two thirds of those contained recommendations for action. The outcomes of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee, and to a lesser extent the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee, continued to reflect gender perspectives in a more systematic manner than did the outcomes of other committees. Gender perspectives were given the greatest attention in social development and human rights outcomes, but received less attention in economic and political issues. Further efforts could be made to examine the gender dimensions in areas such as disarmament, international security, administrative and budgetary matters, and legal affairs, and to systematically include gender analysis, related data or recommendations for action in reports submitted to the Assembly. There was also a need to facilitate more attention to gender perspectives in the work of the functional commissions. As the Commission on the Status of Women played a catalytic role in advancing gender mainstreaming, the Secretary-General encouraged UN entities to more effectively utilize and report on

the impact of the outcomes of the Commission. He made recommendations for subsidiary bodies of the Assembly to incorporate gender equality perspectives in their discussions and outcomes; the Assembly to ensure that gender perspectives were incorporated in the implementation and follow-up to major UN conferences and summits; functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council to incorporate a gender perspective in their follow-up to UN conferences and summits; the Commission on the Status of Women to enhance its catalytic role in promoting and monitoring the implementation of gender mainstreaming; and UN system entities to systematically incorporate the outcomes of the Commission into their work where appropriate, and report on the impact of outcomes.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/433], adopted **resolution 62/137** without vote [agenda item 63 (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 61/145 of 19 December 2006,

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 HIV/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 mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system,

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 of States parties 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 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) Involving women actively in environmental decision-making at all levels, integrating gender concerns and perspectives in policies and programmes for sustainable development, and strengthening or establishing mechanisms at the national, regional and international levels to assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women;

(e) Providing technical assistance to women, particularly in developing countries, to ensure the continuing promotion of human resources development and the development of environmentally sound technologies and of women's entrepreneurship;

(f) 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;

(g) 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;

(h) 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;

(i) Taking further steps to ensure that the education 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;

(j) Incorporating gender perspectives and human rights in health-sector policies, programmes and research activities, paying attention to women's and girls' specific needs and priorities, ensuring women's right to the highest attainable standards of 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;

(k) 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 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;

(l) 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;

(m) 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;

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

(o) 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;

(p) 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 elaborate and implement laws and strategies to eliminate violence against women and girls;

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, including by paying more attention to issues related to the status of women under their consideration and within their mandates, 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 commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session of the General Assembly on children in 2007, the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, in Bali, Indonesia, in 2007, the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus in Doha in 2008, and the Third High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Accra in 2008;

13. *Reaffirms its call* to include a gender perspective in the consideration of all issues in the agenda and activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Human Rights Council;

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 2007 of the Economic and Social Council, which, inter alia, reaffirmed that gender equality and the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all are essential to eradicating poverty and hunger and that all countries should promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and, as called for, inter alia, in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, identify and accelerate actions towards that end;

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. *Requests* the Economic and Social Council to continue to encourage its functional commissions to mainstream a gender perspective in their respective follow-up actions to major United Nations conferences and summits and to develop more effective means to ensure the implementation of outcomes on gender equality at the national level;

19. *Underlines* 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;

20. *Requests* that entities of the United Nations system systematically incorporate the outcomes of the Commission on the Status of Women into their work within their mandates;

21. *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 seventh anniversary of its adoption and the open debates in the Council on women and peace and security;

22. *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, including in peace negotiations, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-conflict situations, as well as to increase their role in decision-making at all levels, including through the development of national action plans and strategies;

23. *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;

24. *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;

25. *Encourages* the subsidiary bodies of the General Assembly to incorporate gender-equality perspectives systematically in their discussions and outcomes, including through effective use of the analysis, data and recommendations contained in reports of the Secretary-General, and to follow up on the outcomes;

26. *Requests* that reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly facilitate gender-sensitive policy development by more systematically including

qualitative gender analysis, data and recommendations for further action;

27. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to continue its efforts towards achieving the goal of gender balance, including with the active support of gender focal points, and requests the Secretary-General to provide an oral report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-second session, to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session, under the item entitled “Advancement of women”, and to include in his report on human resources management information on the status of women in the United Nations system, including on progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance, recommendations for accelerating progress, and up-to-date statistics, including the number and percentage of women and their functions and nationalities throughout the United Nations system, and information on the responsibility and accountability of the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat and the secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for promoting gender balance;

28. *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 61/143 [YUN 2006, p. 1334], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/62/201] on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, which summarized the efforts of UN entities to achieve greater coordination and collaboration in their work on violence against women; disseminate the in-depth study of the Secretary-General [YUN 2006, p. 1333] and resolution 61/143; and undertake initiatives in respect of violence against women in support of national efforts. The report was based on information from 33 UN system entities and the International Organization for Migration. The Secretary-General decided to spearhead a multi-year system-wide campaign to eliminate violence against women and girls through 2015, coinciding with the target date for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [YUN 2000, p. 51]. The campaign would be developed by the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), in collaboration with UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict and guided by the Deputy Secretary-General. Other notable developments included the establishment of a Task Force on Violence against Women by IANWGE; the launch of UN

Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict, a system-wide initiative involving 12 UN entities to better coordinate the response of the UN system to sexual violence in conflict; the establishment of the Inter-Agency Cooperation Group against Trafficking in Persons; and the launch of the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking, which was facilitated by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and aimed to end human trafficking and slavery. The report also discussed the activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women; efforts to disseminate and give visibility to the in-depth study on violence against women [YUN 2006, p. 1333] and Assembly resolution 61/143 [*ibid.*, p. 1334]; initiatives on violence against women undertaken by UN system entities in support of national efforts; data and information collection, research and evaluation; training and capacity-building measures; support for legislative and policy development and implementation; and UN system internal policies, guidelines and training programmes on violence against women.

The report concluded that UN system entities had stepped up their efforts at addressing violence against women in accordance with their mandates and had developed, supported and/or implemented a range of initiatives aimed at preventing and eliminating such violence. In response to resolution 61/143, UN system entities were strengthening cooperation through new and existing mechanisms. In addition, the Secretary-General planned to launch a global campaign on violence against women towards the end of 2007, which would focus on three main areas: global advocacy, UN leadership and strengthened efforts and partnerships at the regional and national levels.

On 18 December, by resolution 62/133 (see p. 1158), the General Assembly took note of the Secretary-General's report; called on IANWGE to enhance the effectiveness of the Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women as a system-wide funding mechanism for preventing violence against women and girls; and requested the Secretary-General to propose a set of possible indicators on violence against women, building on the work undertaken by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women (see p. 785).

UNIFEM activities. In compliance with General Assembly resolution 50/166 [YUN 1995, p. 1188], the Secretary-General transmitted a report [A/HRC/7/53-E/CN.6/2008/9] of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) on its 2007 activities to eliminate violence against women, including management of the Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, which celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2007 [YUN 1997, p. 1193]. Trust Fund strategic directions for the period 2005-2008 were in line with the recommendations of the Secretary-General's in-depth study on violence against women [YUN 2006, p. 1333], which called for greater at-

tention to implementation of human rights standards, multisectoral approaches, strengthened monitoring and evaluation, and strong institutional mechanisms at the local, national, regional and international levels. UNIFEM convened 19 inter-agency programme appraisal committees at the global and regional levels involving 21 UN entities. Efforts to increase the Trust Fund resource base yielded significant results in 2007, as the target of \$10 million in contributions was met and a goal was set of \$20 million for 2008. Meanwhile, demand for Trust Fund support remained high, with more than \$100 million in requests received in 2007. Grant-making during the year focused on supporting the implementation of national laws, policies and plans of action on ending violence against women and on the interlinkages between violence against women and HIV/AIDS. The Trust Fund, under the twelfth grant-making cycle, provided nearly \$5 million to 29 initiatives in 36 countries, bringing the total awarded since its 1997 inception to more than \$19 million in grants to 263 projects in 115 countries.

In his conclusion, the Secretary-General highlighted the need for a greater focus on prevention, including the need to transform patriarchal gender structures and values that perpetuated and entrenched violence against women. In addition, in order to achieve the MDGs and fulfil other key commitments made to the world's women, he stated that it was critical that the level of support for efforts to address violence against women be increased significantly, and that effective, innovative approaches be replicated on a larger scale.

Note by Secretariat. On 20 November, in response to resolution 61/143 [ibid., p. 1334], the Secretariat issued a note [E/CN.5/2008/8] on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence as a background for discussion during the forty-sixth (2008) session of the Commission for Social Development. The note examined the link between discrimination and violence against women, and focused on promoting full employment and decent work for all to combat the cause of violence against women at its root. It included recommendations on a policy framework to promote gender equality in the workplace, which was a prerequisite for the elimination of all forms of violence against women.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/433], adopted **resolution 62/133** without vote [agenda item 63 (a)].

Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 61/143 of 19 December 2006,

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, and noting the attention paid to the elimination of all forms of violence against indigenous women in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007,

Recognizing 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, and 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,

Deeply concerned about the pervasiveness of violence against women and girls in all its different 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,

Stressing that States have the obligation to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, including women and girls, and must exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls, to eliminate impunity 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,

Expressing its appreciation for the high number of activities undertaken by the United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies to eliminate all forms of violence against women,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, pursuant to resolution 61/143;

2. *Welcomes* the decision of the Secretary-General to spearhead a multi-year system-wide campaign to eliminate violence against women and girls through 2015, focus-

ing on global advocacy, United Nations leadership and strengthened efforts and partnerships at the national and regional levels;

3. *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;

4. *Calls upon* all United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies and invites the Bretton Woods institutions to intensify their efforts at all levels to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and to better coordinate their work, inter alia, through the Task Force on Violence against Women of the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality;

5. *Calls upon* the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality to intensify its consideration of 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;

6. *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, supports the commitment of the Task Force on Violence against Women to undertake a resource flow analysis to assess the resources available for this work and elaborate recommendations for their most effective and efficient use, and calls upon the United Nations system to respond swiftly to those recommendations once issued;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to intensify his efforts to develop and propose a set of possible indicators on violence against women, building on the work undertaken by the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, in order to assist States in assessing the scope, prevalence and incidence of violence against women, with a view to allowing its consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-second session and by the Statistical Commission at the earliest;

8. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to present an oral report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-second session and thereafter to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session with information provided by the United Nations bodies, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies on recent follow-up activities to implement resolution 61/143 and the present resolution, including on the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, and urges United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and the specialized agencies to contribute promptly to the report.

Elimination of rape and other forms of sexual violence

In March [E/2007/27], the Commission on the Status of Women adopted its agreed conclusions on the elimination of discrimination and violence against the girl child (see p. 1172), as well as resolutions on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS (see p. 1169), female genital mutilation (see p. 1171) and forced marriage of the girl child (see p. 1171), which drew attention to the vulnerability of girls, in particular, but also of women, to rape and other forms of sexual violence and the need for their protection. The Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women (see p. 1193) expressed concern about sexual violence and other forms of violence against women, including the climate of impunity perpetrated or condoned by law enforcement and military personnel. In other activity, the "Stop Rape Now: United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict" initiative was launched (see p. 1168).

On 18 December, by resolution 62/134, the General Assembly urged States, the UN system, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society actors to take action to address the issues of rape and other sexual violence against women and girls. It also requested the Secretary-General to report on implementation of the resolution at its sixty-third (2008) session.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/433], adopted **resolution 62/134** without vote [agenda item 63 (a)].

Eliminating rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the obligation of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter,

Reaffirming also that discrimination on the basis of sex is contrary to 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 further the obligations of States parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto, of 1977, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,

Reaffirming the goals, objectives and commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and those contained in the outcome documents of the twenty-third

special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century” with respect to sexual violence and to women in armed conflict,

Recalling all previous General Assembly resolutions on violence against women and violence against children, including resolution 61/143 of 19 December 2006 on intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and its other relevant resolutions, as well as Security Council resolutions 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security, 1612(2005) of 26 July 2005 on children affected by armed conflict and 1674(2006) of 28 April 2006 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict, the resolutions of the Economic and Social Council on women and on the girl child, Commission on Human Rights resolution 2005/41 of 19 April 2005 on the elimination of violence against women and resolution 2001/20 of 16 August 2001 of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights on systematic rape, sexual slavery and slavery-like practices,

Recalling also the inclusion of rape and other forms of gender-related crimes and crimes of sexual violence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court,

Recalling further the recognition by the ad hoc international criminal tribunals that rape can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity, or a constitutive act with respect to genocide,

Welcoming the United Nations inter-agency initiative “Stop Rape Now: United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict”,

Recognizing that violence against women is an offence against the dignity and integrity of the victim, which often inflicts serious physical and psychological harm, 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 violence against women is rooted in historically unequal power relations between men and women,

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,

Expressing concern that civilians, particularly women and children, account for the vast majority of those adversely affected by armed conflict, including as refugees and internally displaced persons, and increasingly are targeted by combatants and armed elements, and recognizing the consequent impact this has on durable peace and reconciliation,

Recognizing that States bear primary responsibility to respect and ensure the human rights of their citizens, as well as all individuals within their territory as provided for by relevant international law,

Stressing 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 the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the victims,

Strongly condemning all acts of violence against women and girls, whether these acts are perpetrated by the State, by private persons or by non-State actors, calling 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 stressing the need to treat all forms of violence against women and girls as a criminal offence, punishable by law,

Stressing that rape or other forms of sexual violence must not be used or condoned in any circumstance by any individual, State or non-State actor,

Recognizing that rape or any other form of sexual violence is unlawful in all circumstances and in all places, regardless of the sex or age of the victim, including in detention and in jails, whether or not committed by State or non-State actors in the course of achieving political or military objectives, whether or not in the course of an international or non-international armed conflict, or in areas under foreign occupation,

Deeply concerned at rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, which are typically committed against women and girls, and which often target victims associated with communities, ethnic groups or other groups regarded as antagonistic to or insufficiently supportive of the group or entity whose forces commit the crime, and are frequently calculated to humiliate, dominate, instil fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate members of such groups, including, but not limited to, the victims and their families,

Affirming the need for States to ensure that perpetrators of rape or other forms of sexual violence committed on their territory do not operate with impunity and that the perpetrators of such acts are brought to justice as provided for by national law and obligations under international law, and also affirming the need to penalize persons in authority found guilty of sexually assaulting victims,

Also affirming the need to provide all necessary assistance to victims, including children born as a result of rape,

Determined to eliminate rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including in conflict and related situations,

1. *Urges* States:

(a) To take special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, in particular rape and other forms of sexual violence;

(b) To end impunity by ensuring that all rape victims, particularly women and girls, have equal protection under the law and equal access to justice and by investigating, prosecuting and punishing any person responsible for rape and other forms of sexual violence, whether or not committed by State or non-State actors in the course of achieving political or military objectives, wherever they occur, whether or not in the course of an international or non-international armed conflict, including in detention and in jails, and regardless of the sex or age of the victim;

(c) To provide victims with access to appropriate health care, including sexual and reproductive health care, psychological care and trauma counselling, as well as to rehabilitation, social reintegration and, as appropriate, effective

and sufficient compensation, in accordance with relevant international and national law;

(d) To develop and implement at all levels, as required, a comprehensive and integrated strategy of prevention and prosecution of rape, and monitor the implementation of such a strategy, which should include the training of, inter alia, all relevant government and military personnel, in particular military commanders, law enforcement officials, judicial system personnel, health workers, teachers and social workers, as well as community leaders and the news media, in all appropriate aspects of the prevention and prosecution of rape and other forms of sexual violence and of protection and support for victims of such violence;

(e) To promote human rights education, including on all aspects of rape and other forms of sexual violence, ensuring factual accounts of such violence, in an effort to encourage better understanding among all peoples, with a view to the prevention and elimination of rape and other forms of sexual violence;

(f) 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;

(g) To consider ratifying or acceding to all human rights treaties, including, as a matter of priority, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto;

2. *Calls upon* States and the United Nations system:

(a) To support all efforts to address rape, including through the regular collection, analysis and dissemination of data, to facilitate such efforts and, in particular, to work towards overcoming the difficulties and challenges of capacity-building and collecting information on the practice;

(b) To integrate to the maximum extent possible the needs of all victims of sexual violence into United Nations humanitarian assistance programmes;

(c) To assign adequate resources within the United Nations system 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 and design programmes to provide assistance to victims, including children born as a result;

3. *Urges* States, in cooperation with the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors, as appropriate:

(a) To conduct public education and awareness campaigns at the national and grass-roots levels in order to raise awareness about the causes and consequences of rape and other forms of sexual violence;

(b) To establish reception centres and shelters for victims, take other appropriate measures to promote and protect women's rights, and provide protection, safe shelter, medical assistance, including sexual and reproductive health care, all necessary medications, including antiretroviral drugs and antibiotics, counselling for victims and their families, comprehensive information and education, legal aid, rehabilitation, and reintegration of victims and

their offspring into society, in cooperation with State efforts towards protecting and supporting victims, in particular appropriate compensation that is effective and sufficient, maintaining due confidentiality and privacy of the victims and their families;

(c) To support programmes to eliminate rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, and design programmes to provide assistance to all victims of rape;

(d) To address the long-term consequences faced by victims of rape and other forms of sexual violence, including legal discrimination and social stigmatization, as well as the effects on children born as a result of rape;

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

(a) To advocate at the local, national, regional and international levels against rape and other forms of sexual violence, inter alia, by building and strengthening networks among those who may be in a position to provide information on their occurrence, and to call attention to their adverse consequences;

(b) To increase coordination and cooperation in addressing this problem and continue to present their observations and conclusions to Governments;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution on rape and other forms of sexual violence in all their manifestations, including when they target victims associated with communities, ethnic groups or other groups regarded as antagonistic to or insufficiently supportive of the group or entity whose forces commit the crime, and are calculated to humiliate, instil fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate members of such groups, including, but not limited to, the victims and their families.

Violence against women migrant workers

In response to General Assembly resolution 60/139 [YUN 2005, p. 1253], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/62/177] on violence against women migrant workers, which provided information on the legal and policy measures introduced by Member States and the activities undertaken by UN system entities and other organizations to address the issue. As at 1 June, 22 Member States had provided information on measures taken; the report also reflected 11 responses received after the deadline as input for the previous report [YUN 2005, p. 1252] on the subject. Several States reported on efforts to record and study incidents of violence against migrant workers; the establishment of new or revised criminal laws that benefited migrant workers; or the adoption of legislation pertaining to the recruitment, remuneration and social integration of migrant women and the protection of their rights, as well as the provision of services for migrant women victims of violence. Several national action plans to combat violence against women provided protection for migrant women, with a few plans containing provisions aimed specifically at combating violence against

women migrant workers. With regard to human rights aspects, as at 1 June, 36 States had become parties to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families [YUN 1990, p. 594]. Special Rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights and subsequently of the Human Rights Council had devoted attention to the human rights of migrants (see p. 717); violence against women (see p. 785); and trafficking in persons, especially women and children (see p. 787). Some UN entities providing information on efforts to combat violence against women migrant workers included: the Division for the Advancement of Women, which placed the question of violence against women as a priority area of work; the Secretary-General's in-depth study on all forms of violence against women [YUN 2006, p. 1333], in which specific attention was devoted to violence against women migrant workers; the United Nations Population Fund, which published the report *State of World Population 2006: A Passage to Hope—Women and International Migration*, covering the diverse experiences of women migrant workers, including their vulnerability to sexual violence and exploitation; and the International Organization for Migration, which contributed to the implementation of resolution 60/139 by conducting research and data collection on women and international migration and promoting bilateral cooperation between States.

The Secretary-General concluded that while a number of States had mechanisms in place to study the situation of migrant women, little statistical data on the incidence of violence against women migrant workers was provided. International migration policies needed to be gender-sensitive to ensure that they empowered female migrants and included efforts to provide migrant women with residency status independent from that of male family members and permission to work when admitted for family reunification, which would enable migrant women to integrate more easily into host communities and help to prevent violence, abuse and exploitation. Greater efforts were needed to assess the effectiveness of general migration legislation and policy in the prevention and elimination of violence against women migrant workers. The Secretary-General stressed the need for legislation, including labour laws and redress mechanisms, to protect women migrant workers and ensure their access to justice, including by ensuring the rights of abuse victims to stay in the country while seeking redress; enhancing the monitoring of working conditions, especially women in domestic services; and providing complaint and investigation mechanisms leading to the punishment of violators. He recommended that States complement legislative measures with targeted and systematic measures to prevent and respond to violence against women migrant workers; strengthen training and capacity-building measures for Govern-

ment officials, community leaders and other professionals likely to come in contact with migrant workers; study and address the linkages between migration and trafficking; and ratify international instruments that addressed migration issues. He further recommended that the Special Rapporteurs reporting to the Human Rights Council on the human rights of migrants, on violence against women, and on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, as well as all human rights treaty bodies, continue to monitor the situation of women migrant workers and violence against those women.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/433], adopted **resolution 62/132** without vote [agenda item 63 (a)].

Violence against women migrant workers

The General Assembly,

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

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

Noting with appreciation the various activities initiated by entities of the United Nations system, such as the Regional Programme on Empowering Women Migrant Workers in Asia of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the high-level panel discussion on the gender dimensions of international migration held by the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session, and the discussions held by the Commission at its fifty-first session, during which it took note, inter alia, of the particular situation of girl migrants, and noting the contribution of the International Labour Organization through the development of a Multilateral Framework on Labour Migration, as well as other activities through which the plight of women migrant workers continues to be assessed and alleviated,

Recalling the discussions during the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held on 14 and 15 September 2006, which recognized, inter alia, the need for special protection for migrant women,

Recognizing the increasing participation of women in international migration, driven in large part by socio-economic factors, and that this feminization of migration requires greater gender sensitivity in all policies and efforts related to the subject of international migration,

Stressing the shared responsibility of all stakeholders, in particular countries of origin, transit and destination, relevant regional and international organizations, the private

sector and civil society, in promoting an environment that prevents and addresses violence against women migrant workers,

Acknowledging the contribution that women migrant workers make to development through the economic benefits that accrue to both the country of origin and the country of destination,

Recognizing the particular vulnerability of women and their children at all stages of the migration process, extending from the moment of deciding to migrate, and including transit, engagement in formal and informal employment, and integration into the host society, as well as during their return to their countries of origin,

Expressing deep concern at the continuing reports of grave abuses and violence committed against migrant women and girls, including gender-based violence, in particular sexual violence, trafficking, domestic and family violence, racist and xenophobic acts, abusive labour practices and exploitative conditions of work,

Recognizing that the intersection of, inter alia, gender, age, class and ethnic discrimination and stereotypes can compound the discrimination faced by women migrant workers,

Affirming the commitment to protect and promote the human rights of all women, including, without discrimination, indigenous women who migrate for work, and in this regard noting the attention paid in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against indigenous women, as appropriate,

Noting with concern that many migrant women who are employed in the informal economy and in less skilled work are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, and underlining in this regard the obligation of States to protect the human rights of migrants so as to prevent abuse and exploitation,

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

Realizing that the movement of a significant number of women migrant workers may be facilitated and made possible by means of fraudulent or irregular documentation and sham marriages with the object of migration, that this may be facilitated through, among other things, the Internet, and that those women migrant workers are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation,

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

Recognizing also the importance of exploring the link between migration and trafficking in order to further efforts towards protecting women migrant workers from violence, discrimination, exploitation and abuse,

Encouraged by some measures adopted by some countries of destination to alleviate the plight of women mi-

grant workers residing in their areas of jurisdiction, such as the establishment of protection mechanisms for migrant workers, facilitating their access to mechanisms for reporting complaints, or providing assistance during legal proceedings,

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

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

2. *Encourages* Member States to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to relevant International Labour Organization conventions and to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, 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 all human rights treaties that contribute to the protection of the rights of women migrant workers;

3. *Takes note* of the reports of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on the human rights of migrants and the Special Rapporteur of the Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences, with regard to violence against women migrant workers, and encourages all special rapporteurs whose mandates relate to the subject of violence against women migrant workers to address the issue of violence against women migrant workers and their human rights, in particular the problems of gender-based violence and discrimination, as well as trafficking in women;

4. *Notes* the findings contained in the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development, 2004: Women and International Migration, including its recommendations for concrete actions aimed at helping to empower migrant women, including women migrant workers, and reducing their vulnerability to abuse;

5. *Requests* all Governments to continue to cooperate fully with the Special Rapporteurs mentioned in paragraph 3 above in the performance of their tasks and mandated duties, including by making available to them requested information on violence against women migrant workers and by reacting promptly to their urgent appeals, and encourages Governments to give serious consideration to inviting them to visit their countries;

6. *Calls upon* all Governments to incorporate a human rights and gender perspective in legislation and policies on international migration and on labour and employment, inter alia, for the prevention and protection of migrant women from violence and discrimination, exploitation and abuse, and to take effective measures to ensure that these do not reinforce discrimination and bias against women;

7. *Calls upon* Governments to adopt or strengthen measures to protect the human rights of women migrant

workers, regardless of their immigration status, including in policies that regulate the recruitment and deployment of women migrant workers, and to consider expanding dialogue among States on devising innovative methods to promote legal channels of migration, inter alia, in order to deter illegal migration;

8. *Urges* Governments to enhance bilateral, regional, interregional and international cooperation to address violence against women migrant workers, fully respecting international law, including international human rights law, as well as to strengthen efforts in reducing the vulnerability of women migrant workers, including by fostering sustainable development alternatives to migration in countries of origin;

9. *Also urges* Governments to adopt or strengthen measures to promote and protect the human rights of migrant girls, including unaccompanied girls, regardless of their immigration status, to prevent their labour and economic exploitation, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and sexual abuse in the workplace, including domestic work;

10. *Further urges* Governments, in cooperation with international organizations, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, to strengthen the focus on and funding support for the prevention of violence against women migrant workers, in particular by promoting the access of women to meaningful and gender-sensitive information and education on, inter alia, the costs and benefits of migration, rights and benefits to which they are entitled in the countries of origin and employment, overall conditions in countries of employment and procedures for legal migration, as well as to ensure that laws and policies governing recruiters, employers and intermediaries promote adherence to and respect for the human rights of migrant workers, particularly women;

11. *Calls upon* Governments, in cooperation with international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders, to provide women migrant workers who are victims of violence with the full range of immediate assistance and protection, such as access to counselling, legal and consular assistance and temporary shelter, as well as mechanisms to allow the views and concerns of victims to be presented and considered at appropriate stages of proceedings, including other measures that will allow victims to be present during the judicial process, to the extent possible, as well as to establish reintegration and rehabilitation schemes for returning women migrant workers;

12. *Also calls upon* Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin and destination, to put in place penal and criminal sanctions to punish perpetrators and intermediaries of violence against women migrant workers, and redress and justice mechanisms that victims can access effectively, as well as to ensure that migrant women victims of violence do not suffer from re-victimization, including by authorities;

13. *Urges* all States to adopt effective measures to put an end to the arbitrary arrest and detention of women migrant workers and to take action to prevent and punish any form of illegal deprivation of the liberty of women migrant workers by individuals or groups;

14. *Encourages* Governments to formulate and implement training programmes for their law enforcers, immigration officers and border officials, prosecutors and service providers with a view to sensitizing those public-sector workers to the issue of violence against women migrant workers and imparting to them the necessary skills and attitude to ensure the delivery of proper, professional and gender-sensitive interventions;

15. *Invites* Governments, the United Nations system and other concerned intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to cooperate towards a better understanding of the issues concerning women and international migration, and to improve the collection, dissemination and analysis of sex- and age-disaggregated data and information in order to assist in the formulation of migration and labour policies that are, inter alia, gender-sensitive and that protect human rights, as well as to aid in policy assessment;

16. *Encourages* concerned Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin, transit and destination, to avail themselves of the expertise of the United Nations, including the Statistics Division of the Secretariat, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, to develop appropriate national data-collection and analysis methodologies that will generate comparable data and tracking and reporting systems on violence against women migrant workers;

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

18. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the problem of violence against women migrant workers and on the implementation of the present resolution, taking into account updated information from the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as well as the reports of the Special Rapporteurs mentioned in paragraph 3 above, and other relevant sources, such as the International Organization for Migration, including non-governmental organizations.

Women and armed conflict

Women, peace and security

In 2007, the United Nations continued efforts to implement Security Council resolution 1325(2000) [YUN 2000, p. 1113] on women, peace and security. In March, the Council urged the Secretary-General to continue to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf and in UN field operations. In other activities, attention focused on the issues of rape and sexual violence, particularly in armed conflict, and on measures taken by UN entities to prevent and respond to gender-based violence in conflict situations.

SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION

On 7 March [meeting 5636], following consultations among Security Council members, the President made statement **S/PRST/2007/5** on behalf of the Council:

The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325(2000) on women and peace and security and recalls the relevant statements by its President as reiterating that commitment.

The Council recalls the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, 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 reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.

The Council urges Member States to ensure increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict.

The Council urges the Secretary-General to continue to appoint more women as special representatives and envoys to pursue good offices on his behalf, and in this regard calls upon Member States to provide candidates to the Secretary-General for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster.

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 security, and encourages Member States, donors and civil society to provide support in this respect.

The Council recognizes that an understanding of the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, effective institutional arrangements to guarantee their protection and full participation in the peace process can significantly contribute to the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security.

The Council recognizes the urgent need to intensify efforts to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard takes note of the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations.

The Council urges the Secretary-General to expand the role and contribution of women in the United Nations field-based operations, including at the decision-making level, and especially among military observers, civilian police and human rights and humanitarian personnel.

The Council emphasizes the need for the inclusion of gender components, where appropriate, in peacekeeping

operations and welcomes United Nations peacekeeping operations policies to promote and protect the rights of women and to take into account a gender perspective as set out in resolution 1325(2000).

The Council reaffirms also the need to implement fully international human rights and humanitarian law, including the four Geneva Conventions that protect the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts.

The Council remains deeply concerned by the pervasiveness of all forms of violence against women and girls 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 take specific measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed conflict.

The Council stresses the need to end impunity for acts of gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict and emphasizes the responsibility of all States to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, including those relating to sexual and other violence against women and girls, and in this regard stresses the need to exclude these crimes, where feasible, from amnesty provisions.

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

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 its implementation.

The Council decides to remain actively seized of the matter and expresses its commitment to the full implementation of resolution 1325(2000).

Report of Secretary-General. In response to the Security Council request in presidential statements **S/PRST/2006/42** [YUN 2006, p. 1340] and **S/PRST/2005/52** [YUN 2005, p. 1255] to annually review the implementation and integration of the United Nations 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 [S/2007/567] on women and peace and security. 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 report described the

methodology used to conduct the System-wide Action Plan review and to update the Action Plan for 2008-2009. The second implementation review covered the period from 1 July 2006 to 1 July 2007 and included updates on progress achieved since the first review of the Action Plan in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1339] in the areas of conflict prevention and early warning; peace-making and peacebuilding; peacekeeping operations; humanitarian response; post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration; preventing and responding to gender-based violence in armed conflict; and preventing and responding to sexual exploitation and abuse by humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel.

While both the 2006 and 2007 implementation reviews demonstrated that progress had been made by UN entities to implement resolution 1325(2000), institutional challenges and gaps in capacity to implement the Action Plan were identified, including the need to adequately fund UN entities for gender-related projects; strengthen national mechanisms for the advancement of women to ensure their participation in public policy formulation on war and peace issues; and establish effective links between the Action Plan and national implementation efforts. The Action Plan itself, which was a compilation of ongoing activities by UN entities in those areas of action where expertise and resources were available, presented challenges, as it was neither established as an integrated UN system-wide strategy, nor as a tool for monitoring, evaluation and accountability. On updating the Action Plan for 2008-2009, a key lesson learned from the reviews was that the 12 areas of action contained in the 2005-2007 Action Plan were too broad: as a result, all activities of UN entities under the 2008-2009 Action Plan would be consolidated into five thematic areas: prevention, participation, protection, relief and recovery, and normative. Recommendations were made on implementation strategies, a results-based management framework, and accountability, monitoring and reporting mechanisms for the updated Action Plan, as well as on building a database on good practices and lessons learned.

The Secretary-General concluded that progress, though uneven, had been achieved in many substantive areas in the 2005-2007 Action Plan and that the 2008-2009 System-wide Action Plan presented an opportunity for the United Nations to increase its efforts to implement resolution 1325(2000) and support Governments to fulfil their commitments on gender equality and women's empowerment in the area of peace and security. The United Nations would need to fully engage Governments and civil society to implement the Plan and special attention needed to be paid to assist Member States emerging from conflict to develop national plans. He made recommendations to further accelerate implementation of resolution 1325(2000), including the development of a system-

wide monitoring and evaluation mechanism, and the conduct of an evaluation in 2010 on progress achieved in implementation of the 2008-2009 Action Plan.

Communications. On 29 August [A/61/1036], Austria transmitted a set of recommendations on the empowerment of women in the area of conflict resolution and peacebuilding, which were agreed upon at a meeting hosted by Austria and the United States of the Women's Empowerment Network Steering Group in the context of an international conference on "Women Leaders—Networking for Peace and Security in the Middle East" (Vienna, 31 May). Noting that there were no women among the 54 United Nations envoys to conflict and post-conflict regions, the Steering Group urged the Secretary-General to establish a mechanism to increase the number of women considered for UN special representatives and envoy positions, including as heads of peace operations.

On 8 October [S/2007/598], Ghana indicated that the Security Council was scheduled to hold a debate on "Women and peace and security" on 23 October, under Ghana's presidency, and transmitted a concept paper, which was annexed to the letter, to help guide the discussion.

On 17 October [S/2007/607], South Africa forwarded the report on the "Africa Regional Meeting on Gender Justice: advancing gender justice in conflict-affected countries" (Cape Town, South Africa, 21-23 March), which was organized by the Ministry of Justice of South Africa, in cooperation with the Partners for Gender Justice Initiative. The high-level meeting was attended by representatives from 12 conflict-affected countries and focused on three priorities: joining gender and justice, strengthening regional cooperation and identifying best practices.

Security Council debate. On 23 October [meeting 5766], the Security Council held a discussion on the implementation of resolution 1325(2000) on women and peace and security, in which the Secretary-General said that significant progress had been made in the seven years since its adoption, with more women participating in mediating and negotiating peace, in searching for justice, in supporting disarmament and demobilization, in shaping development policies and in rebuilding institutions. However, more countries in conflict or post-conflict situations needed to establish their own national action plans and take greater ownership of programmes and priorities in implementing resolution 1325(2000). Meanwhile, the United Nations needed to take a more evenly coordinated approach than in the past, work with Governments to establish truly joint programmes driven by national priorities, clarify the roles and responsibilities of UN entities at the country level and appoint more women in leadership positions in UN peace operations around the world. He reiterated his call to the Security Council

to establish a mechanism dedicated to monitoring violence against women and girls within the framework of resolution 1325(2000). The Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Jean-Marie Guéhenno, said that the number of women serving in senior civilian positions in UN missions had increased by 40 per cent since February, and the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, Rachel Mayanja, emphasized that the purpose of the resolution was to make the world safe for equal participation by women and girls in matters of peace and security. She urged all Governments, parliaments, international organizations and civil society to join the worldwide campaign on violence against women and girls (see p. 1157).

SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION

On 23 October [meeting 5766], following consultations among Security Council members, the President made statement **S/PRST/2007/40** on behalf of the Council:

The Security Council reaffirms its commitment to the full and effective implementation of resolution 1325(2000) on women and peace and security and recalls the relevant statements by its President as reiterating that commitment.

The Council reaffirms the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security.

The Council recalls the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, in particular the statements in these documents concerning women and peace and security, 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 importance of ensuring respect for the equal rights of women and, in this regard, reaffirms the importance of the equal role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stresses the need for their full and equal participation in peace processes at all levels. The Council urges Member States, regional and subregional organizations and the United Nations system to enhance the role of women in decision-making with regard to all peace processes and post-conflict reconstruction and rebuilding of societies as vital in all efforts towards the maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace and security.

The Council is concerned that armed and other types of conflicts still persist in many parts of the world and are an ongoing reality affecting women in nearly every region. In this regard, the Council expresses deep concern that civilians, particularly women and children, continue to account for the vast majority of victims of acts of violence committed by parties to armed conflict, including as a result of deliberate targeting and indiscriminate and

excessive use of force. The Council condemns these acts and demands that those parties immediately put an end to such practices.

The Council reaffirms in this regard that parties to armed conflict bear the primary responsibility to take all feasible steps to ensure the protection of affected civilians, in particular, giving attention to the specific needs of women and girls.

The Council recognizes the constant underrepresentation of women in formal peace processes and is deeply concerned about persistent obstacles and challenges resulting from situations such as violence against women, shattered economies and social structures, lack of rule of law, poverty, limited access to education and other resources, various forms of discrimination and stereotypes.

The Council remains concerned about the low number of women appointed as Special Representatives or Special Envoys of the Secretary-General to peace missions. The Council urges the Secretary-General to appoint, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical representation, more women to pursue good offices on his behalf. The Council urges Member States to redouble their efforts to nominate women candidates to the Secretary-General, for inclusion in a regularly updated centralized roster. In turn, the Council calls upon the Secretary-General to increase the profile and transparency of this procedure and to issue guidelines to Member States on the process of nomination to senior posts. In addition, the Council reaffirms its call for broader gender mainstreaming in all peacekeeping operations, and welcomes United Nations peacekeeping operations policies to promote and protect the rights of women and to take into account a gender perspective as set out in resolution 1325(2000).

The Council takes note of the second follow-up report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security, and the various initiatives and actions undertaken by the United Nations entities in the context of the System-wide Action Plan for the implementation of resolution 1325(2000), and calls upon the Secretary-General to update, monitor and review the implementation and integration of the Plan, to conduct a system-wide evaluation in 2010 of progress achieved in implementing the Plan in 2008-2009, and to report thereon to the Council.

While welcoming the progress achieved so far, the Council recognizes the need for full and more effective implementation of resolution 1325(2000).

In this regard, the Council reiterates its call upon Member States to continue to fully and effectively implement resolution 1325(2000), including, where appropriate, through the development and strengthening of national efforts and capacities, as well as the implementation of national action plans or other relevant national-level strategies.

The Council calls upon the international community to provide, where needed, financial and technical support, as well as adequate training, for national implementation of resolution 1325(2000), and upon the United Nations system, civil society and other relevant actors to collaborate and provide assistance in line with national priorities to Member States, particularly those affected by armed conflict, in the rapid development of

national action plans, and to work closely with national mechanisms responsible for the implementation of the resolution, including, where appropriate, through the United Nations country teams. To this end, it requests the Secretary-General to include, in his annual report to the Council, information on progress on measures taken to improve, where appropriate, the capacity of relevant Member States to implement resolution 1325(2000), including information on best practices.

The Council emphasizes the importance of strengthening cooperation between Member States as well as the United Nations entities and regional organizations in adopting and promoting regional approaches to the full implementation of resolution 1325(2000) in all its aspects.

The Council strongly condemns all violations of international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law, committed against women and girls in situations of armed conflict, including killing, maiming, sexual violence, exploitation and abuse. In this regard, the Council urges the complete cessation by all parties of such acts with immediate effect.

The Council is deeply concerned that despite its repeated condemnation of all acts of violence, including killing, maiming, sexual violence, exploitation and abuse in situations of armed conflict, and despite its calls addressed to all parties to armed conflict for the cessation of such acts with immediate effect and for the adoption of specific measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape, and other forms of sexual abuse, as well as all other forms of violence, such acts remain pervasive, and in some situations have become systematic, and have reached appalling levels of atrocity. The Council stresses the need to end impunity for such acts as part of a comprehensive approach to seeking peace, justice, truth and national reconciliation.

In this context, the Council reiterates paragraph 9 of resolution 1325(2000) and calls upon all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of women and girls, especially as civilians, in particular the obligations applicable to them under the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto, of 1977, the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees of 1951 and the Protocol thereto, of 1967, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto, of 1999, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto, of 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.

The Council requests the Secretary-General to include in his reporting to the Council on situations of armed conflict information on progress in gender mainstreaming throughout the United Nations peacebuilding and peacekeeping missions; data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, including an account of instances of all forms of violence against women and girls, including killing, maiming, grave sexual violence, abductions and trafficking in persons, committed by the parties to armed conflict; and special measures proposed and taken to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape, and other forms of sexual abuse, and all other forms of violence in situations of armed

conflict, in order to end impunity, ensure accountability and uphold a zero-tolerance policy for violence against women and girls.

The Council requests the Secretary-General to prepare a follow-up report on the full implementation of resolution 1325(2000), incorporating information on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls in situations that are on the agenda of the Council, and also information on their protection and on the enhancement of their role in peace processes, to be submitted to the Council in October 2008, and may request the Secretary-General to give an oral briefing on the progress of the report.

The Council decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

Sexual violence and armed conflict

UN action against sexual violence in conflict.

On 8 March, on the occasion of International Women's Day, 12 UN system entities launched the "Stop Rape Now: United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict" initiative (UN Action), with the goal of ending sexual violence during and in the aftermath of armed conflict. UN Action maximized the capacity of existing inter-agency structures, and comprised the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), the Joint UN Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNIFEM, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization (WHO). The initiative, which sought to coordinate and enhance the response of the UN system, had three pillars: advocacy, country-level support for UN system action and knowledge generation.

On 23 October, in presidential statement S/PRST/2007/40 (see p. 1167), the Security Council requested the Secretary-General to include in his reports on situations of armed conflict data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, with an account of instances of all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, committed by the parties to armed conflict; and measures taken to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape, and other forms of sexual abuse, and/or violence in situations of armed conflict.

On 18 December, by resolution 62/134 (see p. 1159), the General Assembly welcomed the inter-agency initiative Stop Rape Now: UN Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict and urged States, UN system entities, NGOs and civil society actors to take action to address the issues of rape and other sexual violence against women and girls.

Women and health

Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS

In a March resolution on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS [E/2007/27 (res. 51/1)], the Commission on the Status of Women stressed that the HIV/AIDS pandemic, with its devastating scale and impact on women and girls, required urgent action in all fields and at all levels. Gender equality and the political, social and economic empowerment of women and girls were fundamental elements in the reduction of their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and were essential to reversing the pandemic. The Commission welcomed the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS adopted by the General Assembly in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1411] and reaffirmed the need for Governments to intensify national efforts and international cooperation in the implementation of the commitments contained in the Declaration. It urged Governments to strengthen initiatives that would increase the capacity of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection; ensure that women and girls had equitable and sustained access to treatment for HIV/AIDS and opportunistic infections; and integrate HIV prevention, voluntary counselling and testing of HIV into other health services, including sexual and reproductive health, family planning, maternity and tuberculosis services. On the establishment of joint UN teams on AIDS at the country level, the Commission requested the Secretary-General to direct 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.

Elimination of obstetric fistula

The United Nations continued efforts to improve maternal health and address the issue of obstetric fistula, a preventable and treatable condition caused by damage to the tissues of the bladder and rectum as a result of prolonged and obstructed labour, through the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the global Campaign to End Fistula. UNFPA and partners launched the Campaign in 2002 [YUN 2002, p. 1078] with the goal of eliminating fistula by 2015.

In 2007, the Campaign was active in 45 countries in Africa, Asia and the Arab States, preventing and treating fistula and rehabilitating and empowering women after treatment. Some 3,300 women received fistula treatment with support from UNFPA, and 89 health facilities in 19 countries received support to strengthen their capacity to provide treatment. Training was provided for more than 500 professionals in fistula management, and tens of thousands of individuals,

community leaders and policymakers were sensitized about maternal health. UNFPA also supported the first-ever delegation of fistula survivors to attend the global "Women Deliver" conference (London, 18-20 October), where advocates shared their experiences in panel events and interviews. The year also marked the twentieth anniversary of the Safe Motherhood Initiative [YUN 1987, p. 1222], which generated intensified commitment to address maternal mortality and morbidity and resulted in new and greater pledges of assistance. Donors contributed over \$8.5 million in new funding to the Campaign during 2007. In September, the UNFPA Executive Board announced the establishment of the Thematic Fund for Maternal Health, which would become operational in early 2008.

In his August report [A/62/297] on the girl child, which summarized UN activities in the human rights area, with a focus on the impact of national action on the well-being of the girl child, the Secretary-General also provided information on UN efforts to prevent and treat obstetric fistula.

By resolution 62/138 of 18 December, the General Assembly welcomed the contribution by Member States, the international community and civil society to the global Campaign to End Fistula and called on the international community to support the activities of UNFPA and other partners in the Campaign, including WHO, in establishing and financing regional fistula treatment and training centres. It also urged the international community to address the shortage of doctors, nurses and other health workers trained in lifesaving obstetric care, and of space and supplies, which limited the capacity of most fistula centres.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/435], adopted **resolution 62/138** without vote [agenda item 66 (a)].

Supporting efforts to end obstetric fistula

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming 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 also 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,

Reaffirming further the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and urging States that have not done so to consider, as a matter of priority, signing, ratifying or acceding to these Conventions and the Optional Protocols thereto,

Stressing the interlinkages between poverty, malnutrition, lack of or inadequate or inaccessible health services, early childbearing, early marriage of the girl child, violence against young women and girls and gender discrimination as root causes of obstetric fistula, and that poverty remains the main social risk factor,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

Recognizing also that early pregnancy and early childbearing entail complications during pregnancy and delivery and a much higher risk of maternal mortality and morbidity, and deeply concerned that early childbearing and limited access to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, including in the area of emergency obstetric care, cause high levels of obstetric fistula and other maternal morbidities as well as maternal mortality,

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

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access by girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health and in enjoyment by girls of fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence compared with boys and their often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence and harmful practices,

Welcoming the contribution by Member States, the international community and civil society to the global Campaign to End Fistula, bearing in mind that a people-centred approach to social and economic development is fundamental to protecting and empowering individuals and communities,

1. *Recognizes* the interlinkages between poverty, malnutrition, lack of or inadequate or inaccessible health services, early childbearing, early marriage of the girl child and gender discrimination as root causes of obstetric fistula, that poverty remains the main social risk factor, that the eradication of poverty is critical to meeting the needs and protecting and promoting the rights of girls and that continued urgent national and international action is required to eliminate it;

2. *Stresses* the need to address the social issues that contribute to the problem of obstetric fistula, such as early marriage of the girl child, early pregnancy, lack of access to sexual and reproductive health, lack of or inadequate education of girls, poverty and low status of women and girls;

3. *Also stresses* that States have the obligation to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of

women and girls, that they must exercise due diligence in order 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;

4. *Calls upon* States to take all necessary measures to ensure the right of women and girls to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and develop sustainable health systems and social services, with a view to ensuring access to such systems and services without discrimination, while paying special attention to adequate food and nutrition, family planning information, increasing knowledge and awareness and securing appropriate prenatal and post-natal care for the prevention of obstetric fistula;

5. *Also calls upon* States to ensure that girls have equal access to free and compulsory primary education of good quality and that they complete their education at that level, and to renew their efforts to improve and expand girls' and women's education at all levels, including at secondary and higher levels, as well as vocational education and technical training, in order to, inter alia, achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication;

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

7. *Calls upon* States and/or 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, and the private sector:

(a) To develop, implement and support national and international prevention, care and treatment strategies, as appropriate, to address effectively the condition of obstetric fistula and to develop further a multisectoral, multidisciplinary, comprehensive and integrated approach in order to bring about lasting solutions and put an end to obstetric fistula, maternal mortality and related morbidities, including through ensuring access to affordable, comprehensive, quality maternal health-care services, including skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care;

(b) To strengthen the capacity of health systems to provide the essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat those cases that do occur by providing the continuum of services, including family planning, prenatal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric care and post-partum care, to young women and girls, including those living in poverty and in underserved rural areas where obstetric fistula is most common;

(c) To redouble their efforts to meet the internationally agreed goal of improving maternal health by increasing access to skilled attendance at birth and emergency obstetric care, and appropriate prenatal and post-natal care;

(d) To provide essential health services, equipment and supplies and skills training and income-generating projects to young women and girls so that they can break out of a cycle of poverty;

(e) To mobilize funding to provide free or subsidized fistula repairs, including through encouraging more networking among providers and the sharing of new treatment techniques and protocols;

(f) To provide health education, rehabilitation and counselling, including medical counselling, as key components of post-operative care;

(g) To bring obstetric fistula to the attention of policymakers and communities, thereby reducing the stigma and discrimination associated with it and helping women and girls suffering from obstetric fistula so that they can overcome abandonment and social exclusion together with the psychosocial implications thereof, inter alia, through support of social reintegration projects;

(h) To educate individual women and men, girls and boys, communities, policymakers and health professionals about how obstetric fistula can be prevented and treated and increase awareness of the needs of pregnant women and girls, including their right to the highest attainable standard of health, through working with community and religious leaders, traditional birth attendants, media, radio stations, influential public figures and policymakers, support the training of doctors, nurses and other health workers in lifesaving obstetric care, and include training on fistula repair, treatment and care as a standard element of health professionals' training curricula;

(i) To develop means of transportation and financing that enable women and girls to access obstetric care and treatment, and provide incentives and other means to secure the presence in rural areas of qualified health professionals who are able to perform interventions to prevent obstetric fistula;

8. *Calls upon* the international community to support the activities of the United Nations Population Fund and other partners in the global Campaign to End Fistula, including the World Health Organization, in establishing and financing regional fistula treatment and training centres through identifying and supporting health facilities that have the potential to serve as centres for treatment, training and convalescent care;

9. *Encourages* communication and networking among existing fistula centres to facilitate training, research, advocacy and fund-raising and the development and application of relevant standards, including *Obstetric Fistula: Guiding Principles for Clinical Management and Programme Development*, published by the World Health Organization, which provides background information along with principles for developing fistula prevention and treatment strategies and programmes;

10. *Urges* the international community to address the shortages of doctors, nurses and other health workers trained in lifesaving obstetric care, and of space and supplies, which limit the capacity of most of the fistula centres;

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

12. *Invites* Member States to contribute to efforts to end obstetric fistula, including, in particular, the United Nations Population Fund global Campaign to End Fistula,

with the goal of eliminating obstetric fistula by 2015, in line with the targets of the millennium development goal of improving maternal health;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session on the implementation of the present resolution under the item entitled "Advancement of women".

Traditional practices affecting the health of women and girls

Female genital mutilation

In a March resolution on ending female genital mutilation [E/2007/27 (res. 51/2)], the Commission on the Status of Women reaffirmed that harmful traditional or customary practices, including female genital mutilation, constituted a serious threat to the physical, psychological, sexual and reproductive health of women and girls, which could increase their vulnerability to HIV and have adverse obstetric outcomes or fatal consequences. It urged States to condemn all harmful traditional practices, in particular female genital mutilation, and to take all necessary measures to protect girls and women from such violence, including by enacting and enforcing legislation to prohibit female genital mutilation and end impunity. It also urged States to develop social and psychological support services and care, as well as take action to improve health, including sexual and reproductive health, in order to assist women subjected to female genital mutilation. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to ensure that all relevant UN system entities, in particular UNICEF, UNDP, UNIFEM, UNFPA, OHCHR, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and WHO, take into the account the protection and promotion of the rights of girls against female genital mutilation in their country programmes and to report on implementation of the resolution at the fifty-second (2008) session of the Commission.

The girl child

Forced marriage of the girl child

In a March resolution on the forced marriage of the girl child [E/2007/27 (res. 51/3)], the Commission on the Status of Women recognized that early marriage and early childbearing continued to impede improvements in the educational, economic and social status of women worldwide and could severely curtail their educational and employment opportunities. Forced marriage, among other factors, contributed to girls faring disproportionately worse than boys in terms of access to primary school in some countries; had adverse psychological effects on girls; and could involve threatening behaviour, abduction, imprisonment, physical, psychological and sexual

violence, rape and even murder. The Commission urged States to enact and enforce laws to ensure that marriage was entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses; establish a minimum legal age of consent and a minimum age for marriage; and raise the minimum age for marriage when necessary. It also urged States and invited UN system entities to support and implement the development of national and international prevention, care and treatment strategies to effectively address sexual and reproductive health, maternal mortality and morbidities, including obstetric fistula, and to further develop a comprehensive and integrated approach to ensure access to the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health. The Commission requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the resolution at its fifty-second (2008) session.

Elimination of discrimination and violence against the girl child

Report of Secretary-General. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9 [YUN 2006, p. 1356], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2007/2] on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child, which was the priority theme of the fifty-first (2007) session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The report provided information on global policies and legal frameworks for the development and protection of the girl child, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (see p. 1189); on the persistence of discrimination and violence against the girl child and progress achieved in addressing the issue and recognizing their rights; on girls in high-risk situations, such as adolescent girls, migrant girls and girls with disabilities, in detention or in conflict situations; and on the empowerment of girls.

The Secretary-General concluded that discrimination and violence against the girl child persisted in all parts of the world, despite progress in raising awareness about the rights of the girl child, the unacceptability of continued violations of those rights and efforts undertaken to address inequalities in education, health and social protection. Institutions charged with the protection of girls, including families, schools and communities, were implicated in violating the rights of the girl child, and the well-being of the girl child was further threatened by stereotypical attitudes and behaviour and harmful practices. Meanwhile, poverty, social and economic upheavals caused by armed conflict and the HIV/AIDS pandemic further exacerbated the risk of abuse and exploitation of the girl child. There was a need for explicit attention to the girl child in policy and programme development and resource allocations, including the need for data disaggregated by sex and age and the development

of indicators to more effectively measure progress in addressing discrimination and violence against the girl child. Awareness-raising, community mobilization and education and training were needed to ensure that all key actors worked to eliminate attitudes and practices which negatively affected girls, and the engagement of men and boys in that work was critical. In order to eliminate discrimination and violence against the girl child, the Secretary-General recommended actions to be undertaken by Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations, NGOs, other relevant stakeholders, the Committee on the Rights of the Child (see p. 681) and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (see p. 1189).

The Commission on the Status of Women took note of the Secretary-General's report on 9 March [E/2007/27 (dec. 51/101)].

Gender mainstreaming efforts. In response to General Assembly resolution 61/145 [YUN 2006, p. 1330] and Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9 [ibid., p. 1356], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2007/3] on mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluations of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child. The report assessed the extent to which attention to the girl child had been mainstreamed in national policies and programmes, including through analyses of 140 responses submitted by Member States in preparation for the 10-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly [YUN 2005, p. 1247], 29 updates received in response to a 2006 note verbale sent to Member States, analyses of 51 poverty reduction strategy papers and 141 country MDG reports, as well as 113 and 146 reports, respectively, on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The report focused on areas such as education; health; harmful traditional practices; girls in high-risk situations; violence against the girl child, including trafficking; and institutional arrangements, and provided an assessment of trends in mainstreaming as reported by Member States. The report should be read in conjunction with the Secretary-General's report on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child (above).

The Secretary-General observed that while critical issues for eliminating discrimination and violence against the girl child were identified across all reporting mechanisms, not all Member States provided information on concrete steps taken to mainstream attention to the girl child. Moreover, explicit attention

to girls was not reported in policies and programmes in many areas, including in policies and programmes specifically focusing on women or children. The needs and priorities of girls were often invisible, grouped in references to “girls and boys”, “children” or “women and girls”. Progress was made in identifying issues of concern to the girl child across all sectors, yet the analysis was not always translated into concrete steps to address the gaps and challenges identified. Girls’ education received the most explicit attention in all reporting mechanisms, and the most commonly reported measures to address discrimination and violence against the girl child were legislative ones, including efforts to strengthen and enforce legislation, and actions to incorporate attention to girls in policies, strategies and action plans. Constraints reported included lack of resources, institutional capacity, data and coordination. The report concluded with recommendations for consideration by the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Commission on the Status of Women took note of the Secretary-General’s report on 9 March [E/2007/27 (dec. 51/101)].

Commission action. On 26 and 27 February, during its fifty-first session [E/2007/27], the Commission on the Status of Women held, respectively, two high-level round tables and a panel discussion on the theme “Elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child” and on 9 March adopted its agreed conclusions on the topic, which called for action to be taken and included recommendations in areas such as poverty, education and training, gender stereotypes, HIV/AIDS, child labour, armed conflict, humanitarian assistance to girls, violence and discrimination, trafficking in persons, girls in high-risk situations, migration, empowering girls, participation of girls, gender mainstreaming and data collection. The Commission also called on UN system entities to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes, as well as to articulate country-level goals and targets in that field, in accordance with national development strategies.

By **decision 2007/238** of 24 July, the Economic and Social Council transmitted for information, to the commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up of the special session on children, the Commission’s agreed conclusions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child.

(For more information on human rights activities and the girl child, see p. 787.)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee

[A/62/435], adopted **resolution 62/140** without vote [agenda item 66 (a)].

The girl child

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 60/141 of 16 December 2005 and all relevant resolutions, including the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in particular those relevant to the girl child,

Reaffirming the equal rights of women and men as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling all human rights and other instruments relevant to the rights of the child, in particular the girl child, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocols thereto,

Welcoming the opening for signature of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, particularly as it explicitly recognizes the specific situation of girls with disabilities,

Reaffirming the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the commitments relevant to the girl child made at the 2005 World Summit,

Reaffirming also the outcome document of the twenty-seventh special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled “A world fit for children”, the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, entitled “Global Crisis—Global Action”, and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS of 2006,

Reaffirming further all other relevant outcomes of major United Nations summits and conferences relevant to the girl child, as well as their five- and ten-year reviews, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development and the declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session in 2005,

Reaffirming the Dakar Framework for Action, adopted at the World Education Forum in 2000,

Welcoming the study on violence against children by the independent expert appointed by the Secretary-General and the in-depth study of the Secretary-General on all forms of violence against women, and taking note of the recommendations contained therein,

Recognizing that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in particular for developing countries, and recognizing also that chronic poverty remains the single biggest obstacle to meeting the needs of and promoting and protecting the rights of children and that urgent national and international action is therefore required to eliminate it,

Recognizing also that girl children are often at greater risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms

of discrimination and violence, and reaffirming the need to achieve gender equality to ensure a just and equitable world for girls, including through partnering with men and boys, as an important strategy for advancing the rights of the girl child,

Recognizing further that the empowerment of girls is key in breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and in promoting and protecting the full and effective enjoyment of their human rights, and further recognizing that empowering girls requires the active support and engagement of their parents, legal guardians, families, boys and men, as well as the wider community,

Deeply concerned about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access for girls to education, nutrition and physical and mental health care, in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys, and in leaving them more vulnerable than boys to the consequences of unprotected and premature sexual relations and often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and to violence, abuse, rape, incest, honour-related crimes and harmful traditional practices, such as female infanticide, early marriage, forced marriage, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

Deeply concerned also that female genital mutilation is an irreparable, irreversible harmful practice that affects more than 130 million women and girls alive today, and that each year a further 2 million girls are at risk of undergoing the harmful procedure,

Deeply concerned further that, in situations of poverty, war and armed conflict, girl children are among those most affected and furthermore become the victims of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS, which have a serious impact on the quality of their lives and leave them open to further discrimination, violence and neglect, thus limiting their potential for full development,

Emphasizing that increased access to education, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, for young people, especially girls, dramatically lowers their vulnerability to preventable diseases, in particular HIV/AIDS infection and sexually transmitted diseases,

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

Deeply concerned that early childbearing and limited access to sexual and reproductive health care, including in the area of emergency obstetric care, causes high levels of obstetric fistula and maternal mortality and morbidity,

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

Welcoming the holding of the commemorative high-level plenary meeting devoted to the follow-up to the outcome of the special session on children on 11 and 12 December 2007,

1. *Stresses* the need for full and urgent implementation of the rights of the girl child as provided to her under human rights instruments, and urges States to consider sign-

ing, ratifying or acceding to the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women as a matter of priority;

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

3. *Calls upon* States to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol thereto;

4. *Urges* all States that have not yet signed and ratified or acceded to the Convention concerning Minimum Age for Admission to Employment, 1973 (Convention No. 138) 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 to consider doing so;

5. *Urges* all Governments and the United Nations system to strengthen efforts bilaterally and with international organizations and private sector donors in order to achieve the goals of the World Education Forum, in particular that of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, which have not been fully met, and to implement the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative as a means of reaching this goal, and calls for the implementation of and reaffirms the commitments contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, particularly those related to education;

6. *Calls upon* States and the international community to recognize the right to education on the basis of equal opportunity and non-discrimination by making primary education compulsory and available free to all children, ensuring that all children have access to education of good quality, as well as making secondary education generally available and accessible to all, in particular through the progressive introduction of free education, bearing in mind that special measures to ensure equal access, including affirmative action, contribute to achieving equal opportunity and combating exclusion, and ensuring school attendance, in particular for girls and children from low-income families;

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

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

9. *Calls upon* all States and international and non-governmental organizations, individually and collectively, to implement further the Beijing Platform for Action, in

particular the strategic objectives relating to the girl child, and the further actions and initiatives, and to mobilize all necessary resources and support in order to achieve the goals and strategic objectives and actions set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

10. *Urges* States to improve the situation of girl children living in poverty, deprived of nutrition, water and sanitation facilities, with no access to basic health-care services, shelter, education, participation and protection, taking into account that, while a severe lack of goods and services hurts every human being, it is most threatening and harmful to the girl child, leaving her unable to enjoy her rights, to reach her full potential and to participate as a full member of society;

11. *Also urges* States to ensure that the applicable requirements of the International Labour Organization for the employment of girls and boys are respected and effectively enforced and that girls who are employed have equal access to decent work, and equal payment and remuneration, are protected from economic exploitation, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and abuse in the workplace, are aware of their rights and have access to formal and non-formal education, skills development and vocational training, and further urges States to develop gender-sensitive measures, including national action plans where appropriate, to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, including commercial sexual exploitation, slavery-like practices, forced and bonded labour, trafficking and hazardous forms of child labour;

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

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

14. *Urges* States to formulate comprehensive, multi-disciplinary and coordinated national plans, programmes or strategies to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, which should be widely disseminated and should provide targets and timetables for implementation, as well as effective domestic enforcement procedures through the establishment of monitoring mechanisms involving all parties concerned, including consultations with women's organizations, giving attention to the recommendations relating to the girl child of the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences and on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, of the Secretary-General in his in-depth study on all forms of violence against women and of the independent expert in his study on violence against children;

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

16. *Further urges* States to involve girls, including girls with special needs, and their representative organizations, in decision-making processes, as appropriate, and to include them as full and active partners in identifying their own needs and in developing, planning, implementing and assessing policies and programmes to meet those needs;

17. *Recognizes* that a considerable number of girl children are particularly vulnerable, including orphans, children living on the street, internally displaced and refugee children, children affected by trafficking and sexual and economic exploitation, children living with HIV and AIDS, and children who are incarcerated who live without parental support, and therefore urges States, with the support of the international community, where relevant, to take appropriate measures to address the needs of such children by implementing national policies and strategies to build and strengthen governmental, community and family capacities to provide a supportive environment for such children, including by providing appropriate counselling and psychosocial support, and ensuring their enrolment in school and access to shelter, good nutrition and health and social services on an equal basis with other children;

18. *Encourages* States to promote actions, including through bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation and financial assistance, for the social reintegration of children in difficult situations, in particular girls, considering, inter alia, views, skills and capacities that those children have developed in the conditions in which they lived and, where appropriate, with their meaningful participation;

19. *Urges* all States and the international community to respect, promote and protect the rights of the girl child, taking into account the particular vulnerabilities of the girl child in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations, and further urges States to take special measures for the protection of girls, in particular to protect them from sexually transmitted diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, gender-based violence, including rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, torture, abduction and forced labour, paying special attention to refugee and displaced girls, and to take into account their special needs in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation assistance and reintegration processes;

20. *Deplores* all cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children, especially girls, in humanitarian crises, including those cases involving humanitarian workers and peacekeepers, and urges States to take effective measures to address gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies and to make all possible efforts to ensure that their laws and institutions are adequate to prevent, promptly investigate and prosecute acts of gender-based violence;

21. *Deplores further* all acts of sexual exploitation, abuse of and trafficking in women and children by military, police and civilian personnel involved in United Nations operations, welcomes the efforts undertaken by United Nations agencies and peacekeeping operations to implement a zero-tolerance policy in this regard, and requests the Secretary-General and personnel-contributing countries to continue to take all appropriate action necessary to combat these abuses by such personnel, including through the full implementation without delay of those measures adopted in the relevant

General Assembly resolutions based on recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations;

22. *Calls upon* Governments, civil society, including the media, and non-governmental organizations to promote human rights education and full respect for and the enjoyment of the human rights of the girl child, inter alia, through the translation, production and dissemination of age-appropriate and gender-sensitive information material on those rights to all sectors of society, in particular to children;

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

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

25. *Requests* States to ensure that, in all policies and programmes designed to provide comprehensive HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, particular attention and support is given to the girl child at risk, infected with and affected by HIV/AIDS, including pregnant girls and young and adolescent mothers, as part of the global effort to scale up significantly towards achieving the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention, treatment, care and support by 2010;

26. *Invites* States to promote initiatives aimed at reducing the prices of antiretroviral drugs, especially second-line drugs, available to the girl child, including bilateral and private sector initiatives as well as initiatives on a voluntary basis taken by groups of States, including those based on innovative financing mechanisms that contribute to the mobilization of resources for social development, including those that aim to provide further access to drugs at affordable prices to developing countries on a sustainable and predictable basis, and in this regard takes note of the International Drug Purchase Facility, UNITAID;

27. *Calls upon* all States to integrate food and nutritional support with the goal that children, especially girl children, have access at all times to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, for an active and healthy life, as part of a comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS and other communicable diseases;

28. *Urges* States and the international community to increase resources at all levels, particularly in the education

and health sectors, to enable young people, especially girls, to gain the knowledge, attitudes and skills that they need to prevent HIV/AIDS and early pregnancy and to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health;

29. *Urges* States, the international community, the relevant United Nations entities, civil society and international financial institutions to continue to actively support, through the allocation of increased financial resources, targeted innovative programmes that address ending female genital mutilation and developing and providing education programmes and sensitization workshops on the dire consequences of this harmful practice for the health of the girl and to provide for those who perform the harmful procedure training programmes so that they may adopt an alternative profession;

30. *Calls upon* States to strengthen the capacity of national health systems, and in this regard calls upon the international community to assist national efforts, including by allocation of adequate resources in order to provide essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat those cases that occur by providing the continuum of services, including family planning, prenatal and post-natal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric care and post-partum care, to adolescent girls, including those living in poverty and in underserved rural areas where obstetric fistula is most common;

31. *Calls upon* States and the international community to create an environment in which the well-being of the child is ensured, inter alia, by cooperating, supporting and participating in global efforts for poverty eradication at the global, regional and country levels, recognizing that strengthened availability and effective allocation of resources are required at all levels, in order to ensure that all the internationally agreed development and poverty eradication goals, including those set out in the Millennium Declaration, are realized within their time framework, and reaffirming that investments in children and the realization of their rights are among the most effective ways to eradicate poverty;

32. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including an emphasis on ending female genital mutilation, using information provided by Member States, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, with a view to assessing the impact of the present resolution on the well-being of the girl child.

Women and human rights

Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR activities

During the year, cooperation continued between the UN Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with the goal of achieving equality between women and men and the promotion and protection of women's human rights. In December, the

Secretary-General transmitted a report [A/HRC/7/52-E/CN.6/2008/8] on implementation of the 2007 joint work plan of the Division and OHCHR, which summarized the major activities that were carried out jointly and contained the joint work plan for 2008.

Special Rapporteur on laws discriminating against women

In response to Commission on the Status of Women resolution 50/3 [YUN 2006, p. 1342], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2007/8] on the advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur on laws that discriminated against women, which summarized the views of Member States, observers, OHCHR and treaty bodies on the previous report by the Secretary-General [YUN 2006, p. 1341], as well as on the issue of the advisability of appointing a special rapporteur on laws against women. The 2007 report should therefore be read in conjunction with the previous report on the subject.

The Secretary-General observed that the views expressed by Member States and observers, as well as human rights treaty bodies and OHCHR on various aspects of a special rapporteur to address laws that discriminated against women complemented and expanded on the comments in the 2006 report and covered issues such as the mandate and financial implications of the establishment of the position, the relationship between a new mechanism and existing mechanisms and the relationship between a new mechanism and UN reform discussions. He invited the Commission on the Status of Women to consider the advisability of the appointment of a special rapporteur, based on the conclusions in both reports, and added that timely action by the Commission on the creation of the position and its mandate would facilitate the ongoing review by the Human Rights Council of the special procedures mechanisms, including allowing the Council to consider the new mandate and its relationship with the Council and existing mechanisms. It would also enable the Commission to ensure that the new mechanism would be supportive of the UN reform process, in particular gender equality issues. With regard to determining the mandate of the new mechanism, the Commission could advise on its coordination with existing bodies and mechanisms to avoid overlap and duplication.

The Commission on the Status of Women took note of the Secretary-General's report on 9 March [E/2007/27 (dec. 51/101)].

Trafficking in women and girls

United Nations efforts to address the issue of human trafficking, in particular trafficking in women

and girls, continued during 2007. In a 30 March letter [A/61/838], Belarus and the Philippines transmitted to the General Assembly a summary of the International Conference on Trafficking in Women and Girls (New York, 5 March), which indicated that the problem of trafficking in persons affected both developed and developing countries and was the most profitable criminal activity globally after arms smuggling and drug trafficking, affecting some 30 million women and girls and bringing a profit of about \$9.5 billion for the traffickers and criminal syndicates. Women constituted 80 per cent of all victims of human trafficking. Girls were identified as the most vulnerable to human trafficking and victims, especially women and girls, usually ended up in prostitution dens or were forced to work in factories with no real wages or social protection. Participants discussed the dimensions of a coordinated and integrated response to address the issue and emphasized the critical role of Governments and their collaboration with international organizations, civil society, including NGOs, mass media and the private sector to curb human trafficking. The main conclusion of the Conference was the recognition of the importance of a people-centred and well-coordinated approach to the problem.

On 26 March, UNODC launched the Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) to address the global epidemic (see p. 1141). The Initiative aimed at raising awareness, strengthening prevention, reducing demand, supporting and protecting victims and improving law enforcement. It addressed the need for a global partnership to fight the threat and recognized that broad international cooperation among States, intergovernmental organizations and NGOs was essential.

Women in Afghanistan

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/7 [YUN 2006, p. 1346], the Secretary-General incorporated a gender perspective in his reports on the situation in Afghanistan (see p. 324). In his March report [A/61/799-S/2007/152], the Secretary-General said that progress towards the realization of gender equality continued to be held back by discrimination, insecurity and the persistence of customary practices. Despite the expert mission to Afghanistan of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 2006, no significant progress was made in the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (see p. 1189). Positive developments included the drafting of a law dealing with family violence, which was on the Government's 2007 legislative agenda, and the drafting in 2006 of a gender equity policy to improve women's representation in the civil service.

Progress reported in September [A/62/345-S/2007/555] included efforts of ministries and government bodies to implement the gender-specific benchmarks of the Afghanistan Compact and the Afghanistan National Development Strategy [YUN 2006, p. 363]; education and the upgrading of teachers' skills, with over 9,000 female teachers having completed teacher training; and completion by the Government of the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan, which was the result of extensive consultations with various sectors, including workshops in five regions involving 375 government and civil society representatives from 26 provinces. The consultations were conducted by the Ministry of Women's Affairs with support of UNIFEM, the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and civil society coalitions. The Action Plan would be the main resource for gender mainstreaming in Afghanistan's government institutions and would focus on six sectors that were critical in accelerating the improvement of women's status, namely security; legal protection and human rights; leadership and political participation; economy, work and poverty; health; and education.

Palestinian women

In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/8 [YUN 2006, p. 546], the Secretary-General reported [E/CN.6/2007/4] to the Commission on the Status of Women on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women during the period from October 2005 to September 2006 (see p. 459).

On 24 July, the Council took action on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women in **resolution 2007/7** (see p. 460).

Women and poverty

Women in development

In response to General Assembly resolution 60/210 [YUN 2005, p. 1262], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/62/187] on women in development, which focused on progress made in implementing the resolution, including women's increased participation in government decision-making bodies and its impact on the eradication of poverty. It examined global trends in poverty among young women, as well as activities and measures undertaken to enhance the role of women in development and poverty eradication.

The Secretary-General observed that although women were particularly vulnerable to poverty, they were also critical agents of development and poverty eradication. Research had shown that increased participation of women in decision-making had a positive impact on development and poverty reduction, as women brought different perspectives and

prioritized new agendas which focused on the needs of poor men and women and of children. An analysis of national MDG reporting and poverty reduction strategy papers highlighted the missed opportunities to fully identify and address critical gender perspectives and build on women's capacity in development and poverty eradication efforts. Action to increase the number of women in decision-making and build their capacity as agents of change was required, and women needed to be empowered to participate in the development and implementation of poverty reduction policies, strategies and programmes. He recommended that the General Assembly call on Governments, the UN system, the Bretton Woods institutions, international and regional organizations, NGOs, civil society and other stakeholders to take action in areas such as incorporating gender perspectives into all poverty reduction strategies; addressing neglected policy areas, including trade, infrastructure and finance; encouraging participation of national mechanisms for gender equality and women's groups and networks in national policies and strategies; promoting the participation of women in government decision-making at all levels and in all policy areas; ensuring women's participation at different levels in parliamentary and other committees central to development and poverty reduction; identifying and addressing the broader constraints to women's participation in government decision-making; conducting in-depth, quantitative and qualitative research, including the collection of sex-disaggregated data on the impact and effectiveness of women in decision-making and their impact on development and poverty; and identifying and analysing the social and institutional barriers faced by women at the local, national and international levels.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 78], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second Committee [A/62/423/Add.2], adopted **resolution 62/206** without vote [agenda item 58 (b)].

Women in development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/195 of 18 December 1997, 54/210 of 22 December 1999, 56/188 of 21 December 2001, 58/206 of 23 December 2003, 59/248 of 22 December 2004 and 60/210 of 22 December 2005 and all its other resolutions on the integration of women in development, and the relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women, including the Declaration adopted at its forty-ninth session,

Reaffirming 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 cen-

tury”, and recalling the outcomes of all other relevant major United Nations conferences and summits,

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

Taking note with appreciation of the discussion on women in development in the Commission on the Status of Women at its fiftieth session, and recalling its agreed conclusions on “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”,

Recognizing that access to basic affordable health care, preventive health information and the highest standard of health, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, is critical to women’s economic advancement, that lack of economic empowerment and independence increases women’s vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, including the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, and that the neglect of the full enjoyment of human rights by women severely limits their opportunities in public and private life, including the opportunity for education and economic and political empowerment,

Reaffirming that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations conferences, and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services,

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

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

Noting that gender biases in labour markets and women’s lack of control over their own labour and earned income are also major factors in women’s vulnerability to poverty, and, together with women’s disproportionate responsibilities for domestic work, result in a lack of economic autonomy and influence in economic decision-making within households and in society at all levels,

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

Recognizing also, in this context, the importance of respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and of a national and international environment that

promotes, inter alia, justice, gender equality, equity, civil and political participation and civil, political and fundamental freedoms for the advancement and empowerment of women,

Reaffirming the need to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by the earliest possible date and at all levels by 2015, and reaffirming that equal access to education and training at all levels, in particular in business, trade, administration, information and communications technologies and other new technologies and the need to eliminate gender inequalities at all levels are essential for gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication and to allow women’s full and equal contribution to, and equal opportunity to benefit from, development,

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

Aware that, while globalization and liberalization processes have created employment opportunities for women in many countries, they have also made some women, especially in developing countries and in particular in the least developed countries, more vulnerable to problems caused by increased economic volatility, including in the agricultural sector, and that special support, particularly for women who are small-scale farmers, and empowerment are necessary to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities of agricultural market liberalization,

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

Expressing its concern that, while women represent an important and growing proportion of business owners, their contribution to economic and social development is constrained by, inter alia, the denial and lack of equal rights and lack of access of women to education, training, information, support services and credit facilities, salaries, and control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production,

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

Noting the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes, and the specialized agencies in facilitating the advancement of women in development,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. *Calls upon* Member States, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, 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 of the General Assembly;

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

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

5. *Urges* Member States, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system to accelerate further efforts to increase the number of women in decision-making and to build their capacity as agents of change, and to empower women to participate actively and effectively in the development, implementation and evaluation of national development and/or poverty eradication policies, strategies and programmes, including, where appropriate, programme-based approaches;

6. *Urges* Member States to incorporate a gender perspective, commensurate with gender equality goals, into the design, implementation, monitoring and reporting of national development strategies, and in this regard calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts to develop methodologies and tools and to promote capacity-building and evaluation;

7. *Encourages* Member States to ensure inclusive and more effective participation of national mechanisms for gender equality and women's empowerment in formulating national development strategies, including poverty eradication strategies, and calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts in this regard;

8. *Calls upon* Member States to continue to increase women's representation and participation in government decision-making at all levels in development policy areas to ensure that the priorities, needs and contributions of women are taken into consideration by, inter alia, providing access to training; developing measures to reconcile family and professional responsibilities; and eliminating gender stereotyping in appointments and promotions;

9. *Recognizes* that violence against women and girls is one of the obstacles to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and the implications of violence against women and girls for the social and economic development of communities and States, and calls upon States to elaborate and implement plans of action to eliminate violence against women and girls;

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

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

12. *Encourages* Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society

to promote and protect the rights of women workers, to take action to remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work and to initiate positive steps to promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

13. *Urges* all Member States to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women with regard to their access to bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, giving special attention to poor, uneducated women, and to support women's access to legal assistance; and to encourage the financial sector to mainstream gender perspectives in their policies and programmes;

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

15. *Urges* all Governments to ensure women's equal rights with men and their equal access to all levels of education;

16. *Urges* Member States to encourage women entrepreneurs, including through education and training of women in business, administration and information and communications technologies, and invites business associations to assist national efforts in this regard;

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

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

19. *Recognizes* the need to empower women economically and politically, particularly poor women, and in this regard encourages Governments, with the support of their development partners, to invest in appropriate infrastructure and other projects, as well as to create opportunities for economic empowerment, in order to alleviate for women and girls the burden of time-consuming everyday tasks;

20. *Expresses its concern* at the overall expansion and feminization of the HIV/AIDS pandemic and that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they have become more vulnerable to violence, stigma and discrimination, poverty, and marginalization from their families and communities as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis, and calls upon Governments and the international community to intensify efforts towards the goal of universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010;

21. *Reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development, integrating this goal into strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

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

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

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

25. *Stresses* the importance of collecting and exchanging all relevant information needed on the role of women in development, including data on international migration, as well as the need to develop statistics disaggregated by age and sex, and in that regard encourages developed countries and relevant entities of the United Nations to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems;

26. *Calls upon* all organizations of the United Nations system, within their organizational mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with the national development strategies;

27. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to integrate gender mainstreaming into all its programmes and policies, including in the integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences, in accordance with agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1997;

28. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present reso-

lution, including on integrating a gender perspective into national development strategies;

29. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fourth session the sub-item entitled "Women in development".

Situation of women in rural areas

In response to General Assembly resolution 60/138 [YUN 2005, p. 1266], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/62/202] on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas, which indicated that 40 per cent of all employed women in 2006 worked in agriculture, and women agricultural workers were responsible for half of the world's food production. However, rural women were often among the poorest and most vulnerable, who often worked long hours in difficult circumstances, combining agricultural work and household work, including caring for children, the elderly and the sick. In many countries, the situation of women in rural areas continued to deteriorate due to lack of development, migration to towns, ageing of the population and lack of education and training opportunities. The report focused on action undertaken by Member States and UN system entities to create an environment conducive to improving the situation of rural women; integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development policies and programmes; promote rural women's participation in decision-making; provide for their basic needs; support their non-agricultural employment of rural women; increase their rights to land, property and inheritance; and improve their access to information and communication technology. It also reviewed UN system efforts to support their empowerment and meet their specific needs.

The Secretary-General concluded that Member States and UN system entities had engaged in a wide range of strategies and activities to improve the situation of rural women, which included the attention given to rural women in gender equality policies and strategies, legislative change, targeted activities and work on gender statistics. Although considerable efforts were made to integrate the concerns of rural women into policies, strategies, legislation and programmes, limited information was available on their participation and influence on the design and implementation of such measures. It was critical to increase the visibility and recognition of women's contributions to the social, economic and political development of rural areas. Greater attention should be given to the situation of rural women in policies and programmes that focused on gender equality and rural development, the collection of sex-disaggregated data and the development of monitoring and evaluation methods which combined qualitative indicators with more traditional quantitative measures.

The Secretary-General made recommendations on specific interventions to be undertaken by Governments, UN entities and other stakeholders, such as integrating increased employment opportunities for rural women into international and national development strategies and poverty eradication strategies, and increasing capacity for analysing and addressing the situation of rural women, including through training programmes and the development and dissemination of methodologies and tools.

On 18 December, the General Assembly declared that 15 October would be observed annually as the International Day of Rural Women (resolution 62/136).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/433], adopted **resolution 62/136** without vote [agenda item 63 (a)].

Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 56/129 of 19 December 2001, 58/146 of 22 December 2003 and 60/138 of 16 December 2005,

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

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which Member States resolved, inter alia, to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable, and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, in which they also resolved to promote gender equality and eliminate pervasive gender discrimination by taking all the necessary resolute action,

Welcoming the declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session in the context of the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,

Noting the attention paid to the improvement of the situation of indigenous women in rural areas in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples,

Recognizing the work of relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, especially the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, in promoting education for all, giving particular attention to girls and women in rural areas,

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

Welcoming also the ministerial declaration of the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2003 of the Economic and Social Council, adopted on 2 July 2003, which stressed the need for rural development to become an integral part of national and international development policies and of activities and programmes of the United Nations system and called for an enhanced role for rural women at all levels of rural development, including decision-making,

Recalling the World Summit on the Information Society, held in Geneva in 2003 and Tunis in 2005, as well as the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society adopted by the World Summit in 2005, which reaffirmed the commitment to building capacity in information and communications technology for all and confidence in the use of information and communications technology by all, including women, indigenous peoples and remote and rural communities,

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

Reiterating that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today, and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in particular for developing countries, while recognizing that rural areas of developing countries continue to be home to the vast majority of the world's poor people,

Recognizing the contributions of older rural women to the family and the community, especially in cases where they are left behind by migrating adults or as a result of other socio-economic factors to assume childcare, household and agricultural responsibility,

Reiterating the call for fair globalization and the need to translate growth into eradication of poverty, including for rural women, and in this regard applauding the resolve to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for rural women, a central objective of relevant national and international policies as well as national development strategies, including poverty eradication strategies,

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

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

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

(a) Creating an enabling environment for improving the situation of rural women and ensuring systematic attention to their needs, priorities and contributions, including through enhanced cooperation and a gender perspective, and their full participation in the development, implementation and follow-up of macroeconomic policies, including development policies and programmes and poverty eradication strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers where they exist, based on internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) Pursuing the political and socio-economic empowerment of rural women and supporting their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels, including through affirmative action, where appropriate, and support for women's organizations, labour unions or other associations and civil society groups promoting rural women's rights;

(c) Promoting consultation with and the participation of rural women, including indigenous women and women with disabilities, through their organizations and networks, in the design, development and implementation of gender equality and rural development programmes and strategies;

(d) Ensuring that the perspectives of rural women are taken into account and that they participate in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and activities related to emergencies, including natural disasters, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, and taking appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against rural women in this regard;

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

(f) Investing in and strengthening efforts to meet the basic needs of rural women through improved availability, access to and use of critical rural infrastructure, such as energy and transport, capacity-building and human resources development measures and the provision of a safe and reliable water supply and sanitation, nutritional programmes, affordable housing programmes, education and literacy programmes and health and social support measures, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health and HIV/AIDS treatment, care and support;

(g) Addressing the specific health needs of rural women and taking concrete measures to enhance and provide access to the highest attainable standards of health for women in rural areas, including in such areas of sexual and reproductive health as pre- and post-natal health care, emergency obstetric care, family planning information and increasing knowledge, awareness and support for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS;

(h) Designing and implementing national policies that promote and protect the enjoyment by rural women and girls of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and creating an environment that does not tolerate violations of their rights, including domestic violence, sexual violence and all other forms of gender-based violence;

(i) Ensuring that the rights of older women in rural areas are taken into account with regard to their equal access to basic social services, appropriate social protection/ social security measures, equal access to and control of economic resources, and empowerment of older women through access to financial and infrastructure services, with special focus on support to older women, including indigenous women, who often have access to few resources and are more vulnerable;

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

(k) Mobilizing resources, including at the national level and through official development assistance, for increasing women's access to existing savings and credit schemes, as well as targeted programmes that provide women with capital, knowledge and tools that enhance their economic capacities;

(l) Integrating increased employment opportunities for rural women into all international and national development strategies and poverty eradication strategies, including by, inter alia, expanding non-agricultural employment opportunities, improving working conditions and increasing access to productive resources;

(m) Taking steps towards ensuring that women's unpaid work and contributions to on-farm and off-farm production, including income generated in the informal sector, are recognized and supporting remunerative non-agricultural employment of rural women, improving working conditions and increasing access to productive resources;

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

(o) Considering the adoption, where appropriate, of national legislation to protect the knowledge, innovations and practices of women in indigenous and local communities relating to traditional medicines, biodiversity and indigenous technologies;

(p) Addressing the lack of timely, reliable and sex-disaggregated data, including by intensifying efforts to include women's unpaid work in official statistics, and developing a systematic and comparative research base on rural women that will inform policy and programme decisions;

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

(r) Supporting a gender-sensitive education system that considers the specific needs of rural women in order to eliminate gender stereotypes and discriminatory tendencies affecting them;

3. *Invites* the Commission on the Status of Women to continue to pay due attention to the situation of rural women in the consideration of its priority themes;

4. *Requests* the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular those dealing with issues of development, to address and support the empowerment of rural women and their specific needs in their programmes and strategies;

5. *Stresses* the need to identify the best practices for ensuring that rural women have access to and full participation in the area of information and communications technology, to address the priorities and needs of rural women and girls as active users of information and to ensure their participation in developing and implementing global, regional and national information and communications technology strategies;

6. *Encourages* Member States, the United Nations and relevant organizations of its system to ensure that the needs of rural women are mainstreamed into the integrated process of follow-up to the major conferences and summits in the economic and social fields, in particular the Millennium Summit, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, which is to be held in Doha in the second half of 2008, the 2005 review and appraisal of the progress achieved in implementing all the commitments made in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the 2005 World Summit;

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

8. *Decides* to declare that 15 October of each year shall be officially proclaimed and observed as the International Day of Rural Women;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Women in power and decision-making

Role of men and boys in achieving gender equality

On 2 March, during its fifty-first session [E/2007/27], the Commission on the Status of Women held a panel discussion on the role of men and boys in achieving gender equality, which reviewed progress in the implementation of its agreed conclusions adopted at its forty-eighth (2004) session [YUN 2004, p. 1157]. Some countries incorporated attention to men and boys in their policies and programmes on gender equality and ensured their participation in implementing activities. In one country, the national machinery for the advancement of women trained government officials, policymakers and the general public on ways to engage men in promoting gender equality. Efforts were also

made to sensitize men and boys on gender equality and the rights of women in the home, within the school system and in the community. The need to educate boys on gender equality in their early childhood—their formative years—was stressed. Other efforts highlighted included public information campaigns with messages targeting men and boys on attitudinal and behavioural change; the adoption of legislative measures, policies and programmes that supported a reconciliation of family and work life for women and encouraged men's involvement in family responsibilities; activities to engage men and boys in combating violence against women and girls, as well as eliminating harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, early marriage and dowry-related violence; and interventions to increase the responsibility of men and boys for sexual reproductive health.

While the participants acknowledged the positive results achieved, it was noted that most of the initiatives carried out to involve men and boys in achieving gender equality were small-scale efforts, reaching only a small number of men and boys, and were implemented by NGOs, often without the engagement of other important stakeholders. The need to increase initiatives to achieve broad-based change and to establish partnerships with policymakers, the business sector, NGOs, the media and universities was stressed. Other recommendations dealt with sensitizing men and boys in schools and universities where girls were often subject to sexual harassment and abuse by male students and teachers, finding appropriate ways to relay messages to male youth, and evaluating the impact of activities and initiatives involving men and boys for achieving gender equality. Skepticism about engaging men and boys in gender equality programmes was an issue. Resistance from men was often due to the existence of a patriarchal system, stereotypes, the desire to maintain power over women, the perception of gender equality as “women's business” and the belief that gender equality issues were not important to economic development. The development of alternative forms of masculinity, which included undertaking child-care responsibilities and choosing non-traditional studies and careers, would benefit both men and women. Participants also stressed the need for allocating adequate resources for gender equality programmes.

Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women

On 28 February, during its fifty-first session [E/2007/27], the Commission on the Status of Women convened an informal panel on “financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women”, the priority theme for its fifty-second (2008) session, pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/9 [YUN 2006, p. 1356]. In preparation for the session,

the panel discussed issues such as, different sources of financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women; shifts in how development assistance was delivered over the past 10 years; aid effectiveness and the development of aid policy; the need for multi-dimensional and multi-sectoral approaches; and the new Gender Action Plan of the World Bank. Other areas for consideration included the harmonization of the aid agenda and the gender equality agenda, the decrease in official development assistance for gender equality by some countries and the limited mutual accountability between donor and partner countries.

UN system mechanisms for the advancement of women

Inter-Agency Network. The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), at its sixth annual session (New York, 21-22 February) [IANWGE/2007/Report], reviewed implementation of the Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all UN system policies and programmes [YUN 1997, p. 1186], which included consideration of the Secretary-General's forthcoming report on the topic (see below) and a discussion on the development of a system-wide action plan as a follow-up to the policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming endorsed by the Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB) in October 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1352]. Participants emphasized the need for the action plan to promote greater coordination within the system; specify the actions for implementation of all six main elements of the strategy with a time frame, indicators, allocation of responsibilities, accountability mechanisms and resources; reflect a system-wide understanding of concepts, norms, standards and indicators; and be built on lessons learned and achievements of each individual entity. The Network created an ad hoc working group on the action plan to review performance indicators and outcomes, financial and human resources, accountability framework, key concepts and gender training issues, and to take inventory of existing frameworks.

The report also presented information on follow-up intersessional activities, including those of the IANWGE task forces, the future organization and work methods of the Commission on the Status of Women, and matters related to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. It highlighted the conclusions of the workshop convened by the Network on monitoring and measuring progress on gender equality, as well as the Network's review of the findings and recommendations in the Secretary-General's report on the status of women in the UN system [YUN 2006, p. 1353]. In that connection, the Network resolved

to increase its efforts to enable entities that had not already done so to reach the 50/50 gender balance. The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues (OSAGI) was requested to take the lead in coordinating communities of interest in areas such as gender balance score cards, work-life issues and accountability.

In other recommendations and outcomes, the Network underscored the importance of capacity development for gender mainstreaming and the need to start training at the United Nations System Staff College to develop competencies for gender mainstreaming of senior officials of the UN system. It also recommended starting mandatory web-based training on gender mainstreaming for all staff with an elaboration of clear consequences for staff; the identification of gender balance or diversity focal points in addition to the gender mainstreaming ones; and the exploration of new ways to interact with the Commission on the Status of Women and increase participation in Commission-related expert group meetings. The Network agreed that the theme for International Women's Day for the United Nations would be decided a year in advance to allow for preparatory time and would be related to the theme selected by the Commission on the Status of Women.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2006/36 [YUN 2006, p. 1350], the Secretary-General submitted a May report [E/2007/64] on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all UN system policies and programmes, which was based on the responses from 40 UN system entities to an OSAGI questionnaire and supplemented by the outcome of inter-agency consultations on capacity-building held by IANWGE in February. The report summarized progress achieved in building the capacity of staff in gender mainstreaming and the remaining challenges with regard to commitments to gender mainstreaming training; integration of gender perspectives into other training courses; development of innovative forms of capacity-building; management leadership and support; follow-up to training and impact assessments; strengthening accountability; creating and expanding knowledge networks; inter-agency collaboration; and country team capacity-building. The report also included, pursuant to resolution 2006/9 [YUN 2006, p. 1356], an assessment on the impact of the Commission on the Status of Women's input to discussions within the UN system.

On the implementation of resolution 2006/36, the Secretary-General said that UN system entities made considerable progress in training and capacity-building at both the individual and organizational level, with new tools and approaches continually being developed. However, the review demonstrated that a gap remained between the understanding of basic gender mainstreaming concepts and the staff mem-

bers' actual day-to-day work. In addition, there was considerable variation among UN entities with regard to efforts to systematically strengthen gender mainstreaming capacities. Enhanced concerted efforts were needed to build individual and organizational capacity for gender mainstreaming in order to assist Member States and enhance their national capacity to achieve gender equality and empower women. The need to find ways to mobilize the collective capacity-building potential of the United Nations with greater coherence and focus was stressed. On the impact of the Commission's input to discussions within the UN system, an analysis of replies from UN entities to the questionnaire showed that the recommendations contained in the Commission's 2006 agreed conclusions on enhanced participation of women in development and on equal participation of women and men in decision-making [YUN 2006, p. 1355] provided a new impetus to the work of UN entities in three areas: enhancement of their substantive activities at policy and operational levels; promotion of advocacy and awareness-raising for gender equality and empowerment of women at the regional and national levels; and improvement of the status of women, including their representation within organizations. The report highlighted other areas on which UN system entities focused their efforts in compliance with Commission recommendations, such as mainstreaming gender perspectives into national planning and implementation processes, implementation of Security Council resolution 1325(2000) [YUN 2000, p. 1113] on women and peace and security, women's rights and their access to decision-making, the limited access of women to information and communication technologies, and advocacy and awareness-raising to promote gender equality. However, with regard to the status of women, UN entities needed to do more to implement the Commission's recommendations on 50/50 gender balance, taking into account the findings of the Secretary-General's 2006 report on improvement of the status of women in the UN system [YUN 2006, p. 1353].

The Secretary-General concluded that much more needed to be done to overcome challenges and bridge capacity and knowledge gaps. Training for all staff was critical to understanding gender mainstreaming concepts and their applications, yet capacity-building for gender mainstreaming was not mandatory in all entities, particularly in the field. Meanwhile, there was insufficient knowledge among senior managers on how to operationalize gender mainstreaming policies. One of the major lessons of the review was that building UN staff capacities alone was not sufficient for the UN system to achieve its commitments to gender mainstreaming. Linkages between building UN staff capacities in gender mainstreaming and the realization of organizational goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women needed to be strengthened.

In that connection, he recommended building the institutional capacity of the UN system using the UN system-wide policy on gender equality and the strategy on gender mainstreaming endorsed by CEB in 2006. Recommendations to the Council included encouraging UN entities to: develop or strengthen gender mainstreaming frameworks in a coherent and consistent manner; utilize and strengthen results-based management arrangements; enhance oversight through monitoring, evaluation, audit and reporting procedures; allocate adequate financial and human resources for gender mainstreaming commensurate with organizational gender equality goals; develop or strengthen staff capacity and competence in gender analysis; strengthen coherence and coordination among all UN system entities; and promote inter-agency cooperation through IANWGE and CEB and its subsidiary bodies to ensure implementation of the UN system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming, including the development of an action plan with a clear timetable and indicators.

UNDP consideration. In response to United Nations Development Programme/United Nations Population Fund (UNDP/UNFPA) Executive Board decision 2006/3 [YUN 2006, p. 1350], UNDP presented a progress report on the implementation of its gender action plan [DP/2007/9]. The Executive Board took note [E/2007/35 (dec. 2007/7)] of the report, requested UNDP and UNIFEM to establish closer inter-organizational collaboration to promote gender equality at the country level, and requested that the lessons learned from the first year of the gender action plan—on the need to track results and allocate sufficient human and financial resources—be applied to the further implementation of the gender action plan, as well as to the elaboration of the UNDP 2008-2011 strategic plan.

The Executive Board also approved [E/2007/35 (dec. 2007/20)] an interim budget allocation for January 2008, in the amount of \$1 million, pending approval of the UNIFEM biennial support budget for 2008-2009, and agreed that the allocation would be part of and not incremental to the budget.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 27 July [meeting 47], the Economic and Social Council adopted **resolution 2007/33** [draft: E/2007/L.28] without vote [agenda items 7 (e) and 14 (a)].

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, 2005/31 of 26 July 2005 and 2006/36 of 27 July 2006,

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 and specific needs of women for capacity-building, organizational development and empowerment, together with gender mainstreaming in all programme formulation and implementation activities,

Recognizing that gender equality and the empowerment of women make an essential contribution to the work of the United Nations,

Noting the ongoing discussions in the General Assembly on the report of the Secretary-General on the recommendations contained in the report of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence in the areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment,

Reaffirming that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for achieving 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 training on gender mainstreaming 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,

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,

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

2. *Recognizes* that the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality remains an important forum for the exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas on gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, and takes note of the ongoing discussions on the implementation of the policy and strategy for gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system;

3. *Encourages* all United Nations entities to continue investing in capacity development, including through mandatory training for all staff and personnel and training for

senior managers, as a critical means of increasing the awareness, knowledge, commitment and competencies of staff with regard to mainstreaming a gender perspective in all United Nations policies and programmes;

4. *Recognizes* that a large gap remains between policy and practice and that building United Nations staff capacities alone is not sufficient for the Organization to meet its commitments and obligations with respect to gender mainstreaming, and requests the United Nations system, including United Nations agencies, funds and programmes within their organizational mandates:

(a) To strengthen institutional accountability mechanisms, including through a more effective monitoring and evaluation framework for gender mainstreaming based on common United Nations evaluation standards;

(b) 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;

(c) To continue efforts to achieve gender balance in appointments within the United Nations system at the Headquarters and country levels in positions that affect operational activities, including resident coordinator appointments and other high-level posts, with due regard to representation of women from developing countries and keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographic representation, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

(d) To ensure that programmes, plans and budgets visibly mainstream gender perspectives and allocate adequate financial and human resources for gender mainstreaming commensurate with the organizational gender equality goals, including for mandatory training on gender mainstreaming, especially gender analysis, for all staff and for the implementation of strategies, policies and action plans;

(e) To share and disseminate good practices, tools and methodologies electronically and through regular meetings on gender mainstreaming, including through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and its task forces, as well as the United Nations country teams;

(f) To address gaps by strengthening coordination and synergy between policy and practice in mainstreaming a gender perspective in their respective fields of work;

(g) To enhance collaboration and coordination in the work of gender specialists and gender focal points working, inter alia, in the areas of peace and security, humanitarian affairs and economic and social development;

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

(i) To promote a United Nations system-wide common understanding of a results-based management framework with benchmarks and indicators for measuring progress in application of the gender mainstreaming strategy to achieve gender equality;

(j) To include clear gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators in their strategic frameworks;

(k) To assess the gaps in gender mainstreaming and unify methodologies for evaluation after the implementation of gender mainstreaming policies and programmes within the United Nations system;

(l) To strengthen collaboration between United Nations country teams on gender equality programmes, including through joint activities and the strengthening of the capacity of gender theme groups to support such activities;

(m) To mainstream a gender perspective and pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with national development strategies;

(n) To collaborate with the resident coordinator system to provide gender specialist resources in support of gender mainstreaming in country-level activities in all sectors in which they operate, working closely with relevant national counterparts;

(o) To promote inter-agency cooperation through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and 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 ensure consistency and synergy in the implementation of the United Nations system-wide policy and strategy on gender mainstreaming;

(p) To promote the collection, analysis and use of data disaggregated by sex during programme development and evaluation of gender mainstreaming to assess progress towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women;

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

6. *Stresses* the important role that senior management plays in creating an environment that actively supports gender mainstreaming, and calls upon it to do so;

7. *Requests* the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality to 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;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2008 a detailed report on the implementation of paragraph 4 of Council resolution 2006/36 and on progress made in the implementation of the present resolution.

Strengthening of UN gender equality architecture

During 2007, the United Nations efforts towards strengthening the gender architecture of the Organization continued. On 7 March, during its fifty-first session [E/2007/27], the Commission on the Status of Women held an informal panel on UN reform on gender equality to discuss the relevant recommendations of the report of the High-level Panel [YUN 2006, p. 1352], including the proposal of a new gender equality entity,

which would consolidate OSAGI, the Division for the Advancement of Women and UNIFEM and was strongly supported by Member States and numerous NGOs. Over 150 women's groups signed a statement to the Secretary-General urging the General Assembly to move forward with the entity. Participants noted the important role of civil society in development and recommended that consultations with women's groups from different regions of the world take place when developing the details of the gender equality entity. Participants also stressed the need to ensure that the entity would play a key role in strengthening the national machineries for the advancement of women to implement policies and programmes and suggested that the Commission, at its fifty-second (2008) session, focus on ways to finance gender equality at the country level.

Follow-up to report of High-level Panel. In an April report [A/61/836] on the recommendations contained in 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" [YUN 2006, p. 1352], the Secretary-General provided an overview of the Panel's recommendations in the context of the wider UN reform agenda and suggested ways to take forward intergovernmental consideration of the Panel's report. With regard to the Panel's recommendations to strengthen the Organization's gender architecture, he was in agreement with the assessment of the need to consolidate and strengthen several structures in a dynamic UN entity. However, concerning the proposal on gender equality and women's empowerment, including the establishment of an Under-Secretary-General for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women to lead a consolidated and strengthened UN gender architecture, he said that he would await the outcome of the substantive discussions and consultations by Member States on the proposal in order to be guided further by intergovernmental processes.

Concept note on gender equality architecture. Responding to a 29 June request from the General Assembly President, the Deputy Secretary-General, Asha-Rose Migiro, transmitted to the Assembly, by a 1 August letter, a concept note on the Secretariat's proposal for a strengthened gender architecture, which was the outcome of a lengthy consultative process among the members of the Inter-Agency Gender Task Force. There was consensus among the Task Force members that the existing architecture for gender equality on women's empowerment was fragmented and underfunded and, therefore, inadequate to address effectively the Assembly mandates on gender and women's issues. The Task Force also agreed on a number of goals that a strengthened architecture should endeavour to achieve, including becoming a much stronger voice on women's issues so that gender equality and women's empowerment were given

adequate priority throughout the UN system; establishing a stronger partnership with Governments and civil society to deliver results, especially at the country level; and ensuring greater coherence among the various assistance efforts. Such goals could be achieved by a strong centralized entity with the authority to ensure gender mainstreaming throughout the UN system. The thrust of the note was in line with the proposal outlined in the Secretary-General's report (see p. 1188) and the Deputy Secretary-General's presentation to Member States on 21 June. Following the approval of the concept of the new hybrid entity by Member States, the Secretary-General would formalize the vision of Member States by preparing a comprehensive programme budget document, which would include more details and analysis on the governance, structure, funding and staffing of the new entity.

Report of General Assembly Co-Chairs. In a September report, the Co-Chairs to the General Assembly President on the consultations regarding system-wide Coherence said that Member States recognized the importance of gender equality as a cross-cutting issue in all the main areas of UN work, including peace and security, development, environment and humanitarian assistance, as well as the need to bridge the gap between policy and implementation, mainstream gender throughout the UN system, achieve greater coherence in all agencies dealing with gender issues, avoid duplication of work and strengthen operational activities. Some delegations supported the High-level Panel's recommendation to establish a new gender architecture and the proposal to establish a post of Under-Secretary-General, while others either did not support the creation of a new body or favoured further discussions before any decision was made. The report recommended that the Assembly President organize further informal consultations during its sixty-second (2007) session to allow for more thorough discussion among Member States of the Panel's recommendations with a view to taking concrete action.

In a 15 October introductory statement to the Assembly's Third Committee, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women said that a renewed focus on the gender equality architecture was urgently needed.

UN machinery

Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women

As at 31 December 2007, 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]. At year's end, 51 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 90 parties as at 31 December 2007. States parties to the Protocol allowed the Committee to receive complaints from individuals or inquire into grave or systematic violations of the Convention.

In August, the Secretary-General submitted his annual report to the Assembly on the status of the Convention as at 15 August [A/62/290].

CEDAW

In 2007, 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/62/38].

At its thirty-seventh session (15 January–2 February 2007), CEDAW reviewed the initial or periodic reports of Austria, Azerbaijan, Colombia, Greece, India, Kazakhstan, the Maldives, Namibia, the Netherlands, Nicaragua, Peru, Poland, Suriname, Tajikistan and Viet Nam on measures taken to implement the Convention. CEDAW considered a Secretariat report on ways and means of expediting its work [CEDAW/C/2007/I/4 & Add.1] and a report on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/2007/I/2]. Two specialized agencies, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization had submitted reports in accordance with article 21 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/2007/I/3 & Add.1,3]. With regard to the timely implementation of all its responsibilities beyond the 2006-2007 biennium, the Committee undertook an assessment of the status of submission of reports, in accordance with article 18 of the Convention, and in particular the backlog of reports awaiting consideration, the projected future availability of reports and the Committee's request to States parties with very long-overdue initial reports to submit those within a given time frame. As the Committee concluded that its workload, combined with its other responsibilities under the Convention and under the Optional Protocol to the Convention,

would require extended meeting time, the Committee requested that provisions be made within the 2008-2009 programme budget for three sessions per annum, of which one would meet in parallel chambers [A/62/38 (dec. 37/I)]. In respect of issues arising from article 2 of the Optional Protocol, allowing individuals to submit communications on alleged violations of the Convention, the Committee took action on communication No. 11/2006 (annexed to the report) and continued its work under article 8 of the Optional Protocol, which allowed the Committee to ask for the cooperation of a State party to the Protocol if it received reliable information of violations of the Convention.

At its thirty-eighth session (14 May–1 June 2007), CEDAW reviewed the initial or periodic reports of Mauritania, Mozambique, the Niger, Pakistan, Serbia, Sierra Leone, the Syrian Arab Republic and Vanuatu. The Committee considered a report on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/2007/II/2]. It also considered the report on ways and means of expediting its work [CEDAW/C/2007/II/4] and the reports of specialized agencies [CEDAW/C/2007/II/3 & Add.1,3], including the International Labour Organization [CEDAW/C/2007/II/3/Add.4], on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activity. With regard to extension of its meeting time, the Committee decided that it would adopt a decision at its thirty-ninth session (below) and that a statement of programme budget implications pertaining to that decision would be before the Committee at that session [A/62/38 (dec. 38/I)]. In respect of issues arising from article 2 of the Optional Protocol, the Committee took action on communication No. 10/2005 (annexed to the report), appointed two of its members as rapporteurs on follow-up to the views on communication No. 4/2004 and continued its work under article 8 of the Optional Protocol.

At its thirty-ninth session (23 July–10 August), CEDAW reviewed the initial or periodic reports of Belize, Brazil, the Cook Islands, Estonia, Guinea, Honduras, Hungary, Indonesia, Jordan, Kenya, Liechtenstein, New Zealand, Norway, the Republic of Korea and Singapore. It also considered reports on ways and means of expediting the Committee's work [CEDAW/C/2007/III/4]; the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/2007/III/2]; and reports of specialized agencies on the implementation of article 21 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/2007/III/3 & Add.1,3,4]. With regard to its future meeting time, the Committee undertook a further assessment of the scope of its responsibilities and concluded that it was imperative that the Committee be provided, on a permanent basis, the opportunity to hold three annual sessions of

three weeks each, each preceded by a one-week session of a pre-session working group. It further concluded that, as a temporary measure, in order to eliminate the backlog of reports of States parties awaiting consideration, one of the annual sessions in 2008 and in 2009 should be held in parallel chambers. The Committee, therefore, requested the General Assembly [A/62/38 (dec. 39/I)] to authorize, as a permanent measure from 2008 onwards, the holding of three annual sessions of three weeks each, as well as the temporary measure in the 2008-2009 biennium, to meet for up to seven days, in parallel chambers during one of its annual sessions in each year. The extended meeting time would allow the Committee to eliminate the backlog of reports; ensure that incoming reports were considered in a timely manner; enhance its efforts to ensure that monitoring of the implementation of the Convention in States parties with long-overdue reports was undertaken; and discharge its other responsibilities under the Convention and Optional Protocol.

With regard to programme budget implications, the Committee decided [A/62/38 (dec. 39/II)], in an effort to reduce costs, that summary records of its meetings would be issued in English only during the 2008-2009 biennium. It would revisit that decision in 2009, when it would assess its requirements for meeting time. The Committee requested that the basis for calculating the costs for the requested extended meeting time that was reflected in the statement of programme budget implications be revisited to ensure that they were in line with the Committee's actual requirements. The Committee also adopted a statement on UN reform pertaining to its gender equality structure [A/62/38 (dec. 39/III)].

In other action, the Committee, in respect of issues arising under article 2 of the Optional Protocol, endorsed the reports of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol on its ninth and tenth sessions (annexed to the report) and continued its work under article 8 of the Optional Protocol. It also adopted views under article 7, paragraph 3, of the Optional Protocol in respect of communications 5/2005, 6/2005 and 7/2005 (annexed to the report).

On 23 July, at the opening of its thirty-ninth session, the Committee celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of its work [YUN 1982, p. 1149].

On 27 July, by **decision 2007/270**, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Secretary-General's note [E/2007/75] on the results of the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth sessions of CEDAW. On 17 October, the Council took note of the report of CEDAW on its 2007 sessions (**decision 2007/279**).

On 18 December, the General Assembly took note of the report of CEDAW on the work of its thirty-seventh to thirty-ninth sessions (**decision 62/526**).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 79], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/433], adopted **resolution 62/218** by recorded vote (154-1) [agenda item 63 (a)].

**Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 60/230 of 23 December 2005 and its previous resolutions on the elimination of discrimination against women,

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

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

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

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

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

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", in particular those paragraphs concerning the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto,

Welcoming the declaration of the Commission on the Status of Women on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, in which the Commission recognized that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention are mutually reinforcing in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women,

Recalling that, in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Heads of State and Government resolved to implement the Convention, and recalling also that the 2005 World Summit Outcome reaffirmed that gender equality and the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all are essential to advance development and peace and security,

Recognizing that the equal enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms will promote the realization of the rights of the child, bearing in mind the special needs of girls, and acknowledging the mutual re-

inforcement of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto,

Noting that on 23 July 2007, at its 792nd meeting, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of its work,

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

Having considered the reports of the Committee on its thirty-fourth, thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth and thirty-seventh, thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth sessions,

Expressing concern at the great number of reports that are overdue (two hundred and fifteen), in particular initial reports, which constitutes an obstacle to the full implementation of the Convention,

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

2. *Also welcomes* the growing number of States parties to the Convention, which now stands at one hundred and eighty-five, while expressing disappointment that universal ratification of the Convention was not achieved by 2000, and urges all States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so;

3. *Further welcomes* the growing number of States parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention, which now stands at ninety, and urges other States parties to the Convention to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

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

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

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

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

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

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

9. *Also recalls* its resolution 50/202 of 22 December 1995, in which it took note with approval of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, which has yet to enter into force;

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

11. *Expresses its appreciation* for the efforts made by the Committee to improve the efficiency of its working methods, inter alia, pertaining to its meetings in parallel chambers, following its fifth informal meeting, held in Berlin from 2 to 4 May 2006, and invites the Committee to consider further improvements to its working methods, especially with the aim of achieving timely and effective consideration of reports submitted by States parties;

12. *Notes* decision 39/I of the Committee, in which it requested the General Assembly to authorize an extension of its meeting time;

13. *Also notes* that a backlog of reports of thirty-four States parties to be considered by the Committee persists;

14. *Decides* to authorize the Committee to hold three annual sessions of three weeks each, with a one-week pre-session working group for each session, for an interim period effective from January 2010, pending the entry into force of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, and to authorize three annual sessions of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol to the Convention;

15. *Also decides* to authorize the Committee to meet on an exceptional and temporary basis in the biennium 2008-2009 in a total of five sessions, of which three would occur in parallel chambers, taking due account of equitable geographical distribution, for the purpose of considering reports of States parties submitted under article 18 of the Convention; and further decides that two of the five sessions shall be held at United Nations Headquarters in New York;

16. *Urges* the Committee to evaluate progress, and decides to assess the situation with regard to the location of the sessions of the Committee after two years, also taking into account the wider context of treaty body reform;

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

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

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

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

21. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 54/4 of 6 October 1999, to

provide the resources, including staff and facilities, necessary for the effective functioning of the Committee within its full mandate, taking into account in particular the entry into force of the Optional Protocol to the Convention;

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

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

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

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

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

27. *Invites* the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to address the General Assembly at its sixty-third and sixty-fourth sessions under the item on the advancement of women;

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

RECORDED VOTE ON RESOLUTION 62/218:

In favour: Afghanistan, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Antigua and Barbuda, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belarus, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Botswana, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Congo, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Denmark, Djibouti, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Finland, France, Gabon, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guinea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Mali, Malta, Marshall Islands, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Micronesia, Moldova, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique, Myanmar, Namibia, Nauru, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Timor-Leste, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia, Zimbabwe.

Against: United States.

Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its fifty-first session (New York, 26 February–9 March) [E/2007/27], recommended a draft resolution to the Economic and Social Council for adoption on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (see p. 460), as well as a draft decision on the report of the Commission's fifty-first session and the provisional agenda and documentation for its fifty-second (2008) session (see below). The Commission also adopted and brought to the Council's attention resolutions on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS (see p. 1169); ending female genital mutilation (see p. 1171); forced marriage of the girl child (*ibid.*); and its agreed conclusions on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child, which was also the priority theme of the session. It further adopted and brought to the Council's attention a decision on the documents before the Commission, of which it took note [dec. 51/101], among them, the UNIFEM report on its activities to eliminate violence against women [A/HRC/4/069-E/CN.6/2007/6] and the joint work plan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and OHCHR [A/HRC/4/68-E/CN.6/2007/5]. The Commission also brought to the attention of the Council a note [E/CN.6/2007/CRP.3] on strengthening efforts to eradicate poverty and hunger.

By **decision 2007/239** of 24 July, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Commission's report on its fifty-first session and approved the provisional agenda for its fifty-second (2008) session.

Communication. In a 13 November letter [E/CN.6/2008/10] to the Commission, the Council detailed the outcome of its 2007 substantive session and attached a list of resolutions adopted by the Council calling for action by the functional commissions.

Communications on the status of women

Working Group. At a closed meeting in March [E/2007/27], the Commission considered the report [E/CN.6/2007/CRP.5] of the Working Group on Communications on the Status of Women, established in 1993 [YUN 1993, p. 1050], which considered 15 confidential communications received by the Division for the Advancement of Women and three received by OHCHR. No non-confidential communications were received. The Group noted that Governments had replied to eight of the 15 communications received by the Division, including a note stating that a full reply was pending, and replies to all of the communications transmitted by OHCHR. One Government had sent a reply to a communication on the previous year's list of confidential communications and replies by Governments. The Group 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 and girls. Communications were most frequently submitted on sexual violence against women, in particular girls, including rape and gang rape, committed by private individuals, law enforcement personnel and military personnel, as well as the failure by some States to provide adequate protection to victims and bring perpetrators to justice promptly; other forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, marital rape, forced and early marriage and harmful traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation; abuse of power, impunity, lack of due process, arbitrary detention and failure to grant a fair trial; inhumane treatment in detention and inadequate conditions of imprisonment for women; the impact of armed conflict and situations of insecurity, in particular on women and girls belonging to vulnerable groups; violations of the human rights of women and girls, including trafficking, torture, killings, forced prostitution and sexual slavery; physical and psychological threats and pressure of victims of violence, their families and witnesses by Government officials to force retraction of complaints or testimony; differential application of punishments in law based on sex; and the impact of legislation and practices that discriminated against women in areas such as marriage, citizenship, immigration, the right to own and inherit property, and education and employment.

The Working Group expressed its concern about sexual violence and other forms of violence against women, in particular girls; the climate of impunity and abuse of power in many cases where violence against women, especially sexual violence, was perpetrated or condoned by law enforcement personnel and military personnel; the failure by States, in contravention of their human rights obligations, to exercise due diligence to prevent acts of violence against women, in particular girls, and to 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 States' international obligations and commitments and their constitutional provisions to outlaw such discrimination.

From the replies received, the Working Group noted that some Governments were in the process of reform, either adopting new legislation or making efforts to harmonize legislation and practices with relevant international standards.

UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM)

During 2007 [A/63/205], the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) con-

tinued to focus on four key goals: reducing feminized poverty; ending violence against women; addressing the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS; and achieving gender equality and democratic governance, 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 level to promote women's rights; demonstrated leadership, commitment and accountability for gender equality by mainstream institutions; increased capacity of gender equality advocates; and changes in harmful attitudes and practices.

Over the 2004-2007 period, UNIFEM contributed to: strengthening legal and policy frameworks in 90 countries; reducing feminized poverty through legal and policy support in 37 countries; and strengthening the capacities of national and local partners to institutionalize tools such as sex-disaggregated data (over 50 instances) and gender-responsive budgets (over 30 countries). The Fund also provided support or technical assistance to over 90 ministries of gender equality or women's affairs and contributed to the creation or strengthening of more than 100 national and regional non-governmental women's networks and organizations. On ending violence against women, UNIFEM contributed to strengthening laws and policies in 38 countries in 2007. Of those initiatives, 40 per cent focused on domestic violence, 30 per cent on general violence against women, 15 per cent on trafficking and 5 per cent on female genital mutilation and sexual harassment. An external evaluation of MYFF found that UNIFEM support to changing policies and laws was one of its strongest areas of work, yet its reports provided little information on the degree to which legislative changes had been implemented and to what changes they had contributed. There was also a lack of knowledge on what was required to move from commitment to action on gender equality.

In 2007, UNIFEM contributed to positive institutional changes with a broader range of national and regional partners. However, institutional transformation was a long-term process that required enduring commitments, in-depth support and clear benchmarks, which was a central focus of the UNIFEM 2008-2011 strategic plan. UNIFEM also intended to focus its support to women's organizations by sharpening the mechanisms used to track changes in their capacities and influence with improved tools for monitoring the impact of capacity development initiatives. On changing attitudes and practices to support gender equality, UNIFEM supported the increased capacity of media organizations to generate messages in support of gender equality in all regions where it worked. The Fund was making more consistent use of its goodwill ambassadors, multimedia and the performing arts to support

advocacy for concrete outcomes, such as changes in laws or policies, which included efforts in 45 countries to enhance the use of media for gender-equality objectives. Initiatives to address gender disparity in economic resources, including a joint UNIFEM/World Bank partnership, where the Fund was implementing a component of the Bank's Gender Action Plan in Egypt, Kenya, Liberia, the Mekong region and Peru, demonstrated promising approaches for enhancing women's economic opportunities. During the year, UNIFEM was a partner in more than 60 inter-agency initiatives at both field and headquarters levels and participated in 13 UN joint programmes on gender equality. On management and administration of financial and human resources, UNIFEM finalized a risk assessment model, including measures to streamline and simplify operations, and began to roll out a decentralization plan, delegating greater authority to subregional offices.

In 2007, UNIFEM exceeded its MYFF target for regular resources, reaching \$44 million, which was some \$4 million over the projected figure (\$40 million) and nearly doubled the \$23 million in regular resources in 2004. Total contributions to UNIFEM increased significantly between 2006 and 2007, reaching \$115 million, compared with an income of \$57.6 million in 2006. During the year, 54 bilateral donors contributed to UNIFEM regular resources, up from 48 in 2006. While UNIFEM made good progress on enlarging and diversifying its resource base, the challenge remained to secure a larger resource base that was commensurate with women's needs and the UNIFEM mandate.

In August, the Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly a report [A/62/188] on UNIFEM activities in 2006 [YUN 2006, p. 1359], of which the Assembly took note on 19 December (**decision 62/542**). In other action, by **decision 62/521** of 6 December, the Assembly, with a view to maintaining the institutional memory of the UNIFEM Consultative Committee, granted a full three-year term to two new members of the Committee for the period 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2010, decided that the three remaining members would continue to serve their terms through 31 December 2009 and decided that future designation of members would follow the pattern decided upon.

UNDP/UNFPA Board action. In January, the UNDP/UNFPA Executive Board [E/2007/35 (dec. 2007/7)] took note of the follow-up to the UNDP Administrator's report on the organizational assessment of UNIFEM [DP/2007/10] and requested UNDP and UNIFEM to establish closer inter-organizational collaboration to promote gender equality at the country level.

In June [E/2007/35 (dec. 2007/23)], the Board took note of the UNIFEM multi-year funding framework cumulative report, 2004-2006 [DP/2007/35 & Corr.1],

and requested UNIFEM to take into account the comments of the Executive Board in finalizing its 2008-2011 strategic plan.

In September [E/2007/35 (dec. 2007/35)], the Board endorsed the strategic priorities and results set out in the UNIFEM 2008-2011 strategic plan [DP/2007/45] and requested the Executive Director to submit a midterm review of the plan at its second regular (2009) session. The Board also requested UNIFEM to provide, at its first regular (2008) session, information relating to the resource mobilization framework, including the potential impact on strategic priorities and results set out in the plan should regular resources not meet the projection.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 18 December [meeting 76], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/62/433], adopted **resolution 62/135** without vote [agenda item 63 (a)].

United Nations Development Fund for Women

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 39/125 of 14 December 1984, by which it established the United Nations Development Fund for Women as a separate and identifiable entity in autonomous association with the United Nations Development Programme, as well as its resolution 60/137 of 16 December 2005,

Reaffirming the Beijing Platform for Action adopted by the Fourth World Conference on Women, which recognizes the special role of the Fund in the promotion of the economic and political empowerment of women, and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”,

Emphasizing that implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action is essential to achieving the Millennium Development Goals,

Reaffirming the commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women made at the Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions,

Reaffirming also 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 and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in promoting the advancement of women and gender equality,

Reaffirming further all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, as well as Security Council resolution 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security,

Recognizing the importance of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and noting that the number of States parties to the Convention is among the highest for human rights conventions,

Welcoming the contributions that the Fund has made in supporting initiatives of Member States, United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations to formulate and implement activities that promote gender equality and the empowerment of women,

Recalling its resolution 59/250 of 22 December 2004 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, and stressing the need for all organizations of the United Nations development system to implement their global, regional and country-level activities in accordance with their mandates,

Recalling also Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 and subsequent Council resolutions on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system,

Noting the importance of the work of the Consultative Committee on the United Nations Development Fund for Women in policy and programme directions, as stipulated in the annex to resolution 39/125,

Noting also the ongoing intergovernmental consultation process on the recommendations of the High-level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence, where issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment are addressed,

1. *Takes note with appreciation* of decision 2007/35, adopted on 14 September 2007 by the Executive Board of the United Nations Development Programme and of the United Nations Population Fund at its second regular session of 2007, in which it took note of the strategic plan, 2008-2011, of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, endorsed its strategic priorities and results and authorized its implementation;

2. *Welcomes* the note by the Secretary-General on the activities of the Fund, containing the results-focused report of progress in implementing its multi-year funding framework, 2004-2007;

3. *Commends* the focus by the Fund, in accordance with its mandate as set out in the annex to resolution 39/125, on strategic programmes in its three key thematic areas of work, in line with its strategic plan, 2008-2011, namely, enhancing women’s economic security and rights, ending violence against women and reducing the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among women and achieving gender equality in democratic governance, as well as eradicating feminized poverty and supporting innovative programming in the context of the Beijing Platform for Action and commitments made at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and at the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women;

4. *Calls upon* Member States, intergovernmental bodies and the United Nations system to intensify their efforts to enhance the coordination and ensure adequate status and resourcing of the gender entities of the United Nations to improve the support of the United Nations system for gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels;

5. *Notes with appreciation* the coordination efforts between the Fund and other funds, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system, as well as the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the

Secretariat and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, and calls upon those entities to strengthen their collaborative efforts;

6. *Urges* all organizations of the United Nations system, within their mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality and the empowerment of women in all their programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes, to articulate specific global, regional and country-level benchmarks, goals and targets in this field in accordance with national development strategies, and to ensure monitoring and evaluation of and reporting on the activities of the United Nations system in this regard, while also encouraging the participation of women in these processes, where appropriate;

7. *Encourages* the Fund to continue to contribute to the harmonization and coordination processes of United Nations reform through, inter alia, strengthened partnerships with other funds, programmes and organizations of the United Nations system and through the promotion of development, including technical cooperation, women's human rights and a gender-equality perspective in the policies, guidelines and tools developed by the United Nations Development Group;

8. *Encourages* the participation of the Fund in relevant high-level inter-agency coordination mechanisms, and calls upon the United Nations system to ensure participatory cooperation of units that deal with gender issues within organizations, agencies, funds and programmes across the system in order to achieve better coordination among United Nations bodies, taking into account their respective mandates, in strengthening gender mainstreaming and the empowerment of women;

9. *Recognizes* the efforts of the Fund and other United Nations funds and programmes to strengthen the gender-equality and women's empowerment perspective in formulation, implementation and evaluation processes related to national development plans and programmes aimed at eradicating poverty, including poverty reduction strategies, the Millennium Development Goals and the United Nations development assistance frameworks where they exist, and urges the Fund to support these processes;

10. *Encourages* the Fund to support strengthened and coordinated action on gender equality at the country level, including by designating Fund representatives, where the Fund already has a presence, with the authority to work with the concerned Governments to identify, formulate and execute programmes and projects, within the mandate of the Fund and in line with national priorities, and to enhance cooperation with, and active support for, resident coordinators for operational activities of the United Nations, on the understanding that this will not result in increased administrative expenditure for the Fund;

11. *Recognizes* the technical expertise of the Fund and other gender specialist resources of the United Nations system, and calls upon the United Nations development system to utilize this technical expertise, on the basis of their mandates, to support enhanced programming and policies on gender equality and the empowerment of women at all levels, while undertaking efforts to implement gender mainstreaming internally;

12. *Encourages* Member States and United Nations organizations to further explore with the Fund possible in-

novative representational arrangements, including through the use of seconded staff, project offices and other means;

13. *Notes* the activities undertaken by the Fund, in follow-up to resolution 60/137, to address the impact of armed conflict on women, including sexual and all other forms of violence against women and girls, to strengthen gender justice and to support the promotion of gender equality and full and effective participation of women in peace processes, peacebuilding, post-conflict recovery and reconstruction, and urges the Fund to increase its efforts and enhance its support to a coordinated approach of the United Nations system, including cooperation, as appropriate, with Member States, relevant United Nations entities, regional organizations and other United Nations partners in these fields;

14. *Emphasizes* the importance of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women, established by General Assembly resolution 50/166 of 22 December 1995, as an inter-agency mechanism to respond to the deep concern regarding the persistence of violence and crimes against women in all parts of the world expressed by the Assembly, which has urged the relevant United Nations bodies, entities, funds and programmes and specialized agencies to enhance the coordination of and intensify support to States in their efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and encourages all Governments, non-governmental organizations and the public and private sectors to consider contributing or increasing contributions to the Trust Fund;

15. *Calls upon* the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality to intensify its consideration of ways and means to enhance the effectiveness of the Trust Fund as a system-wide funding mechanism for preventing and redressing all forms of violence against women and girls;

16. *Encourages* the Fund to continue to support the gender-equality and women's empowerment goals and targets of the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the General Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session, and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS adopted at the High-level Meeting on HIV/AIDS of the sixtieth session of the Assembly, by working closely with women who are affected by or infected with HIV/AIDS to develop their capacity to influence programmes and policies, building on its partnerships within the United Nations system, in particular with the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS);

17. *Welcomes* the strengthened partnership with the United Nations Development Programme to facilitate the participation of the Fund in the Joint Programme in order to avail its co-sponsors of the expertise of the Fund with respect to the gender dimensions of HIV/AIDS;

18. *Encourages* the Fund to respond to country requests for the development or strengthening of accountability mechanisms for gender equality, including by supporting United Nations country team coordination, through providing its specific expertise and capacities in these fields, in building the capacity of Governments to undertake gender-responsive budget analysis and to use sex-disaggregated data as a basis for gender-responsive public policy formulation;

19. *Welcomes* the role of the Fund in promoting the strategic importance of the empowerment of women in all of the regions in which it operates, and notes with apprecia-

tion the enhanced programme activities of the Fund in the African region;

20. *Encourages* the Fund to continue to assist Governments in implementing the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, in order to advance gender equality at all levels, including by reinforcing cooperation between Governments and civil society, especially women's organizations, and by supporting efforts to follow up, as appropriate, the concluding comments of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;

21. *Also encourages* the Fund, within its mandate, to continue to assist Governments in implementing the rights of indigenous women, in accordance with international human rights obligations and taking into account, as appropriate, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;

22. *Calls for* further clarification of the lines of responsibility, especially between the United Nations Development Programme and the Fund, to ensure that the resident coordinator system and the United Nations country teams provide coherent support to countries on gender equality, and between the Fund and other member organizations of the United Nations Development Group, to ensure greater effectiveness in United Nations operational activities related to gender equality;

23. *Recognizes with appreciation* the increases in core and non-core contributions to the Fund made by Member States, private organizations and foundations, whose increased contributions demonstrate their commitment to the issues on which the Fund is working;

24. *Invites*, accordingly, Member States, non-governmental organizations and members of private organizations and foundations that have contributed to the Fund to continue to contribute and to consider increasing their financial contributions, and urges others that have not yet done so to consider contributing to the Fund to enable it to reach the targets for core resources in its strategic plan, which are essential for ensuring the predictability and effective planning of its activities.

INSTRAW

The report of the Executive Board of the United Nations International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) (fourth session, New York, 2 and 30 May) [E/2007/79] provided a review of the implementation of the programme of work during the period November 2006-April 2007; the presentation of the proposed 2008-2011 strategic framework; the proposed work plan and operational budget for 2008; as well as information on the financial situation of the Institute, its optimal staffing structure and the proposed networking strategy. In addition, the INSTRAW secretariat prepared a comprehensive report and future projections, annexed to the report, which were the basis of a series of Board recommendations.

The Executive Board approved two decisions, one on the Institute's 2008-2011 strategic framework and

the other on the proposed networking strategy, which aimed to strengthen the Institute's partnership with national focal points. The Board took note of the report on the financial situation of INSTRAW [INSTRAW/EB/2007/R.5], requested the Director to apply a 5 per cent reduction to the workplan and operational budget for 2008 [INSTRAW/EB/2007/R.4] and decided to reconsider the financial situation at its fifth (2008) session. The Board further requested the Director to carry out intensive resource mobilization efforts in order to cover the proposed operational budget and programme of work for 2008, to discuss programme support costs with the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts and to formulate a resource mobilization strategy with the support of the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships.

Spain, on behalf of the INSTRAW Executive Board [A/61/853], transmitted to the General Assembly the 2006 recommendations of the INSTRAW Subcommittee on the Resource Mobilization Strategy [YUN 2006, p. 1359].

On 23 July, INSTRAW issued a revised work plan and operational budget for 2008 [INSTRAW/EB/2007/R.4/Rev.1].

On 27 July, by resolution 2007/37 (see p. 1198), the Economic and Social Council took note of the report of the INSTRAW Executive Board.

Future of INSTRAW

The INSTRAW secretariat prepared a comprehensive report and future projections, annexed to the June report of the Executive Board [E/2007/79] (see above), which assessed the progress and challenges facing the Institute since its revitalization in 2004 [YUN 2004, p. 1173]. The report highlighted progress achieved and activities in strategic areas such as gender, migration, remittances and development; gender, governance and women's political participation; gender, peace and security; and capacity-building for gender equality and women's empowerment. Challenges identified included re-establishing the Institute's credibility; consolidating the Institute's leadership position for action on gender equality and women's empowerment; developing networks and strategies for working with partners; implementing innovative ideas and methods of work; and increasing visibility and communication with stakeholders.

The Board made a series of recommendations for INSTRAW to undertake, which included reaffirming its specific mandate to conduct research and training for gender equality and the empowerment of women, strengthening the Institute's training and research activities within the context of the three pillars of the United Nations (development, peace and security, and human rights), renewing efforts to raise the visibility

and credibility of INSTRAW so that current and potential donors devoted greater interest to the core budget, establishing strategic partnerships with organizations of the UN system, national machinery, civil society and academia, developing a medium- and long-term resource mobilization strategy, intensifying training activities on the basis of lessons learned and initiating new activities in the fields of poverty alleviation, capacity-building in micro-enterprises, information and communication technologies, health, education, peacebuilding, environment and other areas of concern to Member States.

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 27 July [meeting 47], the Economic and Social Council adopted **resolution 2007/37** [draft: E/2007/L.29] without vote [agenda item 14 (a)].

Future work to strengthen the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling all its previous resolutions, including resolutions 1999/54 of 29 July 1999, 2000/24 of 28 July 2000, 2001/40 of 26 July 2001 and 2003/57 of 24 July 2003, on the strengthening of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,

Taking note of the report of the Executive Board of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women on its fourth session and of the recommendations and decisions contained therein,

Taking note also of the report of the Director of the Institute entitled "Comprehensive report and future projections for the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women", contained in the report of the Executive Board,

1. *Reaffirms* the specific mandate of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, as a central focal point for research and training on gender issues within the United Nations system, to conduct research and training for gender equality and the empowerment of women;

2. *Requests* the Institute to strengthen its training and research activities, as appropriate, in accordance with its statute and with its strategic framework 2008-2011, adopted by the Executive Board in 2007, and in line with all relevant United Nations resolutions related, inter alia, to the advancement of women and gender equality in order to contribute to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as follows:

(a) To intensify its training activities on the basis of lessons learned and replicate best practices and to continue to implement innovative methods of work, in order to have a concrete impact on policies and programmes at all levels and respond to both existing and future challenges, particularly in developing countries, including least developed countries in all regions;

(b) To further coordinate its activities and to develop its programme of work in collaboration with all relevant United Nations bodies and to strengthen its cooperation with Governments and national mechanisms of gender equality, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and academia;

(c) To increase its cooperation with the Commission on the Status of Women and with other subsidiary bodies of the Economic and Social Council, particularly in bringing to their attention gender concerns in emerging issues;

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

4. *Requests* the Institute to continue its efforts, including by developing a medium- and long-term resource mobilization strategy, so that current and potential donors devote a greater interest to the core budget and consider commitments to multi-year funding;

5. *Invites* States to make voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund;

6. *Decides* to continue its consideration of the above-mentioned issues, and requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Council, at its substantive session of 2008, a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolutions 60/229 [YUN 2005, p. 1279] and 61/273 (see p. 1440), the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/62/173] on future operations of INSTRAW, which provided an update on the activities of the Executive Board, discussed the strategic frameworks for 2004-2007 and 2008-2011, described INSTRAW efforts to collaborate with other UN system entities, national gender machineries and civil society, and highlighted the Institute's research and training activities in 2006 and 2007. A separate report on the financial situation of INSTRAW would be submitted to the Assembly at its sixty-second (2007) session.

The Secretary-General concluded that INSTRAW, with limited human and financial resources, made further progress in implementation of its 2004-2007 strategic framework and that the Institute accomplished significant achievements, including its pioneering research and its active participation in intergovernmental discussions on international migration and development issues. INSTRAW conducted innovative and relevant research on democratic governance and women's political participation and on national implementation of Security Council resolution 1325(2000) [YUN 2000, p. 1113] on women and peace and security. In the area of training, the Institute contributed to sustainable capacity-building for gender equality, including the launching of the first open-source collaborative database on gender training, and made use of innovative and emerging technologies to encourage the formation of long-distance and virtual working relationships

that allowed INSTRAW to expand its outreach. Under its 2008-2011 strategic framework, the Institute would expand its research and training activities to new areas, with a view to contributing to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals [YUN 2000, p. 51]. INSTRAW would also increase cooperation with the Commission on the Status of Women, IANWGE and other relevant UN bodies, as well as intensify efforts to increase the visibility of its work as a means to assist Member States, international organizations, civil society and the private sector and as part of a strategy for mobilizing voluntary contributions.

On 18 December, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General (**decision 62/526**).

Financial situation

In a 22 March note verbale [A/C.5/61/20], the General Assembly transmitted to the Fifth Committee a letter concerning the budgetary situation of INSTRAW, in which Spain, on behalf of the Executive Board, requested the Assembly to take the necessary steps to ensure the implementation of the budgetary provisions contained in resolution 60/229 [YUN 2005, p. 1279], including the support which the Assembly decided to provide to INSTRAW for the 2006-2007 biennium.

Statement of Budget Division Director. In a 30 March statement [A/C.5/61/SR.45], the Programme Planning and Budget Division Director said that expenditure for the period from 1 January to 31 December 2006 had been \$1.3 million and voluntary contributions of \$378,940 were received during that period. While the Institute had received pledges for 2007 amounting to \$325,011, no voluntary contributions for 2007 appeared in its accounts and it was not known whether further pledges would be made for the year. As at 31 March, \$499,960 remained available for allocation to the Institute. Assuming that annual expenditure in 2007 would total \$1.3 million, as in 2006, the anticipated funding shortfall would be \$857,800.

On 4 April, by **decision 61/555**, the General Assembly authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in an amount of up to \$190,000, under section 9, Economic and social affairs, of the 2006-2007 programme budget, subject to full reimbursement pending receipt of voluntary contributions, and requested the Secretary-General to report on the Institute's financial situation at the second part of its resumed sixty-first (2007) session.

Report of Secretary-General (May). In response to Assembly **decision 61/555**, in a May report [A/61/897] on the financial situation of INSTRAW, the Secretary-General indicated that the estimated available balance

of the INSTRAW Trust Fund for core activities, as at 30 April, amounted to \$218,100. Voluntary contributions of \$385,000 were received during the 2006-2007 biennium up to 30 April 2007, yet were insufficient to provide for the functioning of the Institute to the end of the year. Total expenditures for 2007, which were estimated at \$1,498,500, would result in a shortfall of some \$837,900. If the \$190,000 commitment authority was applied (see above), the shortfall in resources required for 2007 would amount to \$647,900. Meanwhile, contributions to the Trust Fund for INSTRAW special projects were more forthcoming than for its core activities and had increased sharply since 2004. As at 30 April, the balance for special projects stood at \$1,039,000. The Secretary-General proposed that although the estimated requirements for INSTRAW for 2007 were \$90,800 less than the initial estimates of \$1,589,300 approved by the Executive Board, the Board might consider scaling back activities for 2007 that had not yet been implemented. He also recommended that the Assembly, as an interim measure, authorize the Secretary-General, on an exceptional basis, to enter into additional commitments of up to \$647,900 of the 2006-2007 programme budget.

ACABQ report. In May [A/61/924], the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) noted that the Institute's efforts to increase contributions to the core Trust Fund had yielded little response and that the level of earmarked contributions significantly exceeded core contributions. ACABQ concluded that the fundamental issues confronting INSTRAW—the requirement to operate on the basis of voluntary funding and the insufficiency of such funding—remained unresolved and that the sustainability of INSTRAW needed to be carefully examined. As the INSTRAW Executive Board would be meeting on 30 May (see p. 1197), the Committee indicated that, subject to the approval of the Institute's budget by the Board and the payment of further voluntary contributions, the Secretary-General's proposal would entail authorizing him to enter into commitments of up to \$647,900.

On 29 June, by section II of **resolution 61/273** (see p. 1440), the Assembly appealed to Member States to contribute voluntary funds to the Institute and honour existing pledges; requested INSTRAW to formulate its budget in a way that aligned it more closely with the volume of available voluntary resources; requested the Secretary-General to propose solutions for placing the Institute's financial situation on a more stable basis without recourse to regular budget funding; and authorized him to enter into commitments of up to \$367,800 of the 2006-2007 programme budget, subject to full reimbursement, pending receipt of voluntary contributions. Therefore, total resources in commitment authority amounted to \$557,800.

Report of Secretary-General (October). In an October report [A/62/509], the Secretary-General indicated that the level of voluntary contributions received for INSTRAW core activities during the 2006-2007 biennium through 30 September amounted to \$515,300. Total projected income for the 2006-2007 biennium of \$3,491,900 was more than sufficient to cover the projected expenditures of \$2,648,300, with a projected balance as at 31 December of \$643,600, which would enable INSTRAW to reimburse in full the commitment authority of \$557,800 authorized by the General Assembly. Thereafter, the projected closing balance of \$85,800 would be carried over into the financial year beginning 1 January 2008.

To secure sustained resources to fund core activities and offer solutions for placing the Institute's financial situation on a more stable basis, the Executive Board in October had called upon Member States to provide an associate expert for coordinating and implementing activities in Africa; requested the Secretary-General to send communications to Member States encouraging them to make voluntary contributions

to INSTRAW; and requested the Secretary-General to support INSTRAW through convening meetings with a small group of important donors and requesting their support for INSTRAW. Another channel being pursued by the Institute was facilitating fund-raising directly from the private sector and individual contributors, such as the special INSTRAW donation page on the United Nations Foundation website, through which an anonymous donation of \$100,000 was received within the first month of operation. The INSTRAW Director also met with representatives of private sector entities to apprise them of opportunities to support INSTRAW activities.

In November [A/62/7/Add.12], ACABQ noted the encouraging trend reflected in the renewed commitment by Member States to supporting INSTRAW and welcomed the improved financial situation of the Institute.

In section XII of **resolution 62/238** of 22 December (see p. 1454), the Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General, endorsed ACABQ's conclusions and recommendations and reiterated its appeal to Member States to support INSTRAW.