

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ZORICA MRŠEVIĆ, PhD
**STANDARDS AND MECHANISMS
FOR GENDER EQUALITY
IN DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES**

**STANDARDS AND MECHANISMS
FOR GENDER EQUALITY
IN DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES**

Institute of Social Sciences
Belgrade, Narodnog fronta 45
Yugoslavia

Editor

Mirjana Rašević, PhD
Director of the Institute of Social Sciences
Belgrade

Author

Zorica Mršević, PhD

Corrections

Vojislav Nestorović

Computer lay out

Vojislav Nestorović

Printed by

Caligraph Belgrade

Circulation

100

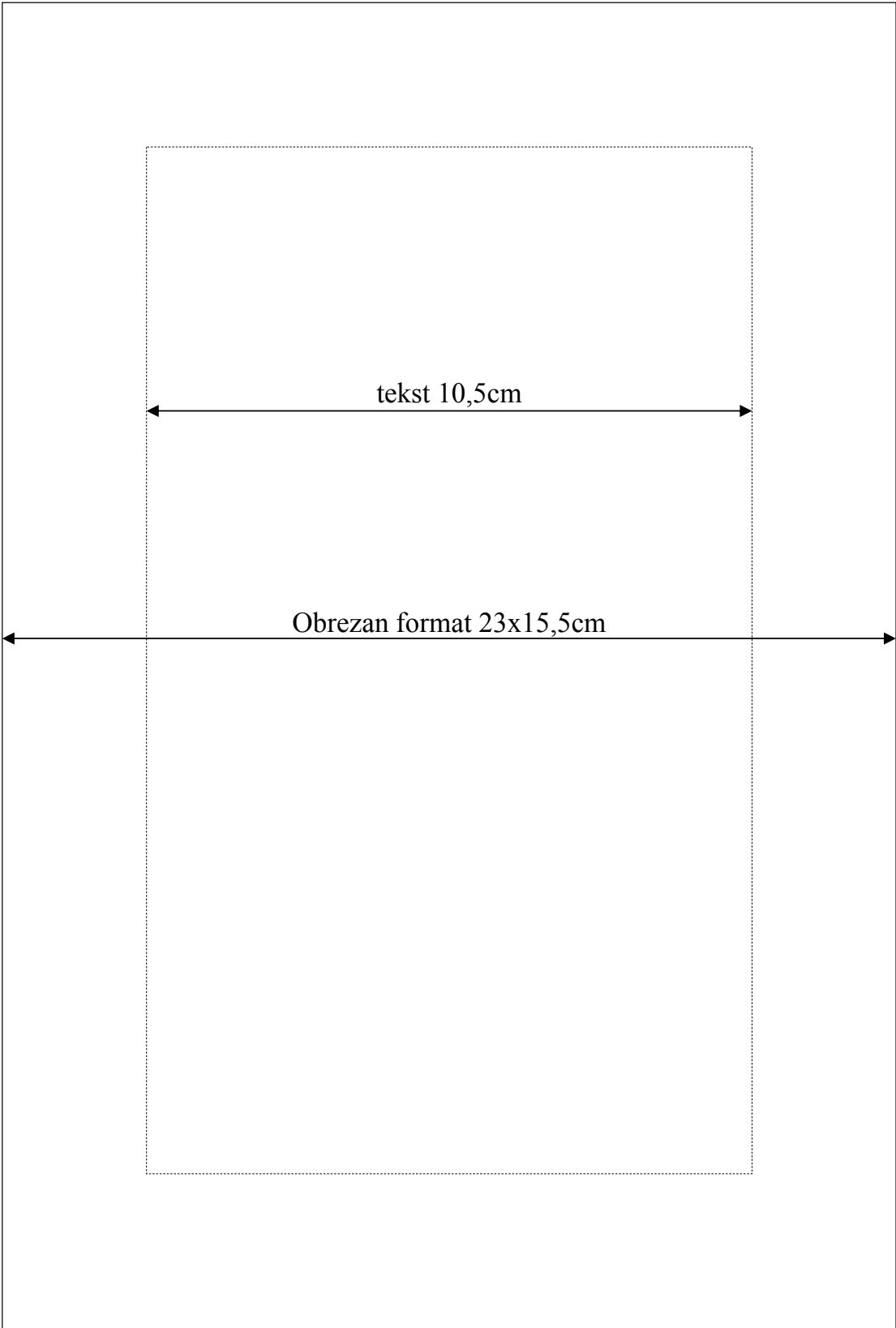
ISBN 86-7093-101-X

INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

ZORICA MRŠEVIĆ, PhD

**STANDARDS AND
MECHANISMS FOR
GENDER EQUALITY IN
DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES**

Belgrade, 2003



CONTENT

PREFACE (Zorica Mršević, PhD)

1. Women's political participation 9
2. Gender equality mechanisms..... 11

PART I

ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL GENDER EQUALITY MACHINERY (Council of Europe Handbook on national machinery to promote gender equality and action plans, excerpt I)

1. What is gender equality machinery? 15
2. Main principles: accountability and autonomy 19
3. How can national gender equality machinery be set up?..... 20
4. Examples of national gender equality
machinery at governmental level..... 23
5. Parliamentary Body to promote gender equality 30
6. Examples of national gender equality
machinery at parliamentary level 31

PART II

INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS ON WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE

1. An approach to democracy: Gender partnership..... 35
2. Instruments of international law concerning women..... 36
3. Annex of the report of the Commission
on the Status of Women..... 37

4. Universal Declaration on Democracy	38
5. Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations' system	43
6. Plan of action to correct imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life	45
7. Proposed System-wide Medium-term Plan for Advancement of Women, 2002–2005 The Commission on the Status of Women	62
8. Specialised Inter-Parliamentary Conference: „Towards partnership between men and women in politics“ Organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union New Delhi (India), 14–18 February 1997	65
9. Declaration on equality of men and women as a fundamental criterion of democracy, CoE: 4th European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men (Istanbul, 13–14 November 1997)	72
10. Final document of the 3 rd Inter-Parliamentary Conference on security and co-operation in the Mediterranean Organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union Marseilles (France), 30 March – 3 April 2000	85
11. EU Resolution on integrating gender issues in development co-operation	86
12. Commitments of Governments to Implement the Beijing Platform for Action	89
13. FWCW Platform for Action Women in Power and Decision-making	91
14. Beijing Parliamentary Declaration	96
15. OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues (summary)	100
16. Resolution 1325 (2000) United Nations S/RES/1325 (2000)	102
17. European Parliament resolution on participation of women in peaceful conflict resolution (2000/2025(INI))	106
18. G8 Roma initiatives on conflict prevention Conclusions of the meeting of the G8 Foreign Ministers	114

PART III

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS (CoE Handbook, excerpt II)

1. What are national action plans?..... 117

2. Examples of national action plans..... 118

 2.1. Austria..... 118

 2.2. Denmark..... 120

 2.3. Finland 123

 2.4. Italy 135

 2.5. Norway..... 138

 2.6. Sweden..... 145

PART IV

ANTIDISCRIMINATIVE LAWS

1. Discrimination law and enforcement:
the Nordic example (excerpt III, CoE Handbook)..... 149

1.2. Examples of an Equal Opportunities Act..... 150

1.3. Examples of Ombuds..... 151

1.4. Equality plans in the work place 152

1.5. Examples of equality plans..... 152

2.2. Norwegian Act on Gender Equality..... 153

LITERATURE 161

PREFACE

To Jasna Malkoč, a former Head of Democratisation in OSCE Mission to the FRY, for her permanent and strong support to the author in promotion of gender equality mechanisms

1. Political Participation of Women

This text is based on the working material prepared for the meeting held in OSCE, on 12. October 2001. For this handbook the chapter on national plans of action was added. The biggest part of the handbook is texts about different international agreements and conclusions from various international conferences and meetings. These conferences and meetings regulate participation of women in the political life as well as methods of increasing it and are completely unknown in our society.

Efficient equality of social opportunities for reaching all positions, professions and working places is a recognised indicator of democracy in a society. It has been proved many times, through experiences of other countries, that it is possible to accept, develop or, where necessary, rehabilitate women's dignity at social level and to allow the creation of political situation of balanced opportunities for man and women to participate in managing public and private business in their countries, without destabilising cultural values or imposing values foreign to national cultures.

The principle of equality between men and women should be explicitly expressed in national constitutions or in any other document on the constitutional level. Further, the researches conducted in this field had shown that in every country where the number of women with paid employment increased, parity participation in economical and social structure was established. Equal pay for equal work, direct and independent approach to vocations, professions, working places and functions are powerful tools for acquiring the acceptance of gender equality and economical independence of women. Shortly, women who achieve independent economical and social power show more interest and become more active in politics.

Without denying the biological differences between men and women, the language used in judiciary should aim to post men and women at the same socially equal grounds, and avoid any discrimination based on the idea of male superiority over women. In this context, legislators could play a decisive role by exercising their right on parliamentary initiative. In languages that have grammatically differentiated genders it is necessary that the laws be written using both male and female forms.

The participation of women in politics and performing of political duties should be encouraged and facilitated by an awareness-raising action, including civil and political education, which would help them become aware of their rights and abilities to engage in political life. The Government, the Parliament, political parties and organisations, trade unions, NGOs and the media could contribute to this process together.

In the context of respecting the principle of equality within political parties, it is very important that the basic documents, for example those defining the basic policies of the party, its hierarchy and rules of procedure, be reviewed in order to eliminate any regulations which explicitly contribute, or justify discrimination of women. Programs of political parties should pay special attention to the principle of equality between men and women. The programs should focus on advantages of active partnership between men and women, based on recognition of their differences and complements. Also, political parties should eliminate from their programs any term or text, which would directly or indirectly give an impression that men are superior to women. It is suggested that measures should be taken to provide equal possibilities to equally qualified men and women for being members of decision-making bodies at all levels in the structure of a party: local, provincial and national. This could include affirmative action measures at extremely optional bases. Wherever a quota system is chosen, it is suggested that the quota should not be related to women. Based on the principle of equality, no gender shall have defined proportion, which would be inferior to given percentage.

A principle of shared political responsibility means that in the Government, at local, regional and national level, proportional participation of women should be established as one of the rules of democracy. Pursuant to that, all governments should proportionally include women. Men and women are equally competent to have a job in the Government in any of the sectors. Therefore, allocation of functions to women should not be limited to some special sectors, but should be present in every area (social issues, foreign affairs, financial issues, internal affairs, and defence).

All of these social and political segments are necessary for the establishing of political participation of women. They cannot be brought about spontaneously or with a disperse action without national co-ordination and beyond certain state structures. They are a part of functioning elements of institutional national mechanisms for achieving gender equality, composed

out of certain boards, institutions and laws. Scandinavian countries use them for more than three decades. In the rest of the World, especially in the countries of the region to which the FRY and Serbia belong, official implementation of the mechanisms started after the Beijing Conference on Women's Human Rights. There, their governments have signed the Platform for Action of Beijing Conference, therefore accepting certain responsibilities and obligations. Since during that period (1995), Yugoslavia was isolated and excluded from global political activities, the decisions of the Conference have never received real political recognition and implementation. Simultaneous to intensifying the integrative processes for the return into international organisations, the moment has come to establish mechanisms for gender equality.

2. Gender equality mechanisms

Most of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the FRY and Serbia, are undergoing unavoidable institutional changes in the process of administrative and political transition, which are over their institutional capacities and abilities. This is reflected (in a negative way) in a slow and inefficient change of institutional frame in many of the sensitive or new areas, such as establishing of gender equality mechanism, anticorruption mechanisms, or the university reform. At the same time, many of the new established institutional measures are representing objective necessity of political moment. This is especially truth when it comes to the institutionalisation of the gender equality mechanisms. They are not only a necessary institutional frame for achieving gender equality in the society, but also for creating democratic and representative, inclusive, and not exclusive, political models. They are an unavoidable institutional precondition for including higher number of women in the mainstream of political decision making, therefore also essential for realising different aspects of social justice, establishment of stabile, peaceful politics and lasting peace in the regional relationships, as well as for sustainable economic development and prosperity.

The main precondition for establishing mechanisms for achieving gender equality is the existence of a clear political will to form them on the official level. It is the basic condition, which is the hardest one to achieve. Also, it is clear from the examples of Nordic countries, that the higher representation of women in the representative political bodies is a next necessary step in establishing gender equality mechanisms.

All of the regional experiences, as well as experiences from other European transitional countries, show that it was very hard to start with establishing elements of gender equality mechanisms at the official level, because there where no preconditions for it. The same situation is also present in the FRY and Serbia.

The long political moment, which lasts more than one decade, is such that it sometimes disables constructive discussion on gender issues at the main political scene. It applies also to issues like violence against women, or undemocratic disproportionately low participation of women in representative and executive political bodies. Typical statement on this is that “now is not the right moment since there are many other more important problems.” As usual, when the issue of gender equality is rejected as less important, it means that “the right moment” will never come, as well as that the position of women will be systematically neglected and worsened.

When we talk about establishing elements of gender equality at official level, there is not a strong political disagreement, but rather lack of information, unwillingness to experiment, or chronic budget insufficiency, etc. The international actors played an important if not even main role in the process of awareness raising on this issue. The international institutions and Western countries put a lot of efforts to create political and financial basis for establishing elements of gender equality mechanisms. Political campaigns on introducing gender equality elements is a necessary part in the process of creating political partnership as well as in creating political will for their institutionalisation. It is also needed for achieving necessary level of information about characteristics and ways of functioning of some of the elements for achieving gender equality mechanisms. That role will develop into an educational role, because it is clear that when it comes to gender equality mechanisms in countries where there are no such mechanisms, all should and could learn.

The basic elements for achieving national gender equality mechanisms are:

1. Bodies (commissions, boards, committees)
2. National plans of action
3. Anti-discriminatory and gender equality law
4. Ombuds

2.1. A Body

A body (usually a commission), as the first element for achieving gender equality, is governmental and/or parliamentary institution. Its function is to enable advancement of women and implementation of women’s human rights, as well as to monitor and provide the adherence to the rights based on the principle of anti discrimination and equality between women and men. The success of this mechanism depends on the level of support received from the civil society. The main source of support is women’s movement. Also, women studies have a special impact on the proper functioning of the national mechanism for gender equality. This is an important political fundament for functioning of the

commission, because women were capable to articulate their interests and statements as well as to put women's issues into programs at national, regional and international level.

Moreover, the commission, as the first element of gender equality mechanism, depends also on the support of women in political parties, particularly those at decision-making levels, on women from NGOs, women's associations and groups, grassroots movements, researches of women's issues, women professionals from different areas, for example from the media, and on all of those who are identifying areas in which further researches and activities are needed.

Main principles for functioning of the commission are responsibility and autonomy. The commission is responsible for identifying different interests of women and men, different social relationships between genders, and it should be open for different opinions, different experiences, various strategies and practical interests. Its function, among other things, is to establish and maintain real and permanent dialog between different interest groups, and especially women's groups from civil society.

Functioning of the bodies depends on the ways of financing it and on the persons who participate in their work and leaders, but also on characteristics of political mandates, funds and on governmental commitment to promote equality between men and women.

Main functions are to promote legislation of equal gender opportunities and anti discriminative laws and to monitor their implementation in praxis. That office, or department, which is a part of some Ministry, is responsible for preparing the Government's decisions related to equality between men and women, Government's decrees, which could contain draft laws or national action plans, monitoring advertisements for incorporating gender aspects into main political streams, as well as for employing women at decision-making levels.

In the countries of Eastern Europe the first elements of gender equality mechanisms are not always established at governmental level. Mostly, they are established at parliamentary level, through forming bodies within the assemblies, with a mandate to take care of gender equality. The parliamentary bodies for promotion of equality between genders are usually established there where they are needed, if there is a will to compensate the lack of female representatives in the Parliament and/or where there is a visible lack of clear mandate as well as authorisation of governmental structures for gender equality.

In parliaments where proportion of women is over 30%, women MPs have formed women's discussion groups. Usually it is women's group composed out of members of different parties, regardless of their political orientation. They discuss issues that are at parliamentary agenda and prepare a joint strategy. Therefore, they usually do not need a special body for it.

Wherever there is such parliamentary body, the main issue is to provide presence of sufficient number of men and to achieve a consensus on key legislative issues related to women. Its function is to initiate passing of the laws, monitor their implementation from the equal opportunity point of view and to assess further impact on gender equality.

The parliamentary body could ask the government and other governmental institutions for information, facts and specific documents relevant for its policies as well as for legislative development.

The composition of the working body depends on the number of MPs in a specific party. Each party, which has MPs, should have at least one representative in each working group.

2.2. National action plan

National plans of action are documents that explicitly contain all the commitments of the government regarding the promotion of the gender equality. It does not only contain the provisions on banning discrimination in the public sphere and in the governmentally financed institutions, but also the adoption of equal opportunities plan in private enterprises. The plan of action usually includes measures, which consider coercive procedures and sanctions.

2.3. Laws

The laws contain clear and specified provisions, which forbid gender discrimination, regulations on procedures for investigating alleged cases of discrimination and opening of an official place for Ombud for equality. In these laws there are also interim special measures with a goal to speed up de facto equality between women and men (so called affirmative action measures), prohibition of direct and indirect discrimination, change of the principle of burden to prove and Ombud's rights to collect information and pronounce sanctions.

The law is not applicable to activities related to praxis of religious communities. The law does not authorise any one to interfere into family matters or private lives of the people.

2.4. Ombuds

The Ombud is an institution in charge of providing implementation of gender equality regulations. Ombud's task is to give informations that are related to gender equality law as well as to advancement of equality. A goal of the Ombud's institution is to create a body that is much easier to approach than the regular court, so people who are discriminated could get appropriate help.

**PART I
ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL
GENDER EQUALITY MACHINERY**

1. What is gender equality machinery?

A gender equality machinery is an institutional governmental and, in some cases, parliamentary structure set up to promote women's advancement and to ensure the full enjoyment by women of their human rights. Its main function is to monitor and to ensure the implementation of the law, of the principle of non-discrimination and equality between women and men.

Almost all conventions and international legal instruments enshrine the principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of sex, race, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status¹. The principle of non-discrimination is the cornerstone and basis for promoting gender equality. Central to the international covenants² is the formal acknowledgement of the principle of equality. These texts are legally binding and envisage appropriate actions to be undertaken by the States Parties in order to fulfil the principle of non-discrimination and equality of women and men. The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, entry into force in 1981), which constitutes a specialised human rights legally binding instrument for States Parties, contains, among others, the following obligations that States have to comply with:

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

Article 1

For the purpose of the present Convention, the term “**discrimination against women**” shall mean any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or

¹ The listed grounds of discrimination refer to Article 2 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

² International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 26 and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, article 3, of the United Nations. Both were adopted in 1966 and entered into force in 1976.

nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.

Article 2

States Parties condemn discrimination against women in all its forms, agree to pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating discrimination against women and, to this end, undertake:

a) To embody the principle of equality of men and women in their national constitutions or other appropriate legislation if not yet incorporated therein and to **ensure, through law and other appropriate means, the practical realisation of this principle.**

Furthermore, States have expressed their commitments towards the achievement of substantive equality for women, especially at the international world conferences on women, by adopting declarations and plan of actions. Since the first UN Women's Conference in Mexico City in 1975, many countries have followed up on the recommendation to establish machinery for the advancement of women. The most clear message comes from the Nairobi Conference on Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, which reviewed and appraised the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace (15–26 July 1985)³.

Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women

Basic strategies – Paragraph 57

“Appropriate governmental machinery for monitoring and improving the status of women should be established where it is lacking. To be effective, this machinery should be established at a high level of government and should be ensured adequate resources, commitment and authority to advise on the impact on women of all government policies. Such machinery can play a vital role in enhancing the status of women, *inter alia*, through collaborative action with various ministries and other government agencies and with non-governmental organisations and indigenous women's societies and groups”.

The Platform for Action of the 4th World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) included “institutional mechanisms for the advancement

³ The United Nations Decade for Women was opened in 1975 by the Mexico City Conference for Women, underwent a mid-term stocktaking in Copenhagen in 1980 and culminated with the Nairobi Conference (1985).

of women” as one of its twelve areas of concern. The Platform gives a definition of national machinery, lists some conditions for effective functioning of such machinery and suggests action to be taken by governments.

Furthermore, the Platform provides a mandate for the national machinery for the advancement of women which includes, *inter alia*, “**to design, promote the implementation of, execute, monitor, evaluate, advocate and mobilise support for policies that promote the advancement of women**” (paragraph 196).

Beijing Platform for Action

201. National machinery for the advancement of women is the central policy-co-ordination unit inside government. Its main task is to support government-wide mainstreaming of a gender-equality perspective in all policy areas. The necessary conditions for an effective functioning of such national machinery include:

- a. Location at the highest possible level in the Government, falling under the responsibility of a Cabinet minister;
- b. Institutional mechanisms or processes that facilitate, as appropriate, decentralised planning, implementation and monitoring with a view to involving non-governmental organisations and community organisations from grass-roots upwards;
- c. Sufficient resources in terms of budget and professional capacity;
- d. Opportunity to influence development of all government policies.

202. In addressing the issue of mechanisms for promoting the advancement of women, Governments and others should promote an active and visible policy on mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that, before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively.

Strategic objectives:

- Create or strengthen national machinery and other governmental bodies;
- Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects;
- Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation.

Moreover, the results of the special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the progress made since the Beijing Conference (Beijing +5), which was held in New York on June 2000, highlighted achievements and obstacles concerning institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women.

Beijing + 5
Further actions and initiatives to implement
the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action⁴

Achievements: national machineries have been instituted or strengthened and recognised as the institutional base acting as “catalysts” for promoting gender equality, gender mainstreaming and monitoring of the implementation of the Platform for Action and in many instances of the Convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. In many countries, progress has been achieved in terms of the visibility, status, outreach and co-ordination of activities of these machineries. Gender mainstreaming has been widely acknowledged as a strategy to enhance the impact of policies to promote gender equality. The goal of the strategy is to incorporate a gender perspective in all legislation policies, programmes and projects. These machineries, despite their limited financial resources, have made a significant contribution to the development of human resources in the field of gender studies and have also contributed to the growing efforts for the generation and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age, gender-sensitive research and documentation.

Obstacles: in a number of countries, inadequate financial and human resources and a lack of political will and commitment are the main obstacles confronting national machinery. This is further exacerbated by insufficient understanding of gender equality and gender mainstreaming among government structures, as well as prevailing gender stereotypes, discriminatory attitudes, competing government priorities and, in some countries, unclear mandates, a marginalized location within the national government structures, lack of data disaggregated by sex and age in many areas and insufficient applied methods for assessing progress, in addition to paucity of authority and insufficient links to civil society. The activities of the national machineries were also hindered by structural and communication problems within and among government agencies.

The success of the machinery depends largely on the support of civil society. The main sources of support are the women's movement in all its various forms, such as women in political parties, especially those in decision-making positions, NGOs, women's associations and groups, grassroots movements, researchers on women's issues, and women professionals in, for example, the media. Through these actors, women have been able to articulate their interests and concerns and have placed women's issues on the national, regional and international agendas. Particularly important for the good functioning of a national gender

⁴ Report of the *ad hoc* Committee of the Whole of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (A/S-23/10/Rev.1)

equality machinery are women's studies. A firm link between the machinery and women's studies is mutually rewarding. The machinery can also identify areas that need further research and request research concerning topical issues. However, a respect for the autonomy of research is a precondition for good relations.

Networking among all these bodies and institutions is a part of implementing equality policy. Networking helps to find channels of influence and mobilise resources through the administrative bureaucracy.

2. Main principles: accountability and autonomy

Two issues are central to the establishment and functioning of a national machinery to promote gender equality: *accountability*⁵ and *autonomy*.

Accountability is essential for national machineries. A national machinery is an important institution which addresses the diverse interests of women and men and social relations between the sexes. It has to be open to different standpoints, different experiences and to a variety of strategic and practical interests.

A real and permanent dialogue has to be established between the national machinery on the one hand and the various interest groups, especially women's groups, from the civil society on the other hand.

If a national machinery is unwilling or unable to keep alive this dialogue with the civil society, the purpose for which it was created is no longer valid.

A national machinery functions at different levels of governance – local, regional, national and international. It articulates women's interests and represents civil society groups before Government, Parliament and regional and international bodies. In this regard, the dialogue with these groups as well as their support increase the **legitimacy** of a national machinery and make it stronger. Women's groups remain essential actors in the work to achieve gender balanced decision-making. Their support of this goal provides democratic legitimacy for efforts to promote gender equality, for new arguments and strategies.

At the same time, the actors in charge of the national machinery have to be liberated from the stricter forms of political accountability to be able to freely intervene in discussions. Here, the second principle, **autonomy**, plays its role. Democratic practice presupposes a level of autonomy for the representatives of interests, which allows them to change their positions. Without autonomy there is no flexibility and, as a consequence, practical policy-making becomes impossible.

⁵ Accountability is defined by the Oxford Dictionary of Politics as "requirement for representatives and representative organisations to answer for the disposal of their powers and duties, act upon criticism or requirements made to them, and accept (some) responsibility for failure, incompetence, or deceit".

Accountability and autonomy go hand in hand. The crucial point is to find a balance between these two principles so that the national machinery can be effective⁶.

3. How can national gender equality machinery be set up?

a. Temporary committees before the establishment of a permanent governmental body

Before the establishment of a permanent governmental body, work for the advancement of women can be started by using temporary bodies, such as governmental committees or working groups.

Some of the current Western European national machinery were established as a result of a comprehensive report on the status of women prepared by a temporary committee.

The **tasks** of this kind of committee could include:

- Preparing an overall review and appraisal of the role and situation of women in the restructuring process;
- Identifying the key areas of concern and action;
- Reviewing and using existing information on women and the gender system such as research, statistical information and other available data and making recommendations on developing and improving the system of data collection by gender;
- Identifying the need to develop new legislation that corresponds to the new conditions and protects women's rights effectively;
- Proposing a broad programme of action to be taken by the respective governments to achieve equality.

Usually, such a committee is appointed by the government for a fixed period of time to perform the task specified in its mandate. The members represent various groups of the population, different parties, social partners, ethnic backgrounds, etc., to ensure that a broad variety of interests will be articulated during the preparatory process. It is important that the representatives are appointed by a democratic process so that they are considered legitimate representatives of their group. The preparatory work of a committee is performed by secretaries funded by governments. The secretaries are experts, such as social scientists or lawyers, who are committed to advancing the status of women, and are experienced in data collection and policy formulation.

⁶ See "Requirements, function and authorities of the Parliamentary Commission for Equal Opportunities", presented at a seminar held in Skopje (6 April 2001) on "the establishment of the Parliamentary Commission for Gender Equality" and prepared by Ms Violeta Neubauer.

The aims of the above-mentioned strategy are also to raise women's awareness of their rights, and mobilise women and men to create a national consensus for the support and implementation of the programme. Therefore, there is a need to organise the work of the committee in such a way that invites participation in the preparatory work and inspires public discussion. Meetings to stimulate public awareness, hearings, workshops and conferences about the themes dealt with by the Committee could be arranged for this purpose. The draft and/or final version of the report could be widely distributed to women's associations, women's groups, researchers on women's issues, and to local, regional and central governments for comments. The proposals would then be elaborated by taking the comments into account. Such participatory methods help to raise interest and create commitment.

b. Permanent institutional bodies/divisions to promote equality

The composition, structure and mandates of the institutional permanent bodies vary. There is also a large variation in the financial and personnel resources of the bodies. Furthermore, the mandates and resources, sometimes even the existence of the bodies, also depend on the governments and their commitment to the promotion of equality between women and men.

The national institutional machinery's main function is to promote equal opportunities legislation, anti-discrimination law(s) and to monitor their implementation (see also 1 what is a gender equality machinery).

A national machinery is usually linked to the government structure. Some countries have an independent equality ministry, even though this *portfolio* usually goes along with another Ministry. In other countries the machinery often takes the form of a department or unit within a ministry (usually the ministry of labour and social affairs). Committees or councils can also act as a machinery, especially when it comes to setting up and implementing plans of action to promote equality. In some countries there is a system that is independent from the government (ombuds, equality councils/ agencies).

The machinery, besides its mandate linked to legislation and its implementation, is often responsible for activities linked to research, training, elaboration of specific projects and actions.

c. Location of the body/division and its tasks

– At governmental level

In many countries, an Equality Affairs Division or Office is established in a ministry. This **division** or office is responsible for the preparation of government decisions concerning equality between women and men as well as the co-ordination of those issues in the Cabinet Office.

The division prepares cabinet decisions and government bills that can contain proposals for laws or national plans of action. They are introduced to Parliament by the minister responsible for equality affairs.

The division initiates and carries out activities promoting equality within the framework of its own mandate and budget. These activities might include the publication of leaflets, the drawing up of guidelines and codes of conduct, monitoring advertisements to ensure that they do not infringe the law, acting to prevent sex-stereotyping, etc.

The division can have a gender-mainstreaming role for the whole government. However, usually it does not have the power to instruct other ministries. The mainstreaming function is carried out through initiatives, negotiations, by participating in joint committees and working groups, etc. It may also co-ordinate the preparation of a national plan of action for the promotion of equality that covers all ministries. The division may instruct other ministries in certain issues if the Parliament or the government so decides by giving it the mandate to do this.

The Equality Affairs Division may also be given the power to scrutinise, from the point of view of equal opportunities, all proposals for government bills and other governmental decisions introduced by various ministries, before they are discussed by the Cabinet. The Division may also monitor the implementation of the time-bound targets, which have been set in order to increasing the share of women in public boards and committees. In this capacity, the Division approves the proposals for the appointments for assignments before the government or the ministry takes the final decision.

– Focal points in government institutions

Focal points may have different functions. One is to introduce a gender perspective into the main policy area of a ministry or an agency. Another function is promote equal opportunities in the personnel policy of the ministry or agency itself.

Norway

The Norwegian Ministry of Agriculture, for example, has one full-time and one part-time post, which have the responsibility for ensuring gender equality in agriculture. One of the objectives of the Norwegian government-policy has been to recruit young women to join the agricultural sector. Positive results have been attained through trainee programmes and grants to establish new agricultural enterprises. On the regional level of the Ministry of Agriculture, there are 16 focal points for women's affairs. Hence women's access to training and advisory services in agriculture has greatly improved.

Other ministries, which often have focal points responsible for equality affairs, are and the last one particularly in connection with

programmes for women in the developing countries. Even if there is no particular post allocated to the advancement of women in an agency, the function can be performed by special committees or working groups set up for that purpose. To be effective, the working group should operate at a high level, prepare action plans with concrete targets, resources, timetables and a monitoring system. These requirements are often not fulfilled. However, the simple fact to give to an official or a working group in an agency the mandate to promote equality, can create opportunities to start the work and develop it.

– *At regional and local level*

The advancement of equality at the regional and local levels requires political will and commitment of regional and local government. The influence and activities of the women's movement, NGOs and women's grassroots organisations, as well as the proportion of women represented in the regional and local governments, create the overall conditions for the advancement of women. However, an efficient machinery is instrumental in supporting equal opportunities.

At the local level, the most usual type of equality machinery in the Nordic countries is an equality committee set up by the municipal councils or governments. These bodies consist of representatives of political parties, and they reflect the party composition at the local elections. They can strive to mainstream equality by initiating and co-ordinating an action plan for equality at the local government level. They can also make recommendations on particular issues concerning equality to the municipal council.

At local level, networks that combine the efforts of women politicians, public authorities and representatives of women's movement have often been effective. They have, for instance, been active in combating violence against women, through the setting up of crisis centres and helplines, as well as in local planning and decision-making.

4. Examples of national gender equality machinery at governmental level

Examples including the most recent developments

Belgium

– *Minister of Employment:* Since July 1999, the responsibility for equal opportunities lies with the Vice Prime Minister, who is also the Minister of Employment.

– *Equal Opportunities Department:* In 1999, this federal department merged with the Unit for positive actions of the Federal Ministry of Employment and Labour. Thus, the responsibilities of the department

have been developed as regards employment and particularly as regards the implementation of a positive action policy in the private sector.

French Community

– *Directorate of Equal Opportunities*: This directorate was set up in 1997 at the Ministry of the French Community, replacing the Equal Opportunities Department. It is administratively dependent on the Secretariat General of the Department. Its objective is to promote equal opportunities in the spheres under the responsibility of the French Community, to serve as a centre of resources and exchange, to inform and support associations and to initiate new projects in order to establish a concrete policy regarding equal opportunities.

Flemish Community

– *Flemish Minister responsible for the Equal opportunities Policy*: This minister was first appointed in June 1995. She is responsible for the overall (horizontal) equal opportunities policy of Flanders beyond all policy fields and levels. Moreover, she conducts a specific (vertical) equal opportunities policy with its own priorities and means. The Flemish equal opportunities policy is directed at women and minority groups. Besides equal opportunities, the current minister is also responsible for welfare and health.

– *Equal Opportunities in Flanders Service*: This service went into operation in 1996. It is attached to the Ministry of Flanders and operates at the highest level of the Co-ordination Department of the Ministry. Due to its establishment in this department, all policy fields of the Flemish community are covered. Its objective is to support the policy of the Minister for Equal Opportunities. It contributes to the elaboration of equal opportunities policy as well as to its implementation and it assesses the outcome of these policies.

– *Interdepartmental Equal Opportunities Committee*: This advisory committee was set up in 1996 within the Ministry of Flanders. It is presided by the Equal Opportunities in Flanders Service. Its objective is to support the overall equal opportunities policy. It serves as a discussion forum, in which representatives of the various policy fields discuss the measures and initiatives required to create a broad equal opportunities policy platform.

Denmark

The adoption by the Parliament of a new Equality Act (May 2000) provides for completely new national machinery to promote gender

equality. The Equal Status Council, which was established in 1975, has been abandoned and a Department for Gender Equality has been established within the Ministry of Equality.

– *Minister of Equality*: The minister is responsible for the Government's overall activities in the field of gender equality and coordinates the equality work of other ministries. The gender mainstreaming strategy is in principle considered in relation to the Government as meaning that there are now 20 Ministers responsible for Gender Equality – each within their field of competence. This means, according to the strategy of gender mainstreaming, that each Ministry is responsible for integrating the gender and equality perspective in all policies and activities.

The Minister of Equality lays down rules and guidelines for the gender equality work and initiates special measures to promote gender equality and equal opportunities. It is thus a dual approach.

Each year the Minister draws up a report and a perspective and action plan for gender equality for the Danish Parliament. The yearly report is based on reports from local authorities and ministries and defines the government's priorities within the equality work in the following year.

– *Department for Gender Equality*: it has been set up under the Minister of Equality and acts as secretariat for the Minister. Its task includes: preparation of legislation and administrative rules concerning gender equality, co-ordination of gender equality measures initiated by public authorities as an element of the mainstreaming strategy, preparation of the annual report on gender equality for the Parliament, implementation of the Minister's perspective and action plan, secretarial assistance to the Gender Equality Board, monitoring of the development in the gender composition of certain committees and boards included in the Act on Gender Equality.

– *The National Centre for Research and Information on Gender Equality*: The Centre is a politically independent institution that is to ensure knowledge, documentation, dissemination and a qualified debate about gender equality. The centre must underpin measures to integrate the gender and gender equality aspect in all policies, planning and administrative activities. The centre can initiate studies, research, analyses, conferences, web sites, etc. and make proposals for activities to the Minister of Equality. The centre is managed by a board composed of representatives from the social partners, women's and men's organisations, researchers and employees.

– *The Gender Equality Board*: The board is composed of a chairperson who is a legally qualified judge and two qualified lawyers. The board deals with complaints about gender discrimination and the Board's decisions are final within the administrative system. The decisions can be brought to the court of law. The Board also offers

counselling and guidance to citizens, organisations, authorities and enterprises about the procedure to bring complaints concerning gender discrimination before the board or other bodies. The board publishes its decisions and submits an annual report. Any citizen may file a complaint with the board. The board can award compensation in the case of violation of the gender equality legislation and in special cases overrule a dismissal.

Apart from the above-mentioned institutions there are a number of gender equality consultants in the municipalities and the local labour authorities as well as gender equality committees in organisations, universities and enterprises. This has not changed with the Act on Gender Equality.

Finland

– *Council for Equality*: Established in 1972, this body is attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Its members are representatives from political parties. Its objective is to promote and monitor the attainment of equality, to eliminate discrimination, to improve the status of women in employment and to promote equal pay. It proposes reforms to the authorities and labour market organisations, develops equality in the legislative and administrative fields, carries out research and combats violence and sexual harassment.

– *Ombuds for Equality*: (See Part III on Ombuds, page 24).

– *Equality Board*: The objective of this body is to monitor the application of the law. It takes breaches of law before the court, prohibits unlawful action in case of discrimination and may impose a conditional fine in certain cases.

– *Inter-ministerial Working Party*: After the Beijing Conference, the first ever inter-ministerial body on equality issues was set up. It was created for the follow-up of the Beijing Conference. It includes representatives from all ministries. In 1999, its last report was submitted.

Hungary

– *National Committee*: it was established in March 1995, and includes representatives of ministries, parliament, all partners involved in collective bargaining, NGOs, women's organisations, as well as the church.

– *Office for Women's Issues*: This body was established in 1996 as "Office for Women's Policy" and later became the "Office of Equal Opportunities". The office was reorganised in 1998, and located within the Social Community Relations Department at the Ministry of Social and Family Affairs and renamed "Office for Women's Issues". Despite all

these changes the personnel and tasks of this administrative body remained more or less unchanged. The office's objective is the advancement of women in Hungary.

– *Council for Women's Issues*: This council was established by government resolution in 1999. Its main responsibility is to facilitate the enhancement of equal opportunities. The Council gives advice on and proposes legislation concerning gender equality, takes part in the implementation of programmes sponsored by national or international resources, contributes to research and reviews the reports and information documents dealing with equal opportunities. Among the members of the council are representatives from all ministries, delegates of civic organisations and experts in the field of gender equality. The governmental side of the council also operates as an inter-ministerial committee, with the objective to outline and initiate the proposals for decision-making in the field of women's advancement, and to monitor and co-ordinate their implementation.

Norway

– *Minister of Children and Family Affairs*: The minister has overall responsibility for gender equality within the government. Since 1977, the then Ministry of Consumer Affairs and government Administration has overall and co-ordinating responsibility for gender equality. The executive unit of the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs is the *Equal Status Division*, which was established in 1977. In 1994, the division was separated from the Equal Status and Family Division. The division's overall objective is to promote gender equality. It is responsible for the application of the Equal Status Act, co-ordinates actions, formulates and co-ordinates gender policy at State level and monitors the representation of women in committees (40%).

– *Equal Status Council*: The Council was established in 1972. It is an independent advisory body, administratively attached to the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. It acts as a liaison body between public authorities, organisations and the public in general. Its major objective is to promote equality in all sectors of society. It suggests to the authorities measures to be taken, monitors the implementation of equal status and collects and disseminates gender related information. In 1997, the Council was transformed into a resource centre for gender equality, called "Centre for Gender Equality" in order to strengthen public awareness. The resource centre functions as a meeting place and as a source of information. It disseminates knowledge by organising seminars and conferences, publishing books and pamphlets, etc. The Centre for Gender Equality is located with the Equality Ombud and with a research information institution "The Source".

– *Ombuds for Equal Status of Women and Men*: (see Part III on Ombuds, page 24).

– *Local Equal Status Committees*: These bodies have been established at municipal level since 1975 in order to promote equality at the municipal level and to serve as a means of communication between individuals, organisations and the municipalities. The Equal Status Council used to organise biannual conferences on gender equality with a view to facilitate networking and training on gender equality in the committees. There is a growing tendency to integrate gender equality concerns into mainstream municipal committees and decision-making fora.

– *Committee of the State Secretaries on Gender Equality*: This was set up in 1997. The regular members comprise the Ministries of Labour and Administration, Regional and Municipal Affairs, Business and Energy, Foreign Affairs (Development Co-operation), Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. The committee sets a political agenda, improves cross-sectorial dialogue and co-operation, and guides the government and the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs on issues related to gender equality. The Committee also holds an important function for gender mainstreaming, with a view to ensuring that gender equality is considered in all Government proposals, and in promoting the institutionalisation of gender mainstreaming. The Committee is chaired by the Prime Minister's Office, where a political advisor on gender equality was appointed in 1997. The co-ordinating Ministry has the secretariat.

Portugal

– *Commission on Equality and Women's Rights*: it was set up in 1991, replacing the Commission on the Status of Women operating since 1973. It was later attached to the Prime Minister's Office. The Commission conducts and promotes studies on equal opportunities and women's issues, runs a documentation centre and a specialised library, and alerts and trains specific target groups. It also provides public information on a variety of subjects through the media, issues opinions on equal opportunity policies and legislation, evaluates the application of Community Directives and case-law, runs a help line for cases of violence and produces publications. It has a Consultative Council with two sections, namely a *Joint Ministerial Section* made up of representatives of governmental administrative departments relevant to the work of the Commission operating as equality consultants, and a *Non-Governmental Organisations Section*.

– *Commission for Equality in Labour and Employment*: This commission was set up in 1979 under the Ministry of Employment. It endeavours to promote the application of Legislative Decree No. 392/79

prohibiting discrimination and promoting equal opportunities for and equal treatment of women and men in the fields of labour, employment and vocational training. The Commission's work relates to the public and private sectors, issuing opinions and recommendations to the Employment Minister, dealing with complaints, conducting surveys and research and informing and alerting the public. It is a tripartite commission embracing representatives of the Government and employers' confederations and trade union organisations. It also manages a Centre for monitoring and preventing direct or indirect sex discrimination in collective agreements and encourages the adoption of positive action and the equality perspective in enterprises.

– *Minister for Equality*: The October 1999 elections provided Portugal with a Minister for Equality. The Ministry of Equality comes under the Prime Minister's Office. It is currently responsible for the Commission for Equality and Women's Rights, the Committee for Equality at Work and in Employment and the Office of the High Commissioner for Immigration and Ethnic Minorities.

Slovenia

– *Women's Policy Office of the Government of the Republic of Slovenia*: The office was founded in 1992 as an advisory body (based on the Founding Act of the Women's Policy Office). This central government unit is not attached to any of the existing ministries but it was founded as an independent government service. The Office performs the following tasks:

- a) Monitors the position of women and the realisation of the rights ensured by the constitution, laws and international agreements;
- b) Assists government in policy making and discusses regulations and measures adopted by the government;
- c) Initiates legislation and proposes measures to the government and ministries to promote gender equality;
- d) Prepares gender based analyses and reports;
- e) Disseminates gender-relevant data and other information on gender equality, including through publications and the media;
- f) Works in partnership with local, regional, national and international agencies.

Sweden

– *The Minister for Gender Equality (Equality between women and men)*: This ministerial post was established by Ministerial Decision in 1976. In 1995, the Deputy Prime Minister was also Minister for Gender Equality and was attached to the Prime Minister's Office. Her objective

was to co-ordinate the government policy on equality. The Minister is now also Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries. The Minister has at her disposal a State Secretary and a Political Adviser for Gender Equality.

– *Division for Gender Equality*: Established in 1983, this Division is placed within the Government's services (Cabinet) and was in 1995 attached to the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs. Among its main objectives are to assist the Minister for Gender Equality in co-ordinating the government's policy in this field; initiating training for the Cabinet Office and other government authorities regarding equality between women and men; reviewing written communications from other ministries to Parliament to ensure that a gender perspective has been considered; processing applications for funds for development work and projects within the field and providing information regarding the Government's policy and work for gender equality. The Division is now attached to the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications.

– *Council on Equality Issues*: Established in 1981, this mixed independent advisory body is linked with the government through its chair, the Minister for Gender Equality. Its objective is to exchange information and ideas and discuss current gender equality issues and to express an opinion on government policy. The Council meets 4 times per year.

– *Equal Opportunities Ombudsman*: (see Part III on Ombuds, page 24).

– *Equal Opportunities Commission*: is a governmental authority under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and was established in 1980 by the Equal Opportunities in Employment Act. The commission is charged with ordering an employer, following an application by the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman and under penalty of a fine, to comply with the requirements set forth in the Equal Opportunities Act concerning active measures to be taken by the employers. The Commission consists of lawyers, representatives of the social partners and experts on labour market and on equality issues.

– *Regional Experts for Gender Equality*: Since January 1995, an expert on gender equality is to be found in each County Administrative Board. The Expert supports the implementation of the national policy for gender equality at the regional level and promotes and develops the integration of a gender perspective within the various regional policy fields.

– *Officers at local government level*: These officers co-ordinate activities to promote equality within their communities.

5. Parliamentary Body to promote gender equality

The establishment of a national machinery to promote gender equality can be initiated also at Parliamentary level – not necessary at Governmental level – by creating within the National Assembly a body with a mandate to secure gender equality, usually a Commission or a Committee.

Parliamentary bodies for the promotion of gender equality are more likely to be established in those countries where there is a need and a will to compensate a lack of women representatives in the Parliaments and/or a lack of clear mandate and authority of the governmental structure for gender equality.

Various countries of Central and Eastern Europe first established a Parliamentary body with the specific mandate to secure gender equality. Yet, gender equality issues and women's issues have often been dealt with by other Parliamentary Committees, usually by the Committee on Family, Women and Children or the Committee on Health. In Croatia and in Hungary, these issues are addressed by the Committee on Human Rights and in the Czech Republic they are handled by a subcommittee of the Petition Committee.

In parliaments where the proportion of women is over 30%, women parliamentarians have formed so-called women's caucuses, an inter-party group of women regardless of their affiliation, which allow women to discuss issues on the parliamentary agenda and prepare a collective strategy.

Whenever a specialised body exists, a crucial challenge is to secure the presence of a fair number of men in it and to reach consensus on key legislation affecting women.

These Parliamentary bodies are usually established by Decree and they differ in terms of mandate and main tasks. These may include:

- to initiate legislations, to monitor their implementation from an equal opportunities point of view and to evaluate the follow-up;
- to promote women's rights and to define strategies and measures to secure equal opportunities;
- to give advice, adopt resolutions and produce surveys.

A Parliamentary body can request from Government and other State institutions information, data and particular documents relevant to its policy and legislative developments. Furthermore, it can commission researchers to carry out surveys and studies on specific issues.

The composition of the working body depends on the number of deputies in individual party groups; in principle each party group of deputies should have at least one representative in each working group. The body will be chaired by a President.

6. Examples of national gender equality machinery at parliamentary level

Albania

– *Group of Parliamentary Women*: in 1994, a group of parliamentary women was set up to protect and promote women's rights. After the

Beijing Conference, the group was replaced by a sub-commission for Youth and Women (11 members).

Belgium

– *Advisory Committee for Equal Opportunities between women and men*: established in 1996, this parliamentary commission is attached to the High Chamber of the federal Parliament. Its objective is to ensure the follow-up and the evaluation of legislative initiatives and government policies from an equal opportunities point of view, as well as to give incentives in order to orient legislation and government policy towards greater concern for equal opportunities. It gives advice, adopts resolutions and produces reports. It does not have a separate budget.

Estonia

– *Association of Parliamentary Women*: founded in 1998. it brings together women MP's deputies from different parties. The association functions as an observer and supporter of gender-related legislation in Parliament. It holds a meeting every month.

France

– *Two Parliamentary delegations on women's rights and equal opportunities for women and men*: these delegations were set up under Act No 99-585 of 12 July 1999 in both chambers of the French Parliament. Their tasks include informing the two chambers about the implications of government policy for women's rights and equal opportunities for women and men, monitoring the implementation of legislation and drawing up an annual activity report containing recommendations, etc.

Lithuania

– *Women's Parliamentary Group*: this parliamentary group was established in 1997 and located within Parliament. It consists of 15 members. It initiates legislation and it is involved in parliamentary procedures.

Portugal

– *Parliamentary Committee on Parity, Equal Opportunities and the Family*: This committee was set up by the Parliament elected in 1995 with a term of office equivalent to that of the legislature (4 years). It

endeavours to analyse and study sectorial policies at the national level, define strategies and policy measures to secure equal opportunities, evaluate the implementation of current legislation in the field of parity and equal opportunities and ensure that it is actually applied. It collects information and opinions, accepts reports/opinions from the general public, requests or proposes specialists and carries out information or research assignments.

Slovenia

– *Women's Policy Commission*: The Commission was established within the Slovenian Assembly in 1990. It monitors the position of women and submits proposals before the Government and the Assembly for improving their situation. The Commission members requested that the government set up a ministry or an office for equal opportunities policy. After the 1996 elections, the Commission was renamed Equal Opportunities Policy Commission and set up at committee level in the National Assembly. The mandate it had over the previous six years was extended and it was entrusted with greater competencies in dealing with these matters. The Committee consists of ten members. It performs its tasks in co-operation with independent experts.

Spain

– *Mixed Commission Congress-Senate of the Spanish Parliament*: this Commission, in which the parliamentary groups are represented, is a co-ordinating organ for the promotion, defence and study of issues related to women's rights.

**PART II
INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTS ON WOMEN'S
PARTICIPATION IN POLITICAL LIFE**

**1. AN APPROACH TO DEMOCRACY:
GENDER PARTNERSHIP**

In September 1997, in Cairo, the IPU Council adopted the Universal Declaration on Democracy and urged Governments and Parliaments throughout the world to be guided by its content.

The opening section of the Declaration, entitled „The Principles of Democracy“, states:

„The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences.“

Already in April 1992, in Yaoundé, the IPU Council had stated:

„The concept of democracy will only assume true and dynamic significance when political policies and national legislation are decided upon jointly by men and women with equitable regard for the interests and aptitudes of both halves of the population.“

Again, when summarising in the New Delhi Declaration the outcome of IPU's Specialised Conference "Towards Partnership Between Men and Women in Politics" (New Delhi, February 1997), the Conference President stated:

„As politics is deeply rooted in society and reflects dominant values, our discussions highlighted clearly that developing a partnership in politics necessarily depends on the degree of partnership as a social mode in general. This is undoubtedly why the Inter-Parliamentary Union asserts that what has to be developed, in modern democratic societies, is nothing less than a new social contract in which men and women work in equality and complementarity, enriching each other mutually from their differences. (...) What is basically at stake is democracy itself.“

2. INSTRUMENTS OF INTERNATIONAL LAW CONCERNING WOMEN

The Inter-Parliamentary Union encourages Parliaments and their members to take the necessary measures for States to become parties without reservation to international conventions concerning women and those concerning human rights.

It also encourages them to see to it that national legislation is harmonized with the provisions of those instruments and with international declarations, which are juridical in scope.

- * Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)
- * Convention on Political Rights of Women (1952)
- * International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966)
- * International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966)
- * Declaration on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1967)
- * Declaration on Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict (1974)
- * Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)
- * Declaration on Elimination of Violence against Women (1993)
- * Inter-American Convention for the Prevention, Punishment and Elimination of Violence against Women (Belém do Pará Convention) (1995)
- * Universal Declaration on Democracy (1997)
- * Optional Protocol to the Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1999)

At its 162nd session (Windhoek, 11 April 1998), the Inter-Parliamentary Council took a special decision on the recommendation of women parliamentarians entitled „Parliamentary action for national follow-up to international agreements and treaties regarding women“.

Twice each year, the delegations to IPU statutory Conferences receive information on the status of ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. On many occasions, the IPU has expressed concern over the reservations or interpretative declarations which several States made when adhering to the Convention and which considerably restrict its scope. It encourages MPs to verify whether there are still grounds to maintain such reservations and declarations and to work actively to have them lifted.

In April 1991, the Inter-Parliamentary Conference called on Governments to study the possibility of adding to the Convention a protocol covering the question of violence against women.

The Union welcomed the adoption of the Optional Protocol in 1999 and encouraged ratification through its network of Focal Points in national parliaments on issues relating to the status of women. Since 1999, the ratification and signature status of the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW has been given at each Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

3. ANNEX OF THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Summary of comments by some Member States on the proposed programme of work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women for the biennium 2002–2003.

The Commission considered the draft programme of work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and of the Division for the Advancement of Women for the biennium 2002–2003 (E/CN.6/2001/CRP.2) under agenda item 3 (a).

It was noted that the draft programme of work reflected sub-programme 2 (gender issues and advancement of women) of programme 7 (Economic and social affairs) of the medium-term plan 2002–2005. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly entitled „Further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action“ provided the overall framework. The draft programme of work, in particular the objectives, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement contained in the narrative should be in line with the guidelines established in General Assembly resolution 55/231 on results-based budgeting.

The chief contribution of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and Division for the Advancement of Women was to support efforts to achieve gender equality, the advancement of women and their full enjoyment of their human rights. It was suggested that this should be stated clearly in the objectives. In the same vein, the Secretariat should enhance the capability of States parties, at their request, to comply with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol, as stated under expected accomplishments, including through operational activities. It should also promote the universal ratification of the Convention and withdrawal of reservations, as stated in the relevant indicator of achievement.

The goals and time-bound targets referred to under indicators of achievements were those specified in the Platform for Action and the outcome document of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly.

Appreciation for the development of methodologies for gender mainstreaming was expressed. Special efforts should be made to

mainstream a gender perspective into the work of the United Nations in poverty eradication, to develop a more coherent system of sex disaggregated statistics and indicators and to reach out to civil society. It was also noted that a gender perspective should be mainstreamed in work programmes and activities decided upon or adopted by intergovernmental forums, entities of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organisations and by Member States.

Additional indicators for the first two objectives were suggested, namely an increase in the participation of ministers in the meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women, improved indicators on the status of women in Member States and the establishment of specific mechanisms for the advancement of women. Additional indicators for the third objective include an increase in the number of Member States having prepared national plans to promote gender equality and increased co-ordination with non-governmental organisations in the implementation of the Platform for Action.

4. UNIVERSAL DECLARATION ON DEMOCRACY⁷

Declaration adopted without a vote* by the Inter-Parliamentary Council at its 161st session (Cairo, 16 September 1997)

The Inter-Parliamentary Council,

Reaffirming the Inter-Parliamentary Union's commitment to peace and development and convinced that the strengthening of the democratisation process and representative institutions will greatly contribute to attaining this goal,

Reaffirming also the calling and commitment of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to promoting democracy and the establishment of pluralistic systems of representative government in the world, and wishing to strengthen its sustained and multiform action in this field,

Recalling that each State has the sovereign right, freely to choose and develop, in accordance with the will of its people, its own political, social, economic and cultural systems without interference by other States in strict conformity with the United Nations Charter,

Recalling also the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted on 10 December 1948, as well as the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights adopted on 16 December 1966, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination adopted on 21 December

⁷ Inter-Parliamentary Union, 6–16th March 2001, Original: English

1965 and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women adopted on 18 December 1979,

Recalling further the Declaration on Criteria for Free and Fair Elections which it adopted in March 1994 and in which it confirmed that in any State the authority of the government can derive only from the will of the people as expressed in genuine, free and fair elections, Referring to the Agenda for Democratisation presented on 20 December 1996 by the UN Secretary-General to the 51st session of the United Nations General Assembly,

Adopts the following Universal Declaration on Democracy and urges Governments and Parliaments throughout the world to be guided by its content:

FIRST PART – THE PRINCIPLES OF DEMOCRACY

1. Democracy is a universally recognised ideal as well as a goal, which is based on common values shared by peoples throughout the world community irrespective of cultural, political, social and economic differences. It is thus a basic right of citizenship to be exercised under conditions of freedom, equality, transparency and responsibility, with due respect for the plurality of views, and in the interest of the polity.

2. Democracy is both an ideal to be pursued and a mode of government to be applied according to modalities which reflect the diversity of experiences and cultural particularities without derogating from internationally recognised principles, norms and standards. It is thus a constantly perfected and always perfectible state or condition whose progress will depend upon a variety of political, social, economic, and cultural factors.

3. As an ideal, democracy aims essentially to preserve and promote the dignity and fundamental rights of the individual, to achieve social justice, foster the economic and social development of the community, strengthen the cohesion of society and enhance national tranquillity, as well as to create a climate that is favourable for international peace. As a form of government, democracy is the best way of achieving these objectives; it is also the only political system that has the capacity for self-correction.

4. The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences.

5. A state of democracy ensures that the processes by which power is acceded to, wielded and alternates allow for free political competition and are the product of open, free and non-discriminatory participation by the people, exercised in accordance with the rule of law, in both letter and spirit.

6. Democracy is inseparable from the rights set forth in the international instruments recalled in the preamble. These rights must therefore be applied effectively and their proper exercise must be matched with individual and collective responsibilities.

7. Democracy is founded on the primacy of the law and the exercise of human rights. In a democratic State, no one is above the law and all are equal before the law.

8. Peace and economic, social and cultural development are both conditions for and fruits of democracy. There is thus interdependence between peace, development, respect for and observance of the rule of law and human rights.

SECOND PART – THE ELEMENTS AND EXERCISE OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

9. Democracy is based on the existence of well-structured and well-functioning institutions, as well as on a body of standards and rules and on the will of society as a whole, fully conversant with its rights and responsibilities.

10. It is for democratic institutions to mediate tensions and maintain equilibrium between the competing claims of diversity and uniformity, individuality and collectivity, in order to enhance social cohesion and solidarity.

11. Democracy is founded on the right of everyone to take part in the management of public affairs; it therefore requires the existence of representative institutions at all levels and, in particular, a Parliament in which all components of society are represented and which has the requisite powers and means to express the will of the people by legislating and overseeing government action.

12. The key element in the exercise of democracy is the holding of free and fair elections at regular intervals enabling the people's will to be expressed. These elections must be held on the basis of universal, equal and secret suffrage so that all voters can choose their representatives in conditions of equality, openness and transparency that stimulate political competition. To that end, civil and political rights are essential, and more particularly among them, the rights to vote and to be elected, the rights to freedom of expression and assembly, access to information and the right to organise political parties and carry out political activities. Party organisation, activities, finances, funding and ethics must be properly regulated in an impartial manner in order to ensure the integrity of the democratic processes.

13. It is an essential function of the State to ensure the enjoyment of civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights to its citizens. Democracy thus goes hand in hand with an effective, honest and

transparent government, freely chosen and accountable for its management of public affairs.

14. Public accountability, which is essential to democracy, applies to all those who hold public authority, whether elected or non-elected, and to all bodies of public authority without exception. Accountability entails a public right of access to information about the activities of government, the right to petition government and to seek redress through impartial administrative and judicial mechanisms.

15. Public life as a whole must be stamped by a sense of ethics and by transparency, and appropriate norms and procedures must be established to uphold them.

16. Individual participation in democratic processes and public life at all levels must be regulated fairly and impartially and must avoid any discrimination, as well as the risk of intimidation by State and non-State actors.

17. Judicial institutions and independent, impartial and effective oversight mechanisms are the guarantors for the rule of law on which democracy is founded. In order for these institutions and mechanisms fully to ensure respect for the rules, improve the fairness of the processes and redress injustices, there must be access by all to administrative and judicial remedies on the basis of equality as well as respect for administrative and judicial decisions both by the organs of the State and representatives of public authority and by each member of society.

18. While the existence of an active civil society is an essential element of democracy, the capacity and willingness of individuals to participate in democratic processes and make governance choices cannot be taken for granted. It is therefore necessary to develop conditions conducive to the genuine exercise of participatory rights, while also eliminating obstacles that prevent, hinder or inhibit this exercise. It is therefore indispensable to ensure the permanent enhancement of, inter alia, equality, transparency and education and to remove obstacles such as ignorance, intolerance, apathy, the lack of genuine choices and alternatives and the absence of measures designed to redress imbalances or discrimination of a social, cultural, religious and racial nature, or for reasons of gender.

19. A sustained state of democracy thus requires a democratic climate and culture constantly nurtured and reinforced by education and other vehicles of culture and information. Hence, a democratic society must be committed to education in the broadest sense of the term, and more particularly civic education and the shaping of a responsible citizenry.

20. Democratic processes are fostered by a favourable economic environment; therefore, in its overall effort for development, society must be committed to satisfying the basic economic needs of the most disadvantaged, thus ensuring their full integration in the democratic process.

21. The state of democracy presupposes freedom of opinion and expression; this right implies freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

22. The institutions and processes of democracy must accommodate the participation of all people in homogeneous as well as heterogeneous societies in order to safeguard diversity, pluralism and the right to be different in a climate of tolerance.

23. Democratic institutions and processes must also foster decentralised local and regional government and administration, which is a right and a necessity, and which makes it possible to broaden the base of public participation.

THIRD PART – THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF DEMOCRACY

24. Democracy must also be recognised as an international principle, applicable to international organisations and to States in their international relations. The principle of international democracy does not only mean equal or fair representation of States; it also extends to the economic rights and duties of States.

25. The principles of democracy must be applied to the international management of issues of global interest and the common heritage of humankind, in particular the human environment.

26. To preserve international democracy, States must ensure that their conduct conforms to international law, refrain from the use or threat of force and from any conduct that endangers or violates the sovereignty and political or territorial integrity of other States, and take steps to resolve their differences by peaceful means.

27. A democracy should support democratic principles in international relations. In that respect, democracies must refrain from undemocratic conduct, express solidarity with democratic governments and non-State actors like non-governmental organisations which work for democracy and human rights, and extend solidarity to those who are victims of human rights violations at the hands of undemocratic régimes. In order to strengthen international criminal justice, democracies must reject impunity for international crimes and serious violations of fundamental human rights and support the establishment of a permanent international criminal court.

* * *

* After the Declaration was adopted, the delegation of China expressed reservations to the text.

5. MAINSTREAMING A GENDER PERSPECTIVE INTO ALL POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES IN THE UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM⁸

Andorra*, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Canada*, Chile, Fiji*, Germany, Iceland*, Ireland*, Liechtenstein*, Mexico, Nauru*, New Zealand*, Norway*, Sweden*, Switzerland*, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Vanuatu*: draft resolution

Azerbaijan, Belarus, Brazil, Croatia, Denmark, France, Greece, Hungary, Japan, Lithuania, Malaysia, Malta, Mongolia, Namibia, Papua New Guinea, Romania, Rwanda, Samoa, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, South Africa, Turkey and Venezuela joined in sponsoring the draft resolution

Affirming that gender mainstreaming constitutes a critical strategy in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and for achieving the overall goal of gender equality,

Recalling Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/6 of 22 July 1996, in which the Council decided that the Commission on the Status of Women would have a catalytic role on mainstreaming a gender perspective in policies and programmes and would identify issues where United Nations system-wide co-ordination needed to be improved in order to assist the Council in its co-ordination,

Recalling also its resolution 41/6 of 21 March 1997 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system,

Recalling further Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, in which there was a call for immediate and concrete steps to mainstream a gender perspective, including the implementation of the 1997/2 agreed conclusions as a matter of urgency and at the latest by the time of the five-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2000,

⁸ The Commission on the Status of Women, Agenda item 3 (a)

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": review of mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system

Welcoming General Assembly resolution 55/71 of 4 December 2000, in which the Assembly, *inter alia*, invited the Economic and Social Council to continue policy co-ordination and inter-agency co-operation towards the achievement of the objectives of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, including by considering the dedication of specific segments to the advancement of women and implementation of the above-mentioned documents and by mainstreaming a gender perspective in all its work,

1. Reaffirms that the primary goal of mainstreaming a gender perspective is the achievement of gender equality as affirmed in the Beijing Platform for Action;

2. Reaffirms also that mainstreaming a gender perspective is integral to the empowerment of women and to achieving gender equality and reiterates that responsibility for mainstreaming within the United Nations system starts at the highest level;

3. Welcomes the ongoing commitment of and actions taken by the Secretary-General and entities of the United Nations system to mainstreaming a gender perspective into the United Nations system;

4. Welcomes also the statement on gender equality and mainstreaming in the work of the United Nations system issued by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination at its first regular session of 1998;

5. Welcomes further the work of the Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, particularly its co-ordination and catalytic role in the area of gender mainstreaming, policy analysis in the work programmes of the bodies of the United Nations system, and its work in compiling good practices and guidelines in the area of gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system;

6. Calls upon the Secretary-General, in future reports to the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly on follow-up to and implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, to assess progress made on mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system, including by providing information on key achievements, lessons learned and best practices, and to recommend further actions and strategies for future action within the United Nations system; Recommends that the Economic and Social Council consider:

a) Establishing, in the context of its general segment, a regular item on its agenda on mainstreaming a gender perspective in the United Nations system to, *inter alia*, monitor and evaluate achievements made and obstacles encountered by the United Nations system, and consider further measures to strengthen implementation and monitoring of gender mainstreaming in the United Nations system;

b) Devoting a future co-ordination segment, by 2005, to the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of agreed conclusions

1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system and to identify further strategies to accelerate their implementation, and as part of this review and appraisal, and to request functional commissions to report on the progress made in implementing the agreed conclusions 1997/2 in their work;

c) Ensuring that a gender perspective is mainstreamed into all its work and, in order to enhance its ability to do so, requesting the Secretary-General and bodies reporting to the Economic and Social Council to address the gender aspects of issues before the Council in their reports;

d) Further intensifying its efforts to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of all its activities concerning integrated and co-ordinated follow-up to United Nations conferences, building upon agreed conclusion 1997/2 of the Council.

6. PLAN OF ACTION TO CORRECT PRESENT IMBALANCES IN THE PARTICIPATION OF MEN AND WOMEN IN POLITICAL LIFE⁹

Adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council, the plenary policy-making body of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, at its 154th session (Paris, 26 March 1994).

The Plan of Action is the outcome of reflection within the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), the world organisation of national parliaments. The Inter-Parliamentary Council developed it by means of a working group¹ made up of an equal number of male and female parliamentarians, on the basis of proposals presented by the member Parliaments. The Council adopted the Plan at its 154th session held in Paris on 26 March 1994 as a contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women to be held in Beijing (China) in September 1995.

The Plan of Action is based on the affirmation² that "forty years after the adoption of the Convention on the Political Rights of Women and despite undeniable progress, political and parliamentary life remains dominated by men in all countries". It is also inspired by the following vision of democracy³: "The concept of democracy will only assume true and dynamic significance when political policies and national legislation are decided upon jointly by men and women with equitable regard for the interests and aptitudes of both halves of the population."

It is divided into five main sections:

* Section A covers all that must precede political participation, i.e., the conditions needed for women to participate actively in political life; this section briefly looks into the question of the cultural and religious

⁹ INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION, PLACE DU PETIT-SACONNEX, 1211 GENEVA 19

values of civilisation, education, employment, health and participation in economic life;

* Section B concerns the legal basis for equality of men and women;

* Section C deals with participation in politics at the national level; it covers such issues as action to promote women's "political awareness", respect for the principle of equality in political parties, measures for affirmative action, participation of women in elections, and the sharing of political responsibilities by men and women;

* Section D covers the various aspects of women's participation in the Inter-Parliamentary Union's activities; and

* Section E concerns the mechanism for follow-up and assessment of the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Plan.

In this Plan of Action, emphasis is placed essentially on political participation as such. It is, however, impossible to refer to political participation in isolation, and other indicators relating to the achievement of civil, economic, social and cultural rights must also be taken into account.

Drawn up with a world-wide approach and prepared in the spirit of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies (1985) and of the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), the Plan of Action is conceived as guidelines to inspire and stimulate national action. It takes account of the variety of cultural, religious, political and institutional contexts and aims to offer solutions adapted accordingly. It also contains provisions that directly concern the Inter-Parliamentary Union itself.

The Inter-Parliamentary Council,

Having before it the Plan of Action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life, which was prepared by a Parity Working Group of balanced membership, Considering that the document was drawn up after an extensive process of consultation of the members of the Inter-Parliamentary Union conducted over a period of two years, and in which they took a very active part, Considering that the document resulting from this process proposes concrete solutions to situations common to all countries while offering a wide range of options responding to individual national and regional situations, and that it represents a common denominator acceptable to all countries,

1. Decides to adopt the Plan of Action;

2. Requests National Groups to bring this Plan of Action to the attention of their Parliaments and Governments, particularly in anticipation of the IVth World Conference on Women, to be held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995, and to publicise it to the utmost at the national level;

3. Requests the Secretary General also to ensure the widest possible international circulation of this document, particularly in preparation for and during the Beijing Conference, in order that it may be taken duly into account when the Action Platform to be adopted by that intergovernmental Conference is drawn up.

A. CONDITIONS FOR ACTIVE PARTICIPATION BY WOMEN IN POLITICAL LIFE

An analysis of the available information on the various national realities highlights the fact that, in all parts of the world a certain number of conditions favour or on the contrary hinder women's active involvement in political life. Wider community awareness of issues associated with women's participation in political life is an important aspect of correcting the current imbalance.

I. THE VALUES OF CIVILIZATION AND THEIR TRANSMISSION

To differing degrees, the cultural and religious values of civilisation tend to assign – more or less rigidly – specific roles and tasks to men and to women. Thus, they tend to limit women's participation in political life or even to exclude women from politics, and action in this area remains the most delicate and long-term of all.

Nonetheless, it should be possible, without destabilising cultures or imposing values foreign to the national culture, to enhance or re-enhance women's dignity at the social level and allow the emergence of a more balanced image of the capacity of men and women to participate in the management of both private and public affairs. The following proposals are aimed at that objective.

1. Developing the concepts of parity and partnership

The combination of efforts on the part of all of society's components is indispensable to tackle and resolve the problems facing society. Emphasis should thus be placed on two complementary concepts: the concept of parity which reflects the fact that persons of one or the other sex are different but nonetheless equal; and the concept of partnership, which shows that a creative synergy can be created between men and women so as to tackle the community's problems effectively.

2. Refraining from presenting activities outside and inside the home as conflicting

It is proposed to refrain from presenting the traditional roles and tasks assumed by women at home and her activities outside the home, whether

social, professional, political, or other, as conflicting activities. In this connection, it can be important to recognise and enhance the historical role played by women in society: For example, women's participation in national liberation struggles, in rebuilding the nation after a war, their past and present role in development. Governments should organise public information campaigns for this purpose. To respect the principle of equality, they should also ensure that the portrait of women given in textbooks corresponds to historical fact and is presented with all their potential and achievements. The media could also do much in that respect by disseminating information based on reliable and verified documentation.

Men should support women's participation in social activities and share with them obligations and responsibilities, as well as authority, with regard to housework and the rearing and education of children. This is particularly so when women combine domestic tasks with professional and/or political activities.

It is equally important to recognise and enhance the role and activities of women inside the home. Governments, Parliaments and non-governmental organisations could organise campaigns focusing on the importance of this role and these activities for society. This recognition could even extend to the institution of a method which would place an economic value on work at home and even a system to remunerate such work. The economic value of women's work at home could also be considered as part of the gross national product. Social security protection should be provided for either men or women, including for work at home.

3. Changing the images and models

The images and models of men and women are transmitted through education in the family, formal education, the media and by advertising messages. Action needs to be taken at all these different levels in order to eliminate any suggestion that one sex is superior to the other and, on the contrary, to promote the image of equality and complementarity between the sexes. It is important that the difference should be seen as an advantage and not a limitation.

Regarding participation in politics, some women such as women parliamentarians and those exercising responsibilities in the government – whether at the local, provincial or national levels – can act positively as models. They can show that, without abandoning their traditional roles, women can participate responsibly in political activities and have no need to adopt male behaviour patterns to do so.

4. Harmonising customary and positive law

In all countries where positive law establishes equality between the sexes while customary law tends to disadvantage women, customary law

should be adjusted so as to eliminate any kind of discrimination. It is also important for men and women to receive sufficient information on their rights and responsibilities. Governments could organise public information campaigns for this purpose, for example, through the media.

II. EDUCATION

In a rapidly changing and unstable world, education and training should be broad-based and launched as a system of lifelong learning so as to strike a new balance between practical and academic skills. Furthermore, education should be linked with sustainable development now requiring, among other things, fresh impetus to close the gap between male and female involvement.

1. *Equality of access to schooling for boys and girls*

In all countries where this is not yet the case, it is recommended that measures be taken to facilitate access to schooling for girls, under legal and practical conditions identical to those for boys. In countries where the rate of school attendance for girls is lower than that for boys, the government as well as community and grass-root organisations could organise campaigns to overcome prejudices and to encourage families to send their girls to school in the same way as boys. In some cases, special provisions such as the awarding of grants or special allowances for girls' schooling, or the supply of educational material free of charge, could be adopted to overcome the material obstacles.

2. *Establishment of an identical duration of schooling for boys and girls*

Boys and girls should be subject to the same minimum obligatory period of school attendance.

3. *Adult literacy programmes*

Governments should draw up and implement adult literacy programmes since this would facilitate women's participation in political life.

4. *Educational content*

It is recommended that all education material should be scrutinised so as to eliminate any messages, which give or suggest an image of men's superiority over women; educational material should be the same for boys and girls. In teacher training, special attention should be paid to promoting the principle of equality between men and women and the concepts of parity and partnership. It is recommended that, at appropriate levels of education, the rights of the person be established as a discipline, which would greatly contribute to the further emancipation of women in all respects.

III. HEALTH

Every year, women die from after-effects linked to pregnancy, delivery or abortion, and nearly 99 per cent of these deaths occur in developing countries. This state of affairs not only has an adverse effect on women's availability for participation in political life but also represents a major handicap diverting them from any activity in civilian life.

It is recommended that governments create and reinforce health systems so that such systems may be capable of preventing maternal and child mortality, thus ensuring that mothers do not have this major concern and so can envisage competing in politics. National Parliaments should promote family planning so as to allow women to organise their domestic lives accordingly, as well as their professional and political careers. In the same spirit, national legislation must guarantee the moral and physical integrity of women through stringent legislation and with harsh penalties for conjugal violence and through total prohibition of practices, which physically mutilate women.

IV. EMPLOYMENT AND PARTICIPATION IN ECONOMIC LIFE

Surveys carried out in this field show that in every country where an increase in the number of women in paid employment has been noted such an increase has led to a change in the economic and social structure. Equal pay for equal work and, for women, direct and independent access to credit are powerful tools for obtaining recognition of the equality of sexes and women's economic independence. In general, women who achieve independent economic and social power show greater interest and become more active in politics. Accordingly, it is recommended that measures be taken to promote the access of women to professional training and employment on equal conditions with men. It is further recommended that measures be taken:

- * To facilitate access to bank credits for those women capable of meeting the conditions laid down by the banks;

- * To help women without wages and with low incomes to increase their purchasing power by teaching them entrepreneurial principles and rules and by facilitating contact with national and international private aid organisations that help small-scale enterprises.

B. THE LEGAL BASES FOR EQUALITY

Reference to the relevant international standards will be found attached. All States which have not done so should ratify without delay the Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952) and the

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979), together with, where applicable, regional instruments concerning the status of women. All States should ensure that their national legislation complies with the norms featuring in those instruments. They should further periodically verify the soundness of any reservation expressed at the time of ratification and envisage its prompt lifting. In all these respects, parliamentarians are strongly recommended to use their right of initiative.

I. ENSHRINING THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY IN BASIC LAW

Women's rights come under the category of rights of the person and should be specifically recognised as such in the national Constitution or in any other basic text of constitutional rank. In particular, the principle of equality between men and women should be explicitly spelled out in the national Constitution or in any other basic text of constitutional rank. It is recommended that, in all countries where this is not yet the case, measures be taken to revise these texts in order to include the appropriate provisions. Legislators can play a decisive role in this regard by using their parliamentary right of initiative.

II. ADOPTION OF A SPECIAL LAW PROVIDING FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY

Since the principle of equality applies to all spheres of activity, it is recommended that a special law define the various practical applications, as is already the case in a number of countries. It is possible to incorporate into these law references to pre-existing laws dealing with the principle of equality in such areas as equal pay. It is recommended that this law be drafted in consultation with women's organisations and other associations as well as other organisations, which seek to ensure that the principles of equality and justice prevail and that all citizens participate fully in political, economic, cultural and social life.

III. INSTITUTION OF A MECHANISM TO ENSURE RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY LAID DOWN IN THE LAW

It is recommended that a mechanism to ensure respect for the principle of equality be created by law. In this context, it is suggested that an ombudsman (man or woman) ⁴ may be appointed with responsibility for acting on equality complaints, as is already the case in a number of countries. The ombudsman should be given the legal means and the human and material resources necessary to fulfil his or her responsibilities

IV. CAREFUL CHOICE OF TERMS USED IN THE CONSTITUTION AND THE LAW

Without denying the difference between men and women, the language used in legislation should aim to put men and women on an equal footing, eschewing any discrimination based on the idea of male superiority over the female sex. It is accordingly recommended that basic texts such as the Constitution should be reviewed in order to eliminate any terms or wording which tend to suggest sexual stereotypes. In this connection, legislators can play a decisive role by using their right of parliamentary initiative. In some languages it is necessary to have laws drafted using both the masculine and feminine forms.

C. PARTICIPATION IN POLITICS AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

I. ACTION TO PROMOTE POLITICAL AWARENESS

Women's participation in politics and in the exercise of political responsibilities should be encouraged and facilitated by action to promote awareness, comprising civic and political education, which helps women to know their rights and to become conscious of their capacity to have a direct hand in political life. The Government, Parliament, political parties and organisations, trade unions, non-governmental organisations and the media can all contribute to this process.

1. Government

However specific they may be, women's issues are questions that concern society as a whole. All governments should thus take the necessary steps to ensure that the interests and specific problems of women are explicitly taken into account and dealt with, in a permanent and thorough manner and in all areas pertaining to governmental jurisdiction. It is absolutely essential that the necessary material and human resources are earmarked for this purpose. Part of these resources should be devoted to promoting women's participation in civic life as an integral part of the process of strengthening democracy and the Ministry of Education should specially see to it that proper civic, political and legal education is dispensed from early childhood. Government action in this respect could include educating women to participate in and manage public affairs (see also the section on non-governmental organisations below). One of the priorities of the Government should be to inform the public of all the legal provisions, which establish the principle of equality between men and women, and to ensure that these

are respected. It should also regularly disseminate figures and other data on women in public life and in politics. The governmental policy promoting participation in civic life should be designed and implemented in close consultation with the political parties and professional as well as social community based organisations. The Government should further rely on the media to inform the public of its objectives, its activities and its achievements.

The Government should offer to administrative personnel (men and women) a different type of training so as to promote a positive change in the image that governmental institutions have of equality between men and women.

2. Political parties and organisations and trade unions

Political parties and organisations should carry out public information campaigns on the need for and importance of women's participation in political life as an integral part of the process of strengthening democracy. In this connection, wherever women's branches exist (see section C.II.4, page 13), they could play an effective role. By analysing election results, the parties could assess the advantage of choosing women candidates as well as men candidates who are active in promoting women's participation. Women should be encouraged to become involved in trade unions, as these organisations are powerful informal levers for the control of political power.

3. Non-governmental organisations

Non-governmental organisations should also carry out public information campaigns on the need for and importance of women's participation in political life as an integral part of the process of strengthening democracy. They should undertake campaigns to encourage the population, especially women, to vote. In doing so, they could draw special attention to those candidates (female or male) who are active in promoting women's participation. Like the government body mentioned above and political parties, they could organise training courses for women in public speaking, communication and elocution, negotiating techniques and strategy, leadership, techniques of moderating groups, management of public affairs, contacts with the press, etc. Women should be encouraged to set up organisations to defend their status or multisectoral associations where they could discover the force of feminine solidarity.

4. Media

The contribution which the media can make towards the promotion of awareness is undoubtedly crucial. They can help to instil among the public the idea that women's participation in political life is an essential

part of democracy. They can also take care to avoid giving negative or minimising images of women and their determination and capacity to participate in politics, stressing the importance of women's role in economic and social life and in the development process in general. Law should prohibit any stereotyped presentation of the image of women by any media.

The media can play an important role in such endeavours as removing discrimination and prejudice against women and encouraging them to improve their personal qualities and actively participate in management and decision-making. They should widely publicise the contributions that women have made to the development process of human civilisations and history, introduce to the public positive images of women's characters, encourage women to build confidence, raise women's participation awareness and deplore discrimination and any other conduct detrimental to women's interests.

II. RESPECT FOR THE PRINCIPLE OF EQUALITY WITHIN POLITICAL PARTIES

1. *Basic texts*

It is proposed that the basic texts, for example, those, which define the party's basic policy, its hierarchy and the rules of procedure, should be reviewed in order to eliminate any provision, which explicitly condones or could justify discrimination against women.

2. *Political parties' programmes*

It is suggested that, when drawing up their programmes, parties should pay special attention to the principle of equality between men and women. The programmes should focus on the advantages of active partnership between men and women based on recognition of their difference and complementarity. In this spirit, it is also recommended that parties should aim to eliminate from their programmes any terms or wording which could directly or indirectly imply the notion of superiority of men over women.

3. *Decision-making bodies*

It is proposed that measures be taken to give equally qualified men and women equal opportunities to belong to decision-making bodies at all levels in the party's structure: local, provincial and national. On a strictly interim basis, these measures may include affirmative action measures. Wherever the measure chosen is a quota system, it is proposed that the quota should not target women but that, in a spirit of equity, it may be established that neither sex may occupy a proportion of seats inferior to a given percentage.

4. Women's branches in the parties

Where they exist, women's branches in the parties should have the following as their objectives and functions inter alia:

(i) To constitute a forum for discussing the special problems encountered by women in carrying out their party activities;

(ii) To organise grassroots activities to make women – especially those with a low level of education – aware of their civil and political rights and of the importance and effect of their active participation in political life;

(iii) To prepare women – including those with scant education – to take part in elections by informing them of the issues and explaining how the elections are held in practice;

(iv) To train women to become candidates in local, provincial and national elections; this training could include courses on various aspects of electoral campaigns and preparation for contacts with the media;

(v) To establish networks for support for women candidates at elections and for women elected.

5. Measures to ensure participation in the activities of political parties

It is suggested that, at all levels of their structure (local, provincial and national), political parties should hold a democratic debate on the expediency of adopting special arrangements to facilitate women's participation in meetings and other party activities, as well as to facilitate men's participation in activities in the domestic sphere. The following are some of the arrangements which could be envisaged and which have already been implemented by some parties: (i) Arranging times of meetings so that they do not coincide with the time when priority is usually given to children and the family; (ii) Setting up day-care centres or kindergartens for children, available free of charge; (iii) Fixing and respecting the time for beginning and ending a meeting, which would be stated in advance in the convocation.

6. Creation of an equality committee within parties

It is suggested that parties set up a committee to ensure respect for the principle of equality, including within the party itself. Such a committee must be composed of men and women and not just seen as a women's branch of the party.

III. PARTICIPATION IN ELECTIONS

1. Recognition of women's right to vote and be elected

The rare countries where women do not yet have the right to vote and be elected should take measures to rectify the situation as rapidly as possible. It is recommended that the right to vote and the right to be elected should be given to women at the same time. It is also recommended that, respecting the principle of equality between men and women, the right of

women to vote and be elected should not be subject to any restrictions or conditions other than those, which may also apply to men. In some countries, the level of education is one of the criteria for inclusion on the electoral roll. In countries where a sizeable proportion of the population is illiterate, especially women, it might be advisable to remove this condition while at the same time making an effort to educate the population on the exercise of electoral rights (see section C I and III 2).

2. Exercise of the right to vote

(i) Registration on the electoral roll

Information campaigns should be undertaken by the government, political parties and non-governmental organisations to encourage voters to register on the electoral roll. These campaigns should focus on women because, more frequently than men, they do not know that voting requires prior registration on the electoral roll or, due to lack of information, they are reluctant to take this step. Special action should be undertaken in rural or deprived areas, by the government, political parties and non-governmental organisations. The campaigns should be given widespread publicity by the media.

A clear presentation of the election issues can act as a determinant in deciding voters to register on the electoral roll and to vote.

(ii) Education in order to progress from a passive to an enlightened vote

Campaigns should also be undertaken by the government, political parties and non-governmental organisations to make voters aware of the importance of voting and to enable them to carry out their electoral responsibilities in a conscious rather than passive manner. These campaigns should focus on women.

(iii) Voting by proxy

Voting by proxy is not to be encouraged. Where the electoral law allows for voting by proxy, it is recommended that it should include provisions, which ensure that the voter's choice is not ignored through the practice of the proxy. Accordingly, it is recommended that the electoral law should:

(a) Specifically provide that the voter must be physically unable to vote; and

(b) Specify precisely how in practice voting by proxy functions so that, in particular, the elector's intention to vote by proxy is clearly established. For example: obligation for the holder of the proxy to present a legal authorisation.

3. Effects of the method of voting and of the distribution of seats in Parliament

According to studies on the subject carried out by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, there is no firm and final indication that one particular electoral system is more favourable to women than another. According to many sources, the electoral system or method of voting significantly determines the

share of women elected to Parliament. Although there is no unanimity on this, election results tend to show that in the proportional electoral system, the share of women elected is indeed higher than with the majority system. Whatever system is used, it is recommended that measures be taken to ensure that an equitable number of women are elected to Parliament.

(i) Balance between candidatures from men and women

Whether the system used is the single-member system or that of a list, parties should ensure that there is the greatest possible balance between the number of men and women candidates, on criteria of competence.

(ii) Uninominal voting and voting for a list

When voting is for a list, it is important to ensure that – contrary to a practice that is far too widespread – women are well situated on the list so that they may have a chance of being elected. This is particularly important if the voting method is that of a closed party list, since the voter has then no possibility of indicating his or her preference among the candidates appearing on the list. The position on the list remains an important criterion even in the case of preferential voting, where the voter can decide to place the candidates in a different order to that attributed by the party, and in voting where the voters can "split" their vote among candidates appearing on competing lists so as to make up their own list. Experience tends to prove that in this electoral system the position on the list often influences the voter's choice and those higher up on the list have a greater chance of being elected. Provisions should be introduced so as enable the community to assess the merits of candidates and convey their views to the parties prior to the elections.

(iii) Putting forward candidatures

Since experience shows that women's candidatures meet with increasing success among voters, it would appear to be in the interests of parties to include women among their candidates at elections. In order to assess better the expediency of women's candidatures, the parties should be asked to analyse election results in the light of this criterion. When putting forward candidates, it is recommended that parties choose the constituencies carefully to ensure that they are not disadvantageous to women. This recommendation is not only addressed to parties with a wide electoral base but also to minority parties. The importance of women candidates in local and municipal elections should be stressed as this is a very effective way for women to enter and acquire experience in political life.

(iv) Support for candidates

Parties and non-governmental organisations, especially women's organisations, should ensure that candidates for election are given the support indispensable for the success of their campaign. In the case of parties, equal support – including financial support – should be given to men and women candidates for election. Women's branches of the parties can further provide women with a very effective network of support (see section C II.4).

4. *Adoption of measures for affirmative action*

On a strictly interim basis, affirmative action measures may be taken. Wherever the measure chosen is a quota system, it is proposed that the quota should not target women but that, in a spirit of equity, it may be established that neither sex may occupy a proportion of seats inferior to a given percentage.

IV. SHARING OF POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY

1. *In Government – at the local, provincial and national levels*

The participation of a proportion of women in government should be established as one of the rules of democracy. All governments should thus include a proportion of women. Men and women alike are fitted to hold government office in any sector whatever. Accordingly, posts allocated to women should not be confined to particular sectors but should be in any area (social affairs, foreign affairs, finance, interior, defence, etc.).

2. *In Parliament – at the local, provincial and national levels*

(i) Legislative action

The creation of a parliamentary committee whose specific terms of reference would be to deal with issues relating to the status of women can make an important contribution towards ensuring that special and permanent attention is paid to implementation of the principle of equality in all national legislation. In conformity with the principle of equality and based on the concept of partnership, such a committee should always be composed of both men and women.

(ii) Measures to ensure equitable distribution of responsibilities in Parliament

The governing body of the Parliament and parliamentary groups should be made aware of the need to ensure an equitable proportional distribution of posts in Parliament between men and women.

(iii) Trans-party women's groups

As a transitional measure until such time as a better balance between men and women in parliament is reached, the creation of an informal trans-party group of women parliamentarians can help to ensure that women legislators' views are taken into account when defining priorities, drafting legislation and allocating posts to be filled.

V. CELEBRATION OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

The United Nations proclaimed 8 March International Women's Day and this should be marked by special events: special ceremony, national campaign, adoption of a text by the Parliament, etc. It is important for such events to be reported by the media in order to bring the event to the public's attention.

D. WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION'S ACTIVITIES

The following proposals are only conceivable in relation to the situation and corresponding measures within each National Group.

I. COMPOSITION OF DELEGATIONS TO INTER-PARLIAMENTARY MEETINGS

National Groups must take special care to respect the provisions of Article 11.1 of the IPU Statutes, which states that "The Conference shall be composed of members of Parliament designated as delegates by their National Groups, including if possible at least one woman if the Group has women members". Non-observance of this rule should be the exception and solely as the result of special circumstances such as the unavailability of women parliamentarians. This statutory provision, which is for statutory meetings, must be taken into account when deciding upon delegations for non-statutory inter-parliamentary meetings, whether global or regional, and even if the delegation to those meetings is usually composed of fewer members than for a statutory conference.

II. SHARING OF RESPONSIBILITIES WITHIN THE UNION

The provisions recently adopted in order to achieve a balance between the number of men and women in the Executive Committee (Article 23.2 of the Statutes) and in the drafting committees of the Conference's Committees (Article 15 of the Rules of the Committees) should be strictly respected. They may be strengthened by other provisions concerning the representation of National Groups in the Inter-Parliamentary Council and ad hoc or specialised bodies, for example:

1. Inter-Parliamentary Council

There are still very few women among the members of the Inter-Parliamentary Council. The National Groups should therefore be encouraged to appoint women as Council members. As a transitional measure and until there is a better sharing of seats between men and women in the Council, each regional grouping represented in the Parity Working Group that drafted the present Plan of Action could be asked to nominate two women to represent it on the Inter-Parliamentary Council in addition to the two members representing each National Group. These twelve regional representatives could take part with full rights in the discussions and voting in the Council. To that end, the Inter-Parliamentary Council decides that the procedure for the amendment of the IPU Statutes and Rules, as defined in Article 27 of the Statutes, be initiated.

2. Special committees, working groups and other non-statutory bodies

Special care must be taken to ensure that every special committee, working group or other non-statutory body includes at least one woman. A provision to this effect could be included in the Rules.

III. STUDY OF WOMEN'S ISSUES

Items concerning women will be placed more often on the agenda of statutory conferences. Whenever a question specifically related to the rights of women is included in the agenda of an Inter-Parliamentary Conference, the Inter-Parliamentary Council may decide to include a number of competent international non-governmental organisations in the list of observers for the session in question.

IV. REPORTS AND STUDIES CONCERNING
THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The studies carried out to date by the Inter-Parliamentary Union on the basis of questionnaires sent to all National Parliaments have provided a valuable means of assessing the situation. Surveys on the distribution of seats between men and women in National Parliaments and on the various aspects of women's participation in political life will continue to be carried out every four years on the basis of data transmitted by the existing national Parliaments, whether or not represented by a National Group within the Union, in reply to a questionnaire.

V. RESULTS OF WORK BY THE
MEETING OF WOMEN PARLIAMENTARIANS

The agenda of each of the Inter-Parliamentary Council's biannual sessions will in future include an oral report on the work, results and recommendations of the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians.

VI. CONVENING OF AN INTER-PARLIAMENTARY
MEETING ON WOMEN

Bearing in mind the success and long-term effects of the symposium held in 1989, the Inter-Parliamentary Council shall include in the Union's programme and budget a symposium-type meeting on „Towards partnership between men and women in politics“, to be held preferably before the IVth World Women's Conference which will take place in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995 (14). The Inter-Parliamentary Council decides that this world symposium, which should be organised in co-operation with the United Nations, shall comprise regional workshops

to allow an in-depth exchange of views among men and women from countries with similar situations and the search for solutions to the specific problems identified.

VII. VOCABULARY USED

The Union's Statutes and Rules will need to be reviewed to ensure that the vocabulary and the terms used can in no way be construed as suggesting the superiority of one sex over another. The IPU Secretary General, in consultation with the Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, should be asked to make proposals for any necessary changes. The same criterion shall be applied to all the Inter-Parliamentary Union's documents.

VIII. THE IPU AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL PARLIAMENTARY BODIES

The IPU should encourage other international parliamentary bodies to use the guidelines of the present Plan of Action in their activities. This will help establish an international machinery for gender equality seeking to collect and disseminate information and research, create model policies and support the cross-national networking of the national equality policy machinery.

E. MECHANISM FOR THE FOLLOW-UP AND EVALUATION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PLAN OF ACTION

The implementation of this Plan of Action should be evaluated periodically. Such evaluations should be carried at five-yearly intervals in the light of national reports.

Within the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the responsibility for examining these reports will be entrusted to a Parity Working Group set up specifically to this end. The views and recommendations formulated by this Parity Working Group will be examined by the Inter-Parliamentary Council and transmitted for action to the Parliaments of the countries concerned.

F. INTERNATIONAL JURIDICAL INSTRUMENTS AND OTHER DOCUMENTS ATTACHED TO THE PLAN OF ACTION

* Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): relevant excerpts

* Convention on the Political Rights of Women (1952): full text

- * International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1960): relevant excerpts
- * Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979) : relevant excerpts
- * Strategies for the Advancement of Women – World Conference to review and appraise the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi (1985): relevant excerpts
- * Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action – World Conference on Human Rights (1993): relevant excerpts
- * African Charter on Human Rights and People’s Rights (1981): relevant excerpts
- * American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man (1948): relevant excerpts
- * American Convention of Human Rights (1969): relevant excerpts
- * Inter-American Convention on the Granting of Political Rights to Women (1948): full text
- * European Convention for the protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (1950): relevant excerpts
- * (European) Declaration on Equality of Women and Men (1988): full text

7. PROPOSED SYSTEM-WIDE MEDIUM-TERM PLAN FOR ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, 2002–2005

The Commission on the Status of Women,

Recalling the Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/34 of 25 July 1996 in which the Council requests the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, to formulate a new system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women to cover the period 2002–2005, to submit the new draft plan to the Council at its substantive session of 2000 in order to provide guidance for the medium-term plans of the individual organisations of the United Nations system, and to submit the draft plan to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-fourth session for comment;

Further recalling Council resolution 1999/16 in which the Council invites the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, to formulate the above-mentioned plan for 2002–2005 in two phases – a first phase consisting of an assessment of activities undertaken by the United Nations system and of obstacles encountered and lessons learned from the present plan and the system-wide process of its implementation, and the second phase consisting of a new plan that reflects the growing emphasis on action and delivery;

Recognising the role of the Council in overseeing the system-wide co-ordination in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

Recalling that Governments have the primary responsibility for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

Further recalling that the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly need to be implemented through the work of all of the organisations and bodies of the United Nations system as an integral part of system-wide programming;

Recognising that the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly call upon the specialised agencies and other organisations of the United Nations system to strengthen their support for actions at the national level and to enhance their contributions to co-ordinated follow-up by the United Nations, each organisation should set out the specific actions that it will undertake, including goals and targets to realign priorities and redirect resources to meet the global priorities identified in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the special session of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, with a clear delineation of responsibility and accountability, all of which should be reflected in the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 2002–2005, and stressing in this connection the need for appropriate mechanisms for co-ordination and co-operation;

Aware that the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly stress that the responsibility for ensuring its implementation and the integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system must rest at the highest levels;

1. *Takes note of* the report of the Secretary-General on the proposed System-wide Medium term Plan for the Advancement of Women 2002–2005;

2. *Stresses* that the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 2002–2005 should be an effective instrument for promoting the coordinated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

2 bis. *Takes note also of* the report of the Secretary-General on the assessment of the implementation of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women 1996–2001;

3. *Recommends* the adoption of the proposed system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 2002–2005 by the Economic

and Social Council taking into account the present resolution and comments of the Committee for Programme and Co-ordination and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination as well as taking note of comments by some member states of the Commission on the Status of Women as contained in the annex to the report of the Commission on the Status of Women;

4. *Stresses* the importance of gender mainstreaming, *inter alia* institutional follow-up and capacity-building, as a critical strategy in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and for achieving the overall goals of gender equality;

5. *Emphasizes* the importance of a coherent and strategic approach to the actions planned to address the strategic objectives spelt out under each critical area of concern; as well as integrating a gender perspective into policies and programmes of entities of the United Nations system.

6. *Recommends* that the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 2002–2005 serve as a monitoring and co-ordination tool at all levels for system-wide progress in implementing actions under each critical area of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

7. *Stresses* the importance of involving all parts of the United Nations in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly; including at the highest decision-making levels;

8. *Invites* the United Nations bodies that meet under the auspices of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination to regularly discuss progress made in implementing activities under each area of critical concern, taking into account the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women for 2002–2006 and the Economic and Social Council, and to provide up-to-date information in those areas to the Council through the Commission, taking into consideration the comments made on the plan by the Commission and other relevant bodies;

9. *Recommends* that the Council, through the Commission, follow-up the implementation of the plan and undertake a comprehensive mid-term review of the implementation of the plan in 2004 including the identification of obstacles and challenges as a basis for future programming and co-ordination of activities for the advancement and empowerment of women by the United Nations system, including a review of the progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective in all activities of the United Nations system;

10. *Recommends* that the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination and the Inter-Agency Meeting on Women and Gender Equality use the plan and comments on it as a basis for monitoring increasing collaboration and

cost-effective approaches to United Nations system activities for the advancement and empowerment of women, including assessment of methods for mainstreaming a gender perspective in all United Nations activities, ensuring accountability and carrying out impact analyses of gender-sensitive programmes and policies;

11. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all United Nations activities system-wide, including in decision-making as part of the accountability of senior managers;

12. *Further requests* the Secretary-General, in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, to integrate a gender perspective in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes and to assure adequate financing of specific programmes for securing equality between women and men;

13. *Recommends* that the Council request formulation of a new system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women to cover the period 2006–2010, and that the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chairperson of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination, submit the new draft plan to the Council at its substantive session of 2005 in order to provide guidance to the medium-term plans of the individual organisations of the United Nations system, and that the draft of the proposal be submitted to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session for comment;

8. SPECIALIZED INTER-PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE „TOWARDS PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN IN POLITICS“¹⁰

Concluding statement by the President on the outcome of the Conference

1. Is partnership possible between men and women in politics? Is it a source of more full-fledged and representative democracy? How can it be achieved? What benefit can society as a whole derive from this new way of imagining and conducting the political administration of countries?

2. These are the questions, which the Inter-Parliamentary Union asked us to debate and for which the Parliament of India, which is in the process of reflecting on this subject, invited you here to New Delhi.

3. All our work was naturally inspired by the results of the Fourth World Conference on Women which took place in Beijing in September

¹⁰ Organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union New Delhi (India), 14–18 February 1997

1995; our meeting was designed to maintain the momentum and ensure the implementation of the commitments made by Governments on that occasion. During our debates, we have extended and amplified the content of the Beijing Parliamentary Declaration and the IPU *Plan of Action to correct present imbalance in the participation of men and women in political life*.

4. During four days of intense debate, we pooled the diversity of our experiences, our reflections, our doubts and our suggestions. To nourish our discussions, the Inter-Parliamentary Union had provided a world comparative study and a poster entitled "*Men and Women in Politics: Democracy Still in the Making*", which constitute an irreplaceable tool for reflection.

5. The Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Indian Parliament encouraged the formation of parity delegations. I am particularly proud to note that the 78 national delegations, which participated in the Conference, were composed of 121 men and 119 women. Never before to my knowledge has an international meeting achieved such a degree of parity, never before has a conference on a topic concerning women allowed such a dialogue between equals, not only in rights but also in numbers. As Speaker of a Parliament, I can only hope that all our Parliaments and our international meetings will, like this one, increasingly come to resemble our societies and take on a parity nature.

6. I also wish to point out that we had the chance to engage in a dialogue on this important question with men and women from the broadest spectrum of political and cultural backgrounds. 133 political parties were in fact represented at the Conference together with nine independents.

7. The presence and active participation of men and women representing several non-governmental organisations greatly enriched the debates of the Conference. The capital role, which they play in the field to promote the establishment of parity democracy, was highlighted on several occasions; they should therefore be encouraged and supported in the action they carry out in very diverse areas. In particular, we felt that it was essential for them to continue and strengthen their scrutiny of the political process.

8. As politics is deeply rooted in society and reflects dominant values, our discussions highlighted clearly that developing a partnership in politics necessarily depends on the degree of partnership as a social mode in general. This is undoubtedly why the Inter-Parliamentary Union asserts that what has to be developed, in modern democratic societies, is nothing less than a new social contract in which men and women work in equality and complementarity, enriching each other mutually from their differences.

9. To address this deficit, a major shift in the mind-set of both men and women is needed. This would generate a positive change of attitudes

towards women and lead to a new balance in society at large and in politics in particular.

10. It goes without saying that women's political rights must be considered in the overall context of human rights and cannot be dissociated therefrom. Men and women politicians, governments and parliaments must pursue their efforts towards the recognition of these rights and the implementation of the international instruments, which relate to them.

11. What is basically at stake is democracy itself.

12. It would appear that we are still far from a world in which the governing bodies of our political parties, which play a decisive role in political life, as well as our governments and our Parliaments are precise mirrors of our societies as regards the proportion of men and women. Nearly all delegates stated that the Constitutions of their countries provided for equality between men and women in all spheres of life. However, all those who spoke affirmed that, in politics, there was a huge gap between law and practice with regard to the principle of equality.

13. In different ways, many of us have however asserted that the integration of women in political life at all levels favours the democratisation of politics and that women, in turn, find that democracy offers them opportunities to become better integrated in the political process.

14. It was stressed that, as already stated in a United Nations study, the situation would improve appreciably if the number of women in Parliament reached a certain threshold figure. This "critical mass" was evaluated at 30 per cent, which has also been borne out by the experience in the Nordic countries. It seemed that this "critical mass" and, even more, parity could not be achieved in Parliaments as long as political parties fail to put forward a sufficient number of women candidates with real chances of being elected.

15. Parties were asked to become more open to women and more receptive to their demands. Indeed, women find it very difficult to obtain a seat on party structures, which have evolved and operate according to basically masculine criteria.

16. Many participants favoured the introduction of quota systems to promote women's access to the governing bodies of parties where, on average, they account for scarcely 10 per cent.

17. The views on quotas were divergent. Those who favoured them stressed the need for quotas at all levels where decisions are actually taken, from parties to the national Parliament, Government and administration. It is clear to us all that quotas are only a necessary evil which should be applied on a temporary basis in order to redress the current dramatic imbalance between men and women and that they should be abolished once the desired effect has been achieved.

18. A clear consensus emerged in favour of quotas targeting candidatures rather than seats in Parliament, and in favour of them being established by parties rather than by Parliament, although the law had the advantage of making them binding on all parties. It was felt that, in order to reduce the discriminatory nature of quotas which makes them so disturbing for many of us, they should be gender neutral.

19. Several delegates further stressed the need for other mechanisms such as, wherever appropriate, the reservation of a certain percentage of seats in local and national representative institutions to compensate for women's poor chances of being elected.

20. With regard to parliamentary elections, many delegates stated that the proportional representation system or a mixed electoral system gives women much greater chances of being elected than the first-past-the-post system. Political parties were, however, asked to ensure that women are well placed on electoral lists – particularly on closed lists – and that they stand in constituencies where they have a reasonable chance of being elected.

21. Parties were further asked to take measures to facilitate the equal participation of men and women in their activities, taking account of the family responsibilities of both sexes. On this subject, many speakers pointed out the importance of day-care centers and kindergartens, as well as other facilities that should be made available, enabling the requirements of both political and family life to be reconciled. The generalisation of paternity leave was also proposed.

22. Another issue, which figured prominently in the debate, was the fact that men and women share paid and unpaid work very unequally. It still remains true that women carry out the vast majority of the unpaid work, largely housework, whereas men carry out most of the paid work. Moreover, recent surveys indicate that women work longer hours than men. It was strongly suggested that this issue must be addressed if progress is to be achieved in women's representation in political life, which is another time-consuming activity. It was therefore suggested that proposals be placed on each national agenda to achieve a fair sharing between men and women in unpaid work.

23. As in a *leitmotiv*, women's education was mentioned in all debates and by virtually all speakers of either sex as one of the preconditions for the integration of more women in political life. This education should be provided for men as much as for women in order to break down patriarchal mind-sets and should start at a very early age.

24. In addition, a lengthy debate was devoted more particularly to women's political and electoral training. It goes without saying that such training is equally indispensable for men and for women, but it emerged from the debate that pre-training is required for women. This training should target three aspects.

- First of all, the exercise of citizenship should begin at school age so that participation in political life is not reduced merely to depositing a vote in a ballot box at more or less regular intervals; on the contrary, it implies a lasting commitment and contribution to the building of a more just society.

- The ability to stand for election and to conduct an electoral campaign implies gaining the necessary self-confidence, putting together the requisite moral, material and logistical support in the political party and informal support networks and, lastly, winning the voters' trust.

- Learning the use of parliamentary procedures so as to be able to fulfil electoral commitments.

25. Other important recommendations made during the debate, included:

- Training should be provided to both women and men and trainers should also be drawn from each sex. Substantial efforts must be made so that the necessary funds are provided for that purpose.

- The responsibility for training involves several sectors. Political parties should mobilise and appeal to women candidates and should set up training programmes suited to their needs. Universities, NGOs and associations also play a fundamental role, particularly women's associations which rely on men and women who can share the wealth of their experiences. Parliaments are another valuable actor which provide training to newly elected MPs in order to help them prepare for their parliamentary duties.

- Training should focus on the working of government, the building of democracy and problems tied to social relations between men and women, and pertain to such topics as communications, campaign organisation, work with volunteers, medias and NGOs, and the role of political parties. One particularly important type of training involves learning how to examine the national budget so as to understand its different components and determine the extent to which it takes into account the needs of women.

- Education programmes should convey the philosophy inherent in human rights, the fight against stereotyped roles, and should be followed by training components comprising elements of legal and political literacy.

26. It was suggested that a directory of institutions world-wide that are able to provide political training for women should be prepared, and it was likewise proposed that training manuals or modules for women politicians should be established. It was also pointed out that the use of local languages for such manuals, as indeed for the relevant national texts (electoral laws etc.), would be tools of great advantage, particularly in large societies which include diverse ethnic or linguistic communities. Several delegates mentioned the great importance of education and training in order to help women overcome the perceived lack of self-confidence, which too often makes them reluctant to come forward into the political arena. Moreover, the importance of providing specialised training for political workers was also mentioned.

27. We devoted much attention to the financing of women's electoral campaigns.

28. Many calls were made to reduce the exorbitant costs of campaigns. This would clearly level the playing field for women but would need to be closely monitored to ensure that limits are respected. Reductions could be achieved not only by placing a cap or ceiling on spending but also by shortening the time for campaigning. Some also argued for the introduction of reduced rates for the use of media time in campaigns.

29. Many delegates expressed the view that women have everything to gain from a cleaner and more transparent system of financing of both nomination and electoral campaigns and it was proposed that all countries should, if they have not already done so, introduce appropriate legislation to regulate funding from all sources, whether public, business, foundations or private.

30. The general lack or the scarcity of funding for women's campaigns led to various interesting recommendations:

- Political parties should, as a matter of principle, put forward at least one-third women candidates and allocate to them one-third of their campaign resources.

- Political parties and international financial institutions such as the World Bank should establish special funds, which can be used to offer cash contributions or interest-free loans to women candidates or to reimburse their campaign expenses.

- The establishment of systems for at least partial public funding of campaigns should be generalised.

- Wherever public funding of political parties is possible, incentives should be put in place, i.e., the amount of funding or refunding of election campaign expenses should be linked to the percentage of women candidates put forward by each party and/or elected to Parliament.

- In those countries where funding is provided to parliamentary political groups, an additional premium should be foreseen, linked to the proportion of women MPs.

- The establishment of foundations for financing women's electoral campaigns should be encouraged and developed.

31. It has been said time and time again that in politics, commitment, active ongoing presence and conviction can make up for insufficient resources, including financial means, and that good media coverage does as much to win an election as large sums of money.

32. Today, the media also play a very important role in politics. No politician, man or woman, can disregard or minimise them. This is why we debated the image of women politicians in the media. As was stated by the Moderator of the lively debate on this topic between media representatives and political figures – Mrs. Dahl, the Speaker of the Swedish Parliament – our discussion was punctuated by the traditional

topics of the love-hate relationship between the media and the political class and the mutual lack of understanding as to the priorities and concerns of each side. The dominant feeling was that each side has to go some way to meet the other.

33. Emphasis was placed on the need, in particular, to provide media training for women both so that they can better understand the working and priorities of the media and also so that they can learn how to get their message across. The media in fact tend to focus on people who are identified with a cause without paying attention to their gender. On the other hand, the media were invited to look into the way they portray women in general, as well as women politicians in particular, and to adopt a new outlook. If the media are aware that integrating women in politics reinforces democracy, they should, having a crucial and increasingly important role to play in the democratic process, strive to get this message across in every possible way.

34. Our main conclusion is that it is necessary to bring about a radical change in attitudes so that the image of women politicians which is relayed by the media should not be restricted only to their identity as women but should portray them as real actors in political life.

35. Some concrete suggestions were put forward, and are summed up below:

- Parliaments and political parties should organise public relations sessions on the image of women politicians in the media.
- The authorities should reform their communications policy so as to take fuller account of the social imbalances between men and women and give a more accurate image of women politicians.
- Journalists should, when covering political subjects, take pains not to interview exclusively men politicians.
- An annual prize should be awarded to press bodies, which prove their impartiality in covering women and men politicians.

36. Several delegates referred to the importance of networking among women politicians, both nationally and regionally and to the action that senior women politicians who play a model role can take in order to encourage other women to enter the political arena.

37. It was suggested that this could be facilitated through National Commissions for Women, which should be established wherever such structures are currently lacking. It was felt that considerable force could be generated if women parliamentarians combine their efforts to ensure that policies in all fields take account of the women's perspective. The role of networking in helping to train new women members of Parliaments was also stressed. It was felt that the momentum which had been generated since the Beijing Conference and over the last few days by the Conference here in New Delhi could be further advanced by the holding of regional meetings of MPs to discuss particular aspects of the question.

38. It was recommended that every State should set up a multidisciplinary advisory board having a supervisory function to ensure that the interests and needs of women are taken into account in every field.

39. As regards possible action to be taken by Parliaments, it was suggested that they should create special committees in charge of monitoring national, international and regional provisions regarding the rights of women, or committees on women's affairs. Parliaments should ensure the adoption of legislation regarding the implementation of women's rights. They should also work out, together with their governments, strategies for progress to be made towards the realisation of equal partnership between men and women. Parliamentarians should also support women's NGOs.

40. The success of this Conference has encouraged us to recommend that the Inter-Parliamentary Union should do everything to ensure that broad publicity is given to these findings and their follow-up, and to increase activities to promote women's integration in political life.

41. One aspect of this integration concerns the participation of women in equal numbers with men in the work of all international bodies. With regard more especially to the IPU, Member Parliaments were strongly urged to ensure that the provisions of Article 11.1 of the Union's Statutes are strictly respected regarding the presence of women in their delegations.

42. Strengthening the Union's co-operation with the United Nations Division on the Status of Women was also proposed as a practical follow-up to the Agreement of Co-operation recently concluded between the IPU and the UN.

43. The idea of holding regional meetings along the lines of the New Delhi Conference in co-operation with the regional institutions concerned was also put forward, and the IPU was encouraged to continue to carry out research and comparative world studies such as the one presented to the Conference. It was proposed that these initiatives might be carried out with the support of UNESCO on questions such as women politicians and the media.

9. DECLARATION ON EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN AS A FUNDAMENTAL CRITERION OF DEMOCRACY¹¹

The Ministers of the States participating in the 4th European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men (Istanbul, 13–14 November 1997)

– Considering that the principles of pluralist democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights – which are the guiding principles of the Council of Europe – constitute the basis for their co-operation;

¹¹ Council of Europe: 4th Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men

– Bearing in mind the major political changes that have taken place in Europe during recent years, leading to the enlargement of the Council of Europe and to the profound transformation of European societies;

– Noting that the Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Council of Europe, meeting in Strasbourg on 10 and 11 October 1997 for the Organisation's Second Summit, stressed „the importance of a more balanced representation of men and women in all sectors of society, including political life,“ and called for „continued progress with a view to achieving effective equality of opportunities between women and men“;

– Recalling the commitments entered into by the member States of the Council of Europe under the European Convention on Human Rights and in the Declaration on equality of women and men of 16 November 1988, reiterated in the message of the Committee of Ministers (11 July 1995) to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 1995);

– Reaffirming their commitment to the goals and recommendations set forward in the texts adopted by the international community at the United Nations World Conferences held during the 1990s, in particular those contained in the strategic objectives of the Platform for Action adopted at the Beijing Conference, as well as in the strategic objectives of the Regional Platform for Action adopted at the High-Level Regional Preparatory meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women (Vienna, October 1994);

– Noting, however, with grave concern that, in spite of the significant changes in the status, the role and the contributions of women in society during the second half of this century, the distribution of power, responsibilities and access to resources between women and men is still very unequal;

– Taking as their starting point the texts adopted at the 1st, 2nd and 3rd European Ministerial Conferences on equality between women and men (Strasbourg, 1986, Vienna, 1989 and Rome, 1993) as well as the results of the Conference "Equality and democracy: Utopia or challenge?" (Strasbourg, February 1995) and in general the work of the Council of Europe on the subject of equality and democracy;

– Recalling the Recommendation No R (96) 5 of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on reconciling work and family life;

– Stressing that, as society is equally composed of women and men and that one of the most structural diversities of people is gender, the balanced representation of women and men in political decision-making would ensure a better functioning of a democratic society;

– Emphasising that the work towards the achievement of equality between women and men should no longer be considered as a women's issue but involve all members of society, women and men, fully and become the concern of society as a whole;

– Taking into consideration the need for men's greater contribution to the promotion of equality between women and men;

AGREE ON THE FOLLOWING:

The strengthening of democracy requires that its principles be deepened and clarified in a never-ending dynamic process of search for and commitment to the full promotion and protection of human rights – civil, political, economic, social and cultural – for all people;

The achievement of equality between women and men is an integral part of the process leading to a genuine democracy. As a prerequisite, the participation of all members of society, women and men, in all walks of life, has to be fully secured. Democracy must become gender aware and gender sensitive;

This includes gender-balanced representation as a demand for justice and a necessity for attaining genuine democracy, which can no longer afford to ignore the competence, skills and creativity of women;

Some of the barriers which women face in connection with their participation and gender-balanced representation in political and public life are due to the structure and functioning of electoral systems and political institutions, mainly political parties. Change in this field can only come about through the empowerment of women and a constructive dialogue with men, leading them to understand the urgency of deep reform in the forms of political representation and decision-making which now show under-representation of women;

The marginalisation of women in public life and democracy is a structural factor that is linked to the unequal distribution of economic and political power between women and men and to attitudinal stereotypes regarding the social roles of women and men. These stereotyped social roles limit the scope for both women and men to realise their potential;

Equality requires a positive, dynamic challenge to the established power structures and to stereotyped sex roles so as to achieve structural change at all levels and, ultimately, a new social order;

Men have an important part to play in achieving equality between women and men, especially when they are decision-makers;

Greater participation by men in the sphere of private life, in caring responsibilities, especially the everyday care of children, family and home, as well as a more equal sharing of responsibilities for decision-making in political, public and professional life with women would improve the quality of life for all.

The Ministers,

1. AGREE that the goal must be to achieve a democracy in which women and men are equal, leading to a deeper realisation of justice and universal human rights, as well as to the enrichment of democracy through gender-balanced representation;

2. AGREE that this goal should be pursued through specific, multidisciplinary strategies, concerning political and public life and all other walks of life, through the empowerment of women and through partnerships of women and men working towards the common goal of equality;

3. AFFIRM that the realisation of equality between women and men is the task not just of governments, but also that of society as a whole;

4. EMPHASISE the need to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies and programmes at all levels, in order to identify the impact on women and men and to improve and develop decision-making;

5. UNDERLINE that the allocation of adequate human and financial resources for gender mainstreaming from all funding resources needs to be ensured for a successful translation of this concept into practice;

6. EMPHASISE, as an important prerequisite to mainstreaming, the need to improve knowledge on men and women in all their living conditions by promoting studies and statistics on men and women in a gender perspective;

7. UNDERLINE the role men have to play in the realisation of equality and agree that specific strategies for men are to be developed;

8. AGREE that new activities aiming at promoting the role of men in the realisation of equality should be complementary to current activities in the field of equality between women and men;

9. AGREE on the indicative list of multidisciplinary strategies aimed at equality between women and men as a fundamental criterion of democracy, which is appended to this Declaration;

10. ENCOURAGE governments, and all institutions and groups concerned, in particular the social partners and senior public officials, to implement, strengthen and support initiatives based on the appended strategies;

11. RECOMMEND the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe to take all necessary measures for the achievement of the objectives set out in this Declaration, in particular:

in the field of intergovernmental co-operation:

– Devise, launch and promote public campaigns to alert public opinion to the usefulness and advantages for society as a whole of gender balanced representation by women and men in decision-making;

– Encourage and organise pooling of information and experience between member States of good practice and assessment of impact of measures taken to achieve a gender balanced representation of women and men in decision-making;

– Promote and carry out research, including a gender impact assessment of electoral systems to identify measures to counter the under-representation of women in decision-making;

- Organise meetings, seminars and conferences, at which men and women discuss together different subjects in an equality perspective, with a view to elaborate a vision for the future, a vision of a post-patriarchal society;

- In the framework of its work for combating violence against women, consider preparing a European legal instrument on this subject;

- Invite the Council for Cultural Co-operation (CDCC) and its Education Committee (CC-ED) to set up a Joint Group of Specialists together with the Steering Committee for equality between women and men (CDEG) aimed at promoting gender equality education and non-stereotyped education at all levels of the education system;

within the Secretariat of the Council of Europe:

- Promote a gender-balanced representation of women and men at all levels within the Council of Europe;

- Encourage targets for the achievement of a critical mass of women in decision-making positions within the Council of Europe.

Furthermore, the Ministers recommend that the Committee of Ministers:

- Promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in all Council of Europe bodies and activities and encourage all bodies which deal with programme and budgetary matters to ensure, in their work, the visible mainstreaming of a gender perspective;

- Ensure that the realisation of equality between women and men is a part of the monitoring of member States' fulfilment of their democratic obligations.

**APPENDIX TO THE DECLARATION
MULTIDISCIPLINARY STRATEGIES AIMING AT
PROMOTING EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN
AS A FUNDAMENTAL CRITERION OF DEMOCRACY**

A. EQUALITY IN POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE

Governments are invited to:

In order to inform and sensitise the public opinion:

- Table a political statement explaining that the equal sharing of decision-making power between women and men strengthens and enriches democracy and commit themselves to the goal of gender balance;

- Monitor and publish, on a regular basis, details of the proportions of women and men in elective and non-elective public positions;

- Promote researches on the obstacles, which prevent women's, access to the various decision-making bodies at the different levels and publish the results;

- Promote analysis of and studies on the selection criteria used for public nomination procedures, with a view to detecting the elements which have a negative influence on the nomination of women and commit themselves to take measures aimed at removing those elements, e.g. by setting up a governmental body in charge of following the situation;

- Promote public campaigns aimed at the general public as well as at specific groups, e.g. at those who decide upon nominations, in order to raise their awareness on the importance of a gender balanced representation in decision-making;

- Undertake education and training activities aimed at informing people, and in particular young people, about the importance of political participation and of having a gender-balanced representation;

In order to prevent discrimination and ensure a gender-balance in political and public life:

- Review the differential impact of electoral systems on the political representation of women in elected bodies and, where appropriate, adjust or reform those systems to promote gender-balanced representation;

- Promote and support special measures to stimulate and empower women to participate in political and public life;

- Take measures to encourage a gender-balanced representation in all public appointments made by the government, for example by proposing thresholds and target figures for women's appointments and by promoting open and accountable appointments and procedures;

- Encourage governmental advisory committees and councils to have a gender-balanced representation in their decision-making bodies;

- Promote a gender balance in all financial institutions funded by the government, for example, by nominating persons of the under-represented sex to Committees at all levels and encourage gender balance in all other financial institutions;

- Ensure that there is gender-balanced representation in all appointments made by a minister or the government itself to all public committees, etc., by, for example, the adoption and implementation of appropriate legislative and/or administrative measures, the setting up a database of all women and men with special skills and knowledge (experts), publishing figures for male and female representation and encourage other nominating bodies to follow a similar policy;

- Encourage employers to allow those participating in political life to have the right to take time off from their professional activity;

- Support, by all appropriate measures, programmes to stimulate a gender-balance in political life, in governments, political parties and/or NGOs;

- Aim at a gender balance in the list of national candidates nominated for elections by the Council of Europe, for example, to the European Court of Human Rights or other bodies of the Organisation;

Political parties are invited to:

- Consider restrictions on the number of terms of office a person can spend in the same political function;
- Consider restrictions on the number of political offices that can be held simultaneously;
- Adopt and promote a gender balance policy within the party and the party's structures and identify measures to achieve this aim;
- Consider adapting the status and working conditions of elected representatives so as to make politics more attractive to persons with family responsibilities;

Political parties, trade unions, employers' organisations and other relevant organisations are invited to:

- Remove discriminatory practices, incorporate gender perspectives into their platforms and ensure women's access to executive and decision-making bodies on an equal basis with men;
- Put at the disposal of their members, when actively involved in their party/organisation's work, a system of necessary benefits for temporary child care and adjust their meeting hours to take account of the needs of families;
- Review and adjust structures and policies, using gender impact assessment;
- Set up specific policies aiming at promoting women to posts of responsibility;
- Review their selection and nomination procedures in order to remove all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the selection and nomination of women to these posts;
- Undertake training initiatives aimed at favouring gender-balanced representation at all levels in the party/organisation;
- Strengthening women's branches within their structure, in order to influence the policy of the party/organisation and to promote the nomination of women candidates;

NGOs are invited to:

- Develop their activities as pressure groups working for equality in the political system and political institutions;
- Initiate and/or develop activities aimed at informing women about their civil and political rights;
- Organise all kinds of training for women and men aimed at a gender balanced representation in political and public life;
- Set up networks of organisations working in favour of gender balanced representation in political and public life;
- Carry out gender impact assessment of systems, structures and policies.

B. EQUALITY IN ECONOMIC AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Governments are invited to:

In order to prevent discrimination and ensure gender balance:

- Promote and strengthen women's full and active participation in the economy and in economic decision-making;
- Encourage and promote an increase in the number of women working at management level in the media;
- Enact and enforce legislation against discrimination based on the ground of sex and to guarantee equal treatment in the labour market;
- Eliminate discriminatory practices against women related to their reproductive possibilities and functions, for example by prohibiting any reference to pregnancy during recruitment;
- Serve as a role model to other employers by ensuring non-discriminatory structures and practices and, to this end, take measures to increase the number of women in the senior civil service through, inter alia, the adoption of transparent, non-discriminatory staff policies and practices, the balanced representation of women and men on recruitment and promotion boards and examination of work practices;
- Encourage the social partners to adopt policies aimed at the increased presence of women in decision-making posts, for example, by setting up joint promotion plans for women between certain employers and women's institutions and organisations;
- Encourage employers to adopt equal opportunities policies in their enterprises as an integral part of their human resources policy and provide the necessary budgetary and staff resources to implement these policies and to ensure their monitoring and assessment;

In order to ensure equal pay for work of equal value and equal treatment:

- Enact and enforce legislation to guarantee the rights of women and men to equal pay for equal work and work of equal value;
- Enact and enforce legislation to guarantee the right of women and men to equal treatment, opportunities and pay and ensure access to justice by providing legal aid and counselling, financial support and information on the functioning of judicial mechanisms;
- Monitor the gender division of the labour market and the participation of women in high level positions, including economic decision-making;

In the field of training

- Promote the improvement of women's skills, in particular in the fields of science, information and communication technologies, as well as in areas of potential expansion;
- Encourage the social partners to provide education and training schemes, such as self-development and management courses for women;

when one sex is under-represented, special training should be provided to enable employees of the under-represented sex to take advantage of particular employment opportunities;

- Provide assistance, counselling and training for people wishing to create their own enterprises, taking into account the specific difficulties with which women are confronted, including access to credit facilities;

- Encourage women to participate actively in the labour market by counselling and training measures aimed especially at young women, at women re-entering the labour market and at unemployed women;

In the field of awareness raising

- Encourage a gender-sensitive judicial system, for example by providing training courses for judges and lawyers;

- Provide training courses for members of government, high level civil servants and other administrative officers when an active and visible policy of mainstreaming is implemented;

- Raise the awareness of teachers about the roles of women and men in a democratic society and about their contribution to equality;

- Include courses on equality between women and men in training programmes for civil servants;

- Encourage the media to provide special awareness raising and training courses on equality between women and men for their staff;

Social partners such as trade unions and employers,

political parties and other relevant bodies are invited to:

- Take initiatives to remove wage differences between traditionally female and male professions by re-evaluating jobs traditionally held by women; the re-evaluation process should be performed both by women and men;

- Ensure a gender perspective in all wage negotiations by the balanced participation of both women and men and by respecting female qualifications;

- Ensure training programmes for women and men employees on an equal basis;

- Agree policies aimed at strengthening women's competencies, knowledge and skills, inter alia by special training courses;

- Agree specific policies aimed at promoting women to decision-making posts where they are under-represented;

- Incorporate equality of opportunity into their human resources policy by analysing and modifying, if necessary, documents and practices implemented in the framework of recruitment procedures, job offers, selection of applicants, training programmes and promotions;

- Gather and update regularly gender-segregated statistical data concerning all indicators to be used in order to establish a permanent overview of the comparative situation of women and men in the company;

- Raise awareness among and train the staff of the company in the field of equal opportunities, especially top management and persons in charge of management, selection and training;
- Combat sexual harassment at the workplace by adopting legislative and administrative measures or collective agreements aiming at protecting the dignity of women and men at work (ref: article 26 of the European Social Charter (revised)) and promote actions for the implementation of these measures, such as awareness-raising campaigns for employers, incentives, counselling, support and, if necessary, to appear for plaintiffs;
- Encourage the organisation of regular meetings between employers and employees on career expectations and the expectation of enterprises (discussion on career planning);
- Ensure the implementation of mainstreaming in all their activities, which involves the (re) organisation, improvement and development of policy processes to incorporate a gender equality perspective by training all their officials in the consequences of the imbalances between women and men.

C. RECONCILIATION OF FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES WITH POLITICAL AND PROFESSIONAL LIFE

Governments are invited to:

- Promote harmonisation and partnerships of women and men in family and society, especially equal sharing of family rights and responsibilities and foster national policies that enable people to combine their work with family life;
- Recognise that the sharing of work and family responsibilities between women and men constitutes a gain for society as a whole and promote this concept;
- Adopt appropriate legislation, incentives and/or measures aimed at encouraging the equal sharing of parental responsibilities between women and men. These could include: flexible working patterns, suitable pension reforms, family friendly infrastructures, and appropriate social services;
- Support and encourage the provision of child care and facilities for dependent persons for women and men, or other services to help them meet their family responsibilities;
- Adopt leave schemes applicable throughout working life for family and educational reasons and, where appropriate, encourage and provide for adequate maternity and paternity leave schemes, shared equally between fathers and mothers and organised with some flexibility, aiming at taking into account the interests of both women and men;
- Adapt social security schemes and tax systems to the increasing diversity of working patterns and in particular, adopt policies to ensure the appropriate protection of labour law and social security for part-time,

temporary, seasonal and home-based workers, especially as far as unemployment and pension schemes are concerned;

Employers are invited to:

- Promote and develop flexible employment practices enabling the employees, both women and men, to meet the demands of their family responsibilities for example by facilitating access to part-time work for those who so wish, to „distance employment“ – (telework, homework) provided that suitable protection is agreed;
- Promote career development, including promotion possibilities, based on work conditions, which harmonise work and parental responsibilities;
- Contribute, financially or otherwise, to the provision of childcare and family facilities for their employees;
- Encourage organisation of work which facilitates flexibility for families, inter alia by holding meetings and training programmes within ordinary working hours;

Social partners are invited to:

- Ensure that collective agreements include provisions to support the reconciliation of work and family life, e.g parental leave, part-time work and flexible employment practices.

D. PROMOTING EQUALITY IN A DEMOCRATIC SOCIETY: THE ROLE OF MEN

Governments are invited to:

In order to favour the mainstreaming of equality and the understanding of the fact that equality is an issue for society as a whole:

- Encourage men to promote equality within their areas of responsibility by incorporating a gender perspective in their work;
- Encourage men to assess the consequences and the impact of political initiatives on the balance between women and men within the area concerned;
- Undertake activities aimed at heads of enterprise or administration, in order that they recognise that men's commitment to their role as fathers is a positive sign, including for their work;
- Encourage high standards of conduct for all those engaged in public life and, in particular, promote non-discriminatory behaviour among members of government and high-level public officials;

In the field of awareness-raising among men on the equality issue:

- Develop awareness among members of government and high-level public employees on equality between women and men, for example by organising training courses;

- Integrate into training of administrative officers training courses on equality between women and men;
- Highlight the changing role models for men and women so as to generate public acceptance and support for men who are following non-traditional role models;
- Encourage activities, such as conferences and campaigns aimed at making equality between women and men a concern for men. This would include encouraging men to be aware of their role in the family, professional life and society with the goal of giving their own input into more equality and partnership and, for the same purpose, women to be aware of their new role in the family;

In the field of training and education:

- Favour mixed-sex composition of education teams at all levels and of staff assisting families;
- Support training and educational programmes already in Kindergartens and primary schools in order to develop and support new ways of socialising girls and boys and prevent stereotypes concerning the traditional roles of women and men;
- Support training and educational programmes for men aimed at ensuring the sharing of responsibilities in the upbringing of children, and for women to accept the participation of men;
- Reduce and aim to eliminate men's violence against women by initiating education ensuring respect of the other person and as concerns violent men, by supporting practical and therapeutic initiatives;

In the research field:

- Improve knowledge on men and women in all their living conditions by promoting studies and statistics on men in a gender perspective;
- Promote studies, which examine the consequences for the identity of men of changes in women's careers, lives and aspirations.
- Promote research on relationships between men and on the ways in which they perceive their masculine identity.

STATEMENT ON EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IN THE CONTEXT OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE

The Ministers of the States participating in the 4th European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men, being held in Istanbul on 13 and 14 November 1997;

Noting that the Heads of State and Government of the member States of the Council of Europe, meeting in Strasbourg on 10 and 11 October

1997 for the Organisation's Second Summit, stressed "the importance of a more balanced representation of men and women in all sectors of society, including political life," and called for "continued progress with a view to achieving effective equality of opportunities between women and men",

Recalling the commitments made by the States participating in the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, as well as the Council of Europe's contribution to that Conference,

Noting that 1999 will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Council of Europe,

AFFIRM the necessity to take stock of the progress made in member States and to multiply the efforts for implementing the Platform for Action adopted at the 4th World Conference on Women, and express the firm hope that this issue will be addressed in the context of the 50th anniversary of the Council of Europe in an appropriate form,

UNDERLINE the importance of strengthening the intergovernmental co-operation within the Council of Europe in the field of equality between women and men and in particular the role of men in this process.

Resolution expressing appreciation to the host authorities.

The Ministers participating in the 4th European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men, held in Istanbul on 13–14 November 1997;

Aware of the progress that equality between women and men will constitute for democracy and of the contribution that the Istanbul Conference has also made to such progress;

Express their warmest thanks to the Government of Turkey for the excellent organisation of this Conference in Istanbul and for its kind hospitality;

Take note of the invitation by the Government of „the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia“ to hold the 5th European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men. Identified. It now remains to mobilise sustained political resolve in order to advance from words to action. This is our joint responsibility, and in the name of each and every one of you, I wish to assert here our commitment to take up this responsibility to the full. Democracy and the development of our countries are at stake.

10. FINAL DOCUMENT OF THE 3rd INTER-PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE ON SECURITY AND CO-OPERATION IN THE MEDITERRANEAN¹²

XXIII. EQUALITY OF MEN AND WOMEN

87. The Conference welcomes the presence of women in the delegations and notes with satisfaction the views on this Final Document expressed at the meeting of Mediterranean women parliamentarians organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union. It notes with satisfaction the idea of regular consultations among Mediterranean women parliamentarians. It is convinced that women, through their participation, can make a major contribution to the solution of problems facing societies and to the settlement of disputes in the Mediterranean.

88. The Conference endorses Principle No. 4 of the Universal Declaration on Democracy, namely that the achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality, complementing each other and drawing mutual enrichment from their differences. It recommends that effective equality of opportunity be recognised as an indicator of democracy in its own right. Moreover, it reaffirms its conviction that it is possible, without destabilising cultures or imposing values alien to national cultures, to acknowledge, develop or, where appropriate, rehabilitate women's dignity at the social level and allow the emergence of a more balanced image of the capacity of men and women to participate in the management of both public and private affairs in the States of the Mediterranean.

89. In this context, the Conference welcomes recent advances in certain Mediterranean States in securing enhanced participation of women in public life. It notes, however, that the proportion of women parliamentarians is still low and expresses the wish to see their numbers growing in every parliament. To that end, it draws attention to the *IPU Plan of Action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life*.

90. The Conference considers that the contribution of Mediterranean women to all activities that have a bearing on the economic and social development of the region should be better known and duly appreciated. To that end, it encourages the development of women's associations and the creation of networks among them for the promotion of exchanges. It recommends that new technology be turned to account as a means of promoting contacts among women and publicising their contribution to

¹² Organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union Marseille (France), 30 March – 3 April 2000

Mediterranean societies. It urges that traditional practices that have an adverse impact on women's life, dignity or personal integrity be abolished.

91. The Conference invites the Inter-Parliamentary Union, as a leading source of information concerning the participation of women in parliaments, to circulate its most recent statistics on a regular basis to national parliaments with a view to enhancing their awareness and promoting action to facilitate women's access to politics. The Conference also encourages networking among Mediterranean women parliamentarians, a possible first step towards which would be the creation, on the IPU Internet site, of an information and dialogue sub-site for Mediterranean women parliamentarians.

92. It calls on all Mediterranean States to implement the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, September 1995) and to take an active part in the evaluation of progress to be undertaken by the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly in New York in June 2000, by sending both male and female MPs to take part in the process and in the tripartite consultation organised jointly by the IPU and the UN. It also invites all Mediterranean States that have not already done so to accede to the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (1979) or to establish the necessary instrument of succession, to adopt the appropriate enabling legislation and regulations, and to reconsider any reservations they have entered thereto. It also invites all States to accede to the additional protocol to the Convention and to ensure its entry into force.

11. EU RESOLUTION ON INTEGRATING GENDER ISSUES IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION

The focus of the Resolution is development co-operation and the practice of the European institutions. It treats development in quite a technical way and as such does not address some of the wider political issues.

The Resolution states that gender-analysis must be mainstreamed at all levels – macro, meso and micro – and in the conception, design and implementation of Community and Member State development co-operation.

It states that development co-operation must encourage and support changes in attitudes, structures and mechanisms at every level to reduce gender inequalities, to ensure political power sharing, women's economic empowerment, and women's equal access to and control over social development opportunities.

The Resolution calls for special attention to be given to positive action to counter major gender disparities.

It calls for sufficient and permanent expertise on gender issues within the Commission and Member States and adequate human, financial and other resources to ensure Resolution is implemented.

The integration of gender issues in European development co-operation can be greatly assisted by greater co-ordination between Member States on both policy and practice. Effective co-ordination will require the allocation of additional staffing and financial resources.

The Resolution does indicate EU political will to foster equality between women and men as an inherent and indispensable part of the development process. What is now required is management will to implement the Resolution.

With regard to implementation, the European Commission will need to put in place institutional measures in each framework and sector to ensure the policy is implemented, and its implementation co-ordinated, monitored and evaluated:

1. Each section of the Commission should prepare a comprehensive action plan setting out how it intends to implement the new policy; this should include objectives, timetable, targets, and co-ordination with other sections and be presented to the Council of Ministers' meeting in December 1996;

2. Analysis of gender-based inequalities and injustices needs to become an integral part of the design, appraisal, implementation and monitoring process of future country strategies, National Indicative Programmes, development programmes and projects, and be incorporated into the terms of reference of all consultants. The project cycle needs to be adjusted accordingly. There are a number of instruments which can be useful in institutionalising gender analysis, such as gender impact statements, if integrated into the overall management information system of the EC;

3. Build institutional capacity in gender expertise for use by policy-makers and decision-making officials and EC Country Delegations;

4. Additional high status, gender and development specialist staff must be appointed within the Commission; these posts need to be permanent;

5. The appointment of specialists competent in gender analysis in such fields as economics, population, human rights, democracy, agriculture, food aid, transport and water within the Commission would enable better monitoring of key sectors of the EU's aid programme. Secondment of specialists from Member States could be considered;

6. Competence in gender analysis should become an essential criterion in the recruitment and appointment of all policy-making and decision-making officials, and in the selection of consultants;

7. The EC staff gender-sensitisation and training programme should be extended to include all policy-making and decision-making officials including senior management. This training needs to be compulsory and repeated on a regular basis;

8. Adequate financial resources must be allocated to enable the gender and development officials to carry out fully their responsibilities;

9. The adoption of participatory methods of appraisal, assessment, monitoring and evaluation, which can ensure the active participation of women, is recommended;

10. The incorporation of unwaged work into data bases and planning is essential to the effectiveness of project and programme assistance since it presents better information on national and local economic activity, income distribution, time and energy availability. In this regard, the EU should support the development of satellite accounts to count the contribution of unwaged work;

11. The social and economic impact at individual and household level of economic reform programmes needs to be monitored carefully, and the programmes adjusted accordingly;

12. Enhance the effectiveness of EC Country Delegations with gender and development expertise and the allocation of greater resources;

13. Channels of consultation need to be developed which enable EC officials and missions to seek the advice and views of local, national and international women's organisations, groups and experts;

14. Enhance the capacity of Southern governments in policy, planning and programming;

15. Allocate staffing and financial resources at EC, Member State and Country Delegation levels to work towards effective co-ordination and harmonisation within the EU on integrating gender issues in development co-operation;

16. The examples of good practice on women and gender and development within the development co-operation activities of EU member states could be usefully collated and incorporated into EC practice as part of the process of evolving policy co-ordination;

17. The EU should encourage and support the institution-building of independent women's organisations in order to ensure that, as members of civil society, they can build their individual and collective capacity to participate on a basis of parity with men in all aspects of decision-making and can monitor respect for human rights;

18. In addition to a comprehensive Commission-wide commitment there is a need for some immediate specific programmes of positive action to redress the current bias against women. A number of areas for positive action present themselves: education and training, general, reproductive and sexual health, productive employment, land reform guaranteeing women's property rights, fostering women's political participation in local, national and international decision-making, support for public education campaigns against violence against women.

12. COMMITMENTS OF GOVERNMENTS TO IMPLEMENT THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

(Background Paper prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women based on the statements delivered during the Fourth World Conference on Women)

A suggestion was made during the 39th session of the Commission on the Status of Women that the Fourth World Conference on Women be a conference of commitments. The Conference Secretariat (The Division for the Advancement of Women) monitored the plenary speeches of the governments and recorded the commitments made in the oral statements.

Ninety countries out of 189 made commitments to improve the situation of women.

A preliminary analysis has shown that the largest number of commitments were made in the legal area, where governments committed themselves to revise existing, or introduce new, laws and regulations to advance the status of women and eliminate de jure discrimination. Several countries decided to sign or ratify international conventions for the advancement of women, including CEDAW and some relevant ILO conventions.

The commitments announced by Governments at Beijing are an indication of the seriousness of their intentions to undertake concrete follow-up action for the advancement of women.

The commitments made by the governments in the framework of the Platform for Action, namely in the twelve critical areas of concern were distributed as follows:

The critical area of concern „Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women“, received the most attention. Forty-nine countries are planning either to strengthen or establish national machineries to deal with gender issues and will provide additional human and financial resources in order to implement national policies on women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Countries recognised that gender was a cross-cutting issue and that it was important to mainstream gender in all social and economic policies and programmes. Three countries committed themselves to making special emphasis on the interests and needs of women in providing international development assistance. Another four countries emphasized the importance of developing and strengthening statistics on women.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

G. Women in power and decision-making

Encourage active participation of women in the decision-making process

Estonia

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
Create national structures to solve women's problems.
Support gender studies.
Strengthen and develop social statistics concerning women's issues
and support gender studies.

Latvia

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
Develop gender-oriented social statistics.

Lithuania

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
Proceed with development of program for the advancement of
women including concrete measures to implement the Platform for Action

Poland

G. Women in power and decision-making
Provide equal access to managerial positions.

Romania

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
Ready to organize, in Bucharest, in co-operation with the United
Nations, a regional Conference for the Central and Eastern European
Countries, assessing the implementation of the provisions under the
Beijing documents.

Russian Federation

G. Women in power and decision-making
Increase participation of women in political decision-making.
Render assistance to women political candidates
H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
Cooperate and support women's NGO.

Ukraine

G. Women in power and decision-making
Complete the establishment of national machinery for implementation
of the principle of equal opportunities at all levels of decision-making.
H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women
Adept and implement national programme „Ukraine women“.

13. FWCW PLATFORM FOR ACTION WOMEN IN POWER AND DECISION-MAKING

G. Women in Power and Decision-making

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his/her country. The empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of women's social, economic and political status is essential for the achievement of both transparent and accountable government and administration and sustainable development in all areas of life. The power relations that prevent women from leading fulfilling lives operate at many levels of society, from the most personal to the highly public. Achieving the goal of equal participation of women and men in decision-making will provide a balance that more accurately reflects the composition of society and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning. Equality in political decision-making performs a leverage function without which it is highly unlikely that a real integration of the equality dimension in government policy-making is feasible. In this respect, women's equal participation in political life plays a pivotal role in the general process of the advancement of women. Women's equal participation in decision-making is not only a demand for simple justice or democracy but can also be seen as a necessary condition for women's interests to be taken into account. Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspective at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved.

Despite the widespread movement towards democratisation in most countries, women are largely underrepresented at most levels of government, especially in ministerial and other executive bodies, and have made little progress in attaining political power in legislative bodies or in achieving the target endorsed by the Economic and Social Council of having 30 per cent women in positions at decision-making levels by 1995. Globally, only 10 per cent of the members of legislative bodies and a lower percentage of ministerial positions are now held by women. Indeed, some countries, including those that are undergoing fundamental political, economic and social changes, have seen a significant decrease in the number of women represented in legislative bodies. Although women make up at least half of the electorate in almost all countries and have attained the right to vote and hold office in almost all States Members of the United Nations, women continue to be seriously underrepresented as candidates for public office. The traditional working patterns of many political parties and government structures continue to be barriers to women's participation in public life. Women may be discouraged from seeking political office by discriminatory attitudes and practices, family

and child-care responsibilities, and the high cost of seeking and holding public office. Women in politics and decision-making positions in Governments and legislative bodies contribute to redefining political priorities, placing new items on the political agenda that reflect and address women's gender-specific concerns, values and experiences, and providing new perspectives on mainstream political issues.

Women have demonstrated considerable leadership in community and informal organisations, as well as in public office. However, socialisation and negative stereotyping of women and men, including stereotyping through the media, reinforces the tendency for political decision-making to remain the domain of men. Likewise, the under-representation of women in decision-making positions in the areas of art, culture, sports, the media, education, religion and the law have prevented women from having a significant impact on many key institutions.

Owing to their limited access to the traditional avenues to power, such as the decision-making bodies of political parties, employer organisations and trade unions, women have gained access to power through alternative structures, particularly in the non-governmental organisation sector. Through non-governmental organisations and grass-roots organisations, women have been able to articulate their interests and concerns and have placed women's issues on the national, regional and international agendas.

Inequality in the public arena can often start with discriminatory attitudes and practices and unequal power relations between women and men within the family, as defined in paragraph 29 above. The unequal division of labour and responsibilities within households based on unequal power relations also limits women's potential to find the time and develop the skills required for participation in decision-making in wider public forums. A more equal sharing of those responsibilities between women and men not only provides a better quality of life for women and their daughters but also enhances their opportunities to shape and design public policy, practice and expenditure so that their interests may be recognised and addressed. Non-formal networks and patterns of decision-making at the local community level that reflect a dominant male ethos restrict women's ability to participate equally in political, economic and social life.

The low proportion of women among economic and political decision-makers at the local, national, regional and international levels reflects structural and attitudinal barriers that need to be addressed through positive measures. Governments, trans-national and national corporations, the mass media, banks, academic and scientific institutions, and regional and international organisations, including those in the United Nations system, do not make full use of women's talents as top-level managers, policy makers, diplomats and negotiators.

The equitable distribution of power and decision-making at all levels is dependent on Governments and other actors undertaking statistical gender analysis and mainstreaming a gender perspective in policy development and the implementation of programmes. Equality in decision-making is essential to the empowerment of women. In some countries, affirmative action has led to 33.3 per cent or larger representation in local and national Governments.

National, regional and international statistical institutions still have insufficient knowledge of how to present the issues related to the equal treatment of women and men in the economic and social spheres. In particular, there is insufficient use of existing databases and methodologies in the important sphere of decision-making.

In addressing the inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels, Governments and other actors should promote an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective in all policies and programmes so that before decisions are taken, an analysis is made of the effects on women and men, respectively.

Strategic objective G.1.

Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making

Actions to be taken

by Governments:

Commit themselves to establishing the goal of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administrative entities, and in the judiciary, including, inter alia, setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men, if necessary through positive action, in all governmental and public administration positions;

Take measures, including, where appropriate, in electoral systems that encourage political parties to integrate women in elective and non-elective public positions in the same proportion and at the same levels as men;

Protect and promote the equal rights of women and men to engage in political activities and to freedom of association, including membership in political parties and trade unions;

Review the differential impact of electoral systems on the political representation of women in elected bodies and consider, where appropriate, the adjustment or reform of those systems;

Monitor and evaluate progress in the representation of women through the regular collection, analysis and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative data on women and men at all levels in various decision-

making positions in the public and private sectors, and disseminate data on the number of women and men employed at various levels in Governments on a yearly basis; ensure that women and men have equal access to the full range of public appointments and set up mechanisms within governmental structures for monitoring progress in this field;

Support non-governmental organisations and research institutes that conduct studies on women's participation in and impact on decision-making and the decision-making environment;

Encourage greater involvement of indigenous women in decision-making at all levels;

Encourage and, where appropriate, ensure that government-funded organisations adopt non-discriminatory policies and practices in order to increase the number and raise the position of women in their organisations;

Recognize that shared work and parental responsibilities between women and men promote women's increased participation in public life, and take appropriate measures to achieve this, including measures to reconcile family and professional life;

Aim at gender balance in the lists of national candidates nominated for election or appointment to United Nations bodies, specialised agencies and other autonomous organisations of the United Nations system, particularly for posts at the senior level.

by political parties:

Consider examining party structures and procedures to remove all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the participation of women;

Consider developing initiatives that allow women to participate fully in all internal policy-making structures and appointive and electoral nominating processes;

Consider incorporating gender issues in their political agenda, taking measures to ensure that women can participate in the leadership of political parties on an equal basis with men.

by Governments, national bodies, the private sector, political parties, trade unions, employers' organisations, research and academic institutions, sub-regional and regional bodies and non-governmental and international organisations:

Take positive action to build a critical mass of women leaders, executives and managers in strategic decision-making positions;

Create or strengthen, as appropriate, mechanisms to monitor women's access to senior levels of decision-making;

Review the criteria for recruitment and appointment to advisory and decision-making bodies and promotion to senior positions to ensure that such criteria are relevant and do not discriminate against women;

Encourage efforts by non-governmental organisations, trade unions and the private sector to achieve equality between women and men in their ranks, including equal participation in their decision-making bodies and in negotiations in all areas and at all levels;

Develop communications strategies to promote public debate on the new roles of men and women in society, and in the family as defined in paragraph 29 above;

Restructure recruitment and career-development programmes to ensure that all women, especially young women, have equal access to managerial, entrepreneurial, technical and leadership training, including on-the-job training;

Develop career advancement programmes for women of all ages that include career planning, tracking, mentoring, coaching, training and retraining;

Encourage and support the participation of women's non-governmental organisations in United Nations conferences and their preparatory processes;

Aim at and support gender balance in the composition of delegations to the United Nations and other international forums.

by the United Nations:

Implement existing and adopt new employment policies and measures in order to achieve overall gender equality, particularly at the Professional level and above, by the year 2000, with due regard to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

Develop mechanisms to nominate women candidates for appointment to senior posts in the United Nations, the specialised agencies and other organisations and bodies of the United Nations system;

Continue to collect and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data on women and men in decision-making and analyse their differential impact on decision-making and monitor progress towards achieving the Secretary-General's target of having women hold 50 per cent of managerial and decision-making positions by the year 2000.

by women's organisations, non-governmental organisations, trade unions, social partners, producers, and industrial and professional organisations:

Build and strengthen solidarity among women through information, education and sensitisation activities;

Advocate at all levels to enable women to influence political, economic and social decisions, processes and systems, and work towards seeking accountability from elected representatives on their commitment to gender concerns;

Establish, consistent with data protection legislation, databases on women and their qualification for use in appointing women to senior decision-making and advisory positions, for dissemination to Governments, regional and international organisations and private enterprise, political parties and other relevant bodies.

Strategic objective G.2.

Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership

Actions to be taken

by Governments, national bodies, the private sector, political parties, trade unions, employers' organisations, sub-regional and regional bodies, non-governmental and international organisations and educational institutions:

- Provide leadership and self-esteem training to assist women and girls, particularly those with special needs, women with disabilities and women belonging to racial and ethnic minorities to strengthen their self-esteem and to encourage them to take decision-making positions;
- Have transparent criteria for decision-making positions and ensure that the selecting bodies have a gender-balanced composition;
- Create a system of mentoring for inexperienced women and, in particular, offer training, including training in leadership and decision-making, public speaking and self-assertion, as well as in political campaigning;
- Provide gender-sensitive training for women and men to promote non-discriminatory working relationships and respect for diversity in work and management styles;
- Develop mechanisms and training to encourage women to participate in the electoral process, political activities and other leadership areas.

14. BEIJING PARLIAMENTARY DECLARATION

The IPU encouraged MPs to participate in the preparation and holding of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) and was actively involved in the preparatory process over a period of three years in the context of its permanent programme concerning women. On account of the role of Parliaments in the affairs of State, it was only natural that the world organisation of Parliaments should ensure that they were closely involved in the preparatory process for the Conference and in its decisions which incur the responsibility of the State.

Against that background, the IPU organised a Parliamentarians' Day during the FWCW on 7 September 1995 at the invitation of the Chinese

National People's Congress. The meeting was chaired by Mrs. Chen Muhua, Vice-President of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress and President of the All-China Women's Association who had been elected President of the FWCW on 4 September.

Five hundred MPs from 102 countries took part in the Day which concluded with the adoption by consensus of the Beijing Parliamentary Declaration.

Adopted by consensus by participants to Parliamentarians' Day on the occasion of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 7 September 1995)

We, members of Parliaments and, as such, a voice for the peoples of the world in the wealth of their cultural and political diversity, resolve to bring to the attention of Governments taking part in the Fourth World Conference on Women the following statement, which was approved at the Parliamentarians' Day organised by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the world organisation of Parliaments, on 7 September 1995, at the kind invitation of the National People's Congress of China:

1. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, the principle of equality between men and women having been established in nearly all our Constitutions and fundamental laws, few indeed are the countries where the right of women to vote and be elected has not yet been recognised and exercised.

2. Women make up half or more of the populations of our countries. In addition to pursuing their family role and traditional household activities, they have in under a century become an active labour force whose nation-wide economic impact is often equal to and sometimes exceeds that of men. In some little-industrialised countries, they are the mainstream of the entire "informal" sector and bear the brunt in agriculture.

3. Women's intellectual potential, often decisive electoral weight and capacity to act for change are still inadequately understood and turned to account.

4. Women in fact remain sidelined at all levels of decision-making, especially in politics, and their economic contribution continues to be shaded over in national statistics and assessments. Our societies are still chiefly organised and run as their male element may determine, with the result that they continue either largely to forgo or to disclaim what female talent and endeavour may so vitally contribute to their development., as well as women's important role in consensus-building, conflict resolution and peace-building.

5. In April 1992, the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Council held that the concept of democracy would only come into its own when major

policy objectives and national legislation were decided upon jointly by men and women with equal regard for the specific interests and aptitudes of each half of the population. Such an active partnership of both elements of society is indeed one of the surest, most lasting foundations of democracy and development, and urgently needs establishing through structural and legislative measures aimed at the equal participation of women and men in the political decision-making process.

6. Today, all our countries face global political and economic challenges that are partly beyond our control, and many are undergoing radical institutional and structural changes whose long-term social, political and economic effects are extremely hard to manage in view of an unsatisfactory international order and insufficient economic co-operation. In such a context, no country can any longer afford to overlook any portion of its human resources. This means redirecting our perspectives and policies. Our domestic policies must henceforth, at all levels, be shaped and applied not just by men but with the full and equal participation of women.

7. Women and children suffer under conditions of war and civil strife and stress. Yet, we consider that there can be no equality or development without peace and justice.

8. By transforming a mode of governance and management based upon a wrong hierarchy of gender, we shall not only let women use their ability to govern but also tap their particular creativity and values, while at the same time reflecting their realities, needs and aspirations in our policies. Such an integrated approach will make for more balanced access to resources and fairer distribution between men and women of both the costs and the benefits of an equitable, balanced and sustainable growth, which is the prime purpose of human development.

9. To this end, we believe it essential for more women to be more active in politics. Yet we regret to note that, according to surveys by the Inter-Parliamentary Union, women still make up barely 11.3% of the world's parliamentarians, a proportion only slightly higher than fifty years ago.

10. Despite considerable progress in the division of political responsibilities and power in several countries, particularly the Nordic ones and some developing countries, women are generally in a minority in the upper echelons of political parties and movements, or even not present at all. In only 20 countries do women account for over 20% of parliamentarians; just 17 have a woman presiding over Parliament or a Parliamentary Chamber; and there are 15 women Heads of State or Government. Some countries continue to deny women the right to vote and to be elected, whether to Parliament or to local or regional bodies.

11. This state of affairs in politics seems indicative of the situation of women in all other sectors and, as we are deeply attached to the concepts of democracy and equality, we believe that priority should go to reversing

the current trend of politics for the sake of a new dynamic in political decision-making that would in turn benefit all other spheres of activity.

12. We believe that the *Plan of Action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life* (adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Union in March 1994 as a contribution to the Fourth World Conference on Women) might very well provide the basis for strategies which, in our own particular contexts and without disclaiming our traditional values, may remedy a state of affairs that has disastrous effects on our societies. We urgently call on Governments to use the Plan of Action to this end.

13. It is our resolve to ensure that the Plan of Action is taken into account by our political parties and movements. In particular, women must have access to executive posts so that candidatures for elections and electoral strategies are decided on fairly and make full allowance for the twofold nature of society, and in order that more may be done to reflect the specific interests of women in electoral campaigns and day-to-day politics.

14. We undertake to seek the enlistment of all resources that may speed up the learning process for women in politics and their exercise of leadership. We believe it essential to give decision-makers and public opinion more extensive information instilling in men and women themselves an awareness of the potential the latter represent and the essential role that is theirs in shaping new visions and policies.

15. As parliamentarians, and whether men or women, we have a basic duty to represent the views and interests of both and to serve the common interest. We believe that national legislation must focus just as much on the interests, values and aspirations of women as on those of men. We undertake to work for the reform of any legislation discriminating against or liable to harm women.

16. We further undertake to work for national ratification of the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (1979) and the *Convention on the Political Rights of Women* (1952), where this is not already the case, to examine the validity of any reservations or interpretative statements placed on ratification, and to take active steps with a view to their lifting.

17. We consider that each of our countries should have a mechanism – parliamentary or otherwise – such as a national committee or an ombudsman, for measuring the impact on the situation of women of any draft law or bill and any related budgetary provisions. This could curtail a form of administration that has proved nothing but damaging to the community as a whole.

18. Finally, we believe that priority should be given to action aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls and we undertake to adopt legislation to this effect.

19. We consider the Fourth World Conference on Women to be just a further step, one that must set off a long-term process aimed at an in-depth re-balancing of society. It is for all of us, whether Governments, Parliaments, non-governmental organisations or individuals, to move towards that goal.

20. As parliamentarians, we forthwith undertake to follow up the Beijing Global Action Platform and the Regional Platforms, adopted at the preparatory conferences, as well as the IPU Plan of Action, in what we deem to be the most fitting and effective manner and with the greatest possible dispatch. It is our intention, in this respect, to ensure that the necessary resources are made available for carrying out any measure we adopt.

15. OSCE ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER ISSUES (summary)¹³

Noting the need to work towards equal treatment of men and women within the Organisation in all areas, including that of personnel recruitment,

Noting further the need to include a gender perspective in the external activities of the Organisation in order to eradicate discrimination against women and promote equal treatment of men and women.

The OSCE participating States recognise that equality of women and men and the protection and promotion of the human rights of women are essential to sustainable democracy and to security and stability in the OSCE region.

OSCE commitments, inter alia, encourage the strengthening of national machinery for the advancement of women.

Opportunities for women in the OSCE

The Chairperson-in-Office, participating States and the Secretariat will take positive action to promote the nomination and appointment of women candidates in the OSCE's institutions and also in field activities.

All participating States are called upon to make substantial efforts to nominate qualified women for future openings, particularly for field activities and visible positions such as head of mission or head of institution.

The Secretariat will continue to include a statement in its vacancy notices and post descriptions to encourage women candidates to apply, and should seek other ways to improve the gender balance in the OSCE.

In order to ensure a consistent approach and continuity in implementation of projects and policies in respect of both gender mainstreaming and activities addressing discrimination against women,

¹³ Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, 1st June 2000, Permanent Council, Original: ENGLISH, 285th Plenary Meeting, PC Journal No. 285, Agenda item 6, DECISION No. 353

the gender specialists will have the strong support of the heads of institutions and missions as well as other senior staff. With support from all sections and departments of the OSC institutions, the gender specialists will assess the implications for women and men of any planned action, policies or programmes.

Participating States will increase their efforts, or initiate new measures, to ensure equality of opportunity between women and men in fact and in law. Suggested initiatives for participating States may include review of existing and draft legislation, policies and practices and development of appropriate and enforceable legal remedies against discrimination on the basis of sex.

Long-term and consistent commitment by the OSCE to promoting and ensuring equality of women and men requires co-operation between participating States, OSCE institutions, other international organisations and NGOs. Where appropriate, the Secretariat will ask OSCE field activities that have not yet done so to participate in or establish an expert co-ordination body for gender issues, following consultations with the host government and relevant organisations present in the field. Such a body should consist of representatives from relevant international and local NGOs and governmental institutions, and from the OSCE and other international agencies. The co-ordination body should define its terms of reference and activities; it is suggested that these should include the following:

- Ensuring co-ordination in the development and implementation of gender projects in the field by the international community and by local NGOs in order to avoid unnecessary duplication;
- Reviewing initiatives by the international community to ensure gender mainstreaming across the OSCE area;
- Evaluating gender projects and activities;
- Developing co-ordination with other gender expert bodies in the OSCE area.

ODIHR will develop methodologies and best practice for projects and activities in respect of all the participating States. Areas of activity will include:

- Increasing access for women to all areas of political and public life and helping NGOs and women political leaders to develop effective coalitions and networks for lobbying for equality of women and men and the human rights of women;
- Developing education programmes to increase knowledge of the human rights of women, and of views of their role in society;
- Enabling women to participate actively in conflict resolution and conflict management;
- Assisting authorities and NGOs in analysing social structures, the economy and national legislation from a gender perspective;

- Supporting the development of legal frameworks for equality and non-discrimination, and protection of the human rights of women and effective mechanisms for their implementation;
- Developing capacity for protecting and enforcing the rights of women, including provision of legal aid;
- Preventing all forms of crime and violence against women, including domestic violence;
- Assisting persons affected by gender-related violence in conflict and post-conflict situations;
- Awareness raising at national and international levels concerning trafficking in women, and co-operation with affected countries in addressing the human rights aspects and other components of this problem.

The ODIHR will also ensure that a gender perspective is taken into account in the work of the democratisation and election sections. Technical assistance for elections should seek to increase women's participation in the electoral process.

The Parliamentary Assembly, at its annual sessions and various subsidiary levels, including the meetings of its main committees, its Standing Committee, and its Bureau and at the Meeting of OSCE Women Parliamentarians, intends to:

- Continue to emphasise the important role that women should play in the development of democratic institutions and practices throughout the OSCE area;
- Encourage OSCE leadership to ensure that women are appointed to management positions in all OSCE structures and institutions and also in OSCE field missions and offices;
- Continue to monitor the implementation by the participating States, the structures and institutions of the OSCE and OSCE field missions and offices of their OSCE commitments to ensure gender equality, including the implementation of these commitments under the Action Plan for Gender Issues;
- Continue to address gender equality and gender mainstreaming issues in its deliberations and resolutions.

16. RESOLUTION 1325 (2000)

*Adopted by the Security Council at its 4213th meeting,
on 31 October 2000*

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999, 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999, 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000 and 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000, as well as relevant statements of its President, and

recalling also the statement of its President to the press on the occasion of the United Nations Day for Women's Rights and International Peace (International Women's Day) of 8 March 2000 (SC/6816),

Recalling also the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (A/52/231) as well as those contained in the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly entitled „Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century“ (A/S-23/10/Rev.1), in particular those concerning women and armed conflict,

Bearing in mind the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the primary responsibility of the Security Council under the Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security,

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,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stressing 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,

Reaffirming also the need to implement fully international humanitarian and human rights law that protects the rights of women and girls during and after conflicts,

Emphasizing the need for all parties to ensure that mine clearance and mine awareness programmes take into account the special needs of women and girls,

Recognizing the urgent need to mainstream a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and in this regard noting the Windhoek Declaration and the Namibia Plan of Action on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Support Operations (S/2000/693),

Recognizing also the importance of the recommendation contained in the statement of its President to the press of 8 March 2000 for specialized training for all peacekeeping personnel on the protection, special needs and human rights of women and children in conflict situations,

Recognizing 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,

Noting the need to consolidate data on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls,

1. *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;

2. *Encourages* the Secretary-General to implement his strategic plan of action (A/49/587) calling for an increase in the participation of women at decision-making levels in conflict resolution and peace processes;

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

4. *Further urges* the Secretary-General to seek to expand the role and contribution of women in United Nations field-based operations, and especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel;

5. *Expresses* its willingness to incorporate a gender perspective into peacekeeping operations, and urges the Secretary-General to ensure that, where appropriate, field operations include a gender component;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to provide to Member States training guidelines and materials on the protection, rights and the particular needs of women, as well as on the importance of involving women in all peacekeeping and peacebuilding measures, invites Member States to incorporate these elements as well as HIV/AIDS awareness training into their national training programmes for military and civilian police personnel in preparation for deployment, and further requests the Secretary-General to ensure that civilian personnel of peacekeeping operations receive similar training;

7. *Urges* Member States to increase their voluntary financial, technical and logistical support for gender-sensitive training efforts, including those undertaken by relevant funds and programmes, inter alia, the United Nations Fund for Women and United Nations Children's Fund, and by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and other relevant bodies;

8. *Calls on* all actors involved, when negotiating and implementing peace agreements, to adopt a gender perspective, including, inter alia:

(a) The special needs of women and girls during repatriation and resettlement and for rehabilitation, reintegration and post-conflict reconstruction;

(b) Measures that support local women's peace initiatives and indigenous processes for conflict resolution, and that involve women in all of the implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements;

(c) Measures that ensure the protection of and respect for human rights of women and girls, particularly as they relate to the constitution, the electoral system, the police and the judiciary;

9. *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 Refugee Convention 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 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the two Optional Protocols thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court;

10. *Calls on* all parties to armed conflict to take special 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;

11. *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;

12. *Calls upon* all parties to armed conflict to respect the civilian and humanitarian character of refugee camps and settlements, and to take into account the particular needs of women and girls, including in their design, and recalls its resolutions 1208 (1998) of 19 November 1998 and 1296 (2000) of 19 April 2000;

13. *Encourages* all those involved in the planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration to consider the different needs of female and male ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependants;

14. *Reaffirms* its readiness, whenever measures are adopted under Article 41 of the Charter of the United Nations, to give consideration to their potential impact on the civilian population, bearing in mind the special needs of women and girls, in order to consider appropriate humanitarian exemptions;

15. *Expresses* its willingness to ensure that Security Council missions take into account gender considerations and the rights of women, including through consultation with local and international women's groups;

16. *Invites* the Secretary-General to carry out a study on the impact of armed conflict on women and girls, the role of women in peace-building and the gender dimensions of peace processes and conflict resolution, and further invites him to submit a report to the Security Council on the results of this study and to make this available to all Member States of the United Nations;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General, where appropriate, to include in his reporting to the Security Council progress on gender mainstreaming throughout peacekeeping missions and all other aspects relating to women and girls;

18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

**17. EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT RESOLUTION
ON PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN PEACEFUL
CONFLICT RESOLUTION (2000/2025(INI))**

The European Parliament,

– having regard to the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 10 December 1948, and to the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action resulting from the World Conference on Human Rights of 14–25 June 1993, in particular paragraphs I 28–29 and II 38 on systematic rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy in situations of armed conflict,

– having regard to the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) of 18 December 1979, to the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 20 December 1993, and to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 20 November 1989,

– having regard to the General Assembly Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 10 December 1984, and to the General Assembly Declaration 3318 on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict of 14 December 1974, in particular paragraph 4 which calls for effective measures against persecution, torture, violence and degrading treatment of women,

– having regard to the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1265 on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict of 17 September 1999, in particular paragraph 14, requesting that United Nations personnel involved in peacekeeping and peace-building activities have appropriate training in human rights law, including gender-related provisions,

– having regard to the United Nations General Assembly Resolution 3519 on Women's Participation in the Strengthening of International Peace and Security of 15 December 1975, and to the United Nations General Assembly Declaration 37/63 on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Cooperation of 3 December 1982, in particular paragraph 12 on practical measures to increase women's representation in peace efforts,

– having regard to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action resulting from the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women of 4–15 September 1995, in particular critical concern area E on Women and Armed Conflict, and to the outcome document of the United Nations Beijing +5 Special Session on further actions and initiatives to implement

the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action of 5–9 June 2000, in particular paragraph 13 on obstacles to women's equal participation in peace-building efforts, and paragraph 124 on a 50/50 gender balance in peacekeeping missions and peace negotiations,

– having regard to the International Criminal Court resulting from the Rome Statute of 1998, in particular Articles 7 and 8 defining rape, sexual slavery, forced impregnation, forced sterilisation and any other form of sexual violence as crimes against humanity and war crimes, including as a form of torture and a grave war crime, whether they occur in a systematic or non-methodical manner, and whether these acts occur in international or internal conflicts,

– having regard to the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the additional Protocols of 1977, stating that women will be protected against rape, and any other form of sexual assault,

– having regard to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms of 1950, in particular Articles 3 and 4, which prohibit inhuman treatment or punishment and torture, as well as slavery,

– having regard to the European Council resolution on Integrating Gender in Development of 20 December 1995, in particular paragraph 19 stressing that a gender perspective must be paramount in emergency operations and crisis prevention,

– having regard to the Declaration and Agenda for Action of the United Nations Millenium Forum on the Strengthening of the United Nations for the 21st Century of 26 May 2000, in particular paragraph 11 of section B on gender training for all peacekeeping personnel,

– having regard to its resolution on women in decision-making of 2 March 2000¹⁴, in particular recital I and paragraph 14 on women's participation in peace-keeping, peace-building and conflict-preventing activities,

– having regard to its resolution of 13 April 1984¹⁵ on the application of the Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees, in particular paragraphs 1 and 2 on providing refugee status to women who face harsh or inhumane treatment because they are considered to have transgressed the social mores of the society in which they live,

– having regard to its resolution of 17 December 1992¹⁶ on the rape of women in the former Yugoslavia, in particular paragraph 2 calling for the recognition of rape as a war crime and crime against humanity,

– having regard to its resolution of 11 March 1993¹⁷ on the rape of women in former Yugoslavia, in particular paragraph 14 calling for

¹⁴ Texts Adopted, Item 7.

¹⁵ OJ C 127, 14.5.1984, p. 137.

¹⁶ OJ C 21, 25.1.1993, p. 158.

¹⁷ OJ C 115, 26.4.1993, p.149.

proper medical support for women rape victims, specifically facilities for termination of pregnancy, where that is the woman's wish,

– having regard to the outcome documents of its public hearing of 26–27 June 1995 on gender specific human rights violations, and its public hearing of 18 February 1993 on rape as a war crime in Bosnia, in particular their recognition of the upheaval that refugee status brings to the lives of women, and the latter's call for financial compensation for victims of rape in armed conflict,

– having regard to Rule 163 of its Rules of Procedure,

– having regard to the report of the Committee on Women's Rights and Equal Opportunities (A5-0308/2000),

A. whereas the Geneva Convention does not refer to acts of sexual violence as a "grave breach crime" or as a specific form of torture thereby making it ambiguous whether sexual violence is always considered a war crime,

B. whereas women develop strength, power and flexibility in certain situations, recognise abuses and are prepared to take initiatives for their families and for society, thereby bringing about positive changes,

C. whereas the United Nations General Assembly Declaration 3318 on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict is technically vague, failing to mention sexual violence or the specific needs of refugee women,

D. whereas 4/5 of the world's refugees are women and children and 90% of war victims are now civilians, mainly women and children,

E. whereas rape and sexual violence have been shown to be highly prevalent in refugee camps in, for example, Kenya and Tanzania,

F. whereas rape as a weapon of war has been documented throughout history, most recently in the former Yugoslavia, Sudan, Liberia, Uganda, Peru, Sri Lanka, Cambodia, Somalia, Rwanda, Bangladesh, as well as in other conflicts,

G. whereas a wide spectrum of studies demonstrate that the mobilisation of male soldiers – both warring factions and peacekeepers – contributes to the growth of prostitution around military bases and army camps, subsequently increasing child prostitution, and the spread of sexually transmitted diseases,

H. whereas armed factions in conflicts across the globe, for instance in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Sudan, have captured young girls and women and forced them into sexual slavery,

I. whereas women who are raped during war are often stigmatised by their local communities and often not provided with health care or psychological trauma services,

J. whereas several peacekeepers from European Union Member States have been dismissed from United Nations missions for acts of sexual violence in Somalia and Mozambique,

K. whereas only four European Union Member States – Belgium, France, Italy and Luxembourg – have ratified the Rome Statute out of the sixty states necessary to authorise the International Criminal Court (ICC),

L. whereas, as a consequence of armed conflict, the breakdown of socio-economic systems and increased levels of poverty, trafficking of women is a growing phenomenon in areas of conflict,

M. whereas women's peace initiatives often cross warring factions – as in the Middle East, Cyprus and Northern Ireland – and are often undertaken at great risk in areas of extreme conflict – as in Sudan, Lebanon and Russia,

N. whereas women are often marginalized or excluded from negotiation and diplomacy aimed at ending armed conflicts, as was the case in peace talks in, for example, Burundi, Tajikistan, and most recently in Kosovo,

O. whereas the rights, priorities and interests of women are frequently ignored in formal peace negotiations,

P. whereas women's full participation in decision-making, conflict prevention and resolution and all peace initiatives is vital; whereas their participation in peacekeeping missions has not been numerically significant until the 1990s, the increased presence of women in the civilian, military and police components of peacekeeping operations has resulted in improved relations with local communities, which is essential to the creation of a sustainable peace,

Q. whereas donor attention during demobilisation of military forces and warring factions generally focuses on men, resulting in women often being excluded from aid and development programs associated with reconstruction,

R. whereas the needs of girl soldiers – who have often been raped, used as sex slaves, had unwanted pregnancies, have venereal diseases and/or AaS – are generally not incorporated in demobilisation initiatives,

S. stressing that sustainable peace is in many ways contingent on community-based involvement and ownership of the peace process – a process which can only be legitimate if women are equally involved – and that the role of the international community in supporting civil society networks that link local, national, and international initiatives is crucial to the peace process,

I. The protection of war affected populations

1. Condemns systematic rape, forced impregnation, sexual slavery, and all other forms of gender-based violence in situations of armed conflict;

2. Condemns the sexual misconduct of soldiers involved in peacekeeping operations;

3. Condemns the use of child soldiers of both sexes;

4. Calls upon the Member States to take all necessary steps to amend Article 147 of the Fourth Geneva Protocol to define rape, forced

impregnation, sexual slavery, forced sterilization, and any other forms of sexual violence as grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions;

5. Calls upon Member States to ratify the Treaty of Rome authorising an International Criminal Court which formally recognises rape, forced impregnation, forced sterilisation, sexual slavery and any other form of sexual violence as crimes against humanity and war crimes, including as a form of torture and a grave war crime, whether they occur in a systematic or non-methodical manner ;

6. Calls on the Member States to take action at the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women and advocate the updating of the wording of the Declaration on the Protection of Women and Children in Emergency and Armed Conflict to include sexual violence and the specific needs of refugee women;

7. Calls on the Member States to take action at the United Nations to ensure the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on women in armed conflict situations;

8. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to gender sensitise peace and security related initiatives, and to that end:

(a) provide training on the gender-aspects of conflict resolution and peace-building to staff engaged in policies concerning conflict at headquarters and in field offices,

(b) utilise local gender expertise in field offices,

(c) foster research on the development of gender-based violence during and after armed conflicts,

(d) provide gender training at an early stage in the training of military personnel so that respect for women becomes a matter of course and a female-friendly atmosphere prevails in the army,

(e) ensure that actions against trafficking in women in conflict affected areas form part of such initiatives;

9. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to integrate a gender perspective in the planning of refugee camps under their funding auspices, and to that end:

(a) make sure that all the initiatives they fund are in line with international agreements and norms concerning refugee women, such as the UNHCR guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women and on the Prevention of and Response to Sexual Violence against Refugees,

(b) protect refugees and internally displaced women and children from the possibility of sexual abuse through the provision of appropriate preventive measures at the very stage when camps are divided up,

(c) secure the right of women refugees to self determination through appropriate economic opportunities and equal representation in refugee committees and other decision-making bodies in refugee camps,

(d) secure safe conditions of return for women and girls returning to their geographical areas of origin;

10. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to make available adequate financial resources so that victims of rape and assault in areas with an armed conflict can receive psychological counselling and have the choice between terminating the pregnancy or giving birth discreetly and so that victims of these outrages can be protected;

11. Calls on the Commission to set aside a certain percentage of the EUR 216 million refugee fund for the training of reception centre civil servants, police officers, and health staff to meet the particular needs of refugee women;

12. Calls on the Member States to introduce a gender perspective in their refugee policies, and to that end:

(a) under specific conditions grant temporary refugee status to women who have been raped or have been subjected to other forms of sexual violence during armed conflict, occupation and/or transition,

(b) provide rape victims with treatment for trauma and offer them practical help as outlined in paragraph 14 of its aforementioned resolution of 11 March 1993 on the rape of women in Former Yugoslavia,

(c) ensure that detention/reception centres for refugees include separate facilities for non-related men and women, concurrent with the appointment of gender trained staff in the women's section;

II. International efforts to prevent and solve armed conflicts

13. Calls on the Member States to promote equal participation of women in diplomatic conflict resolution and reconstruction initiatives at all levels, and to that end:

(a) recruit more women to the diplomatic services of Member States,

(b) train women within the diplomatic corps of Member States in negotiation, facilitation and mediation skills, creating rosters of qualified women for peace and security related assignments,

(c) nominate more women to international diplomatic assignments, specifically to senior positions (UN special representatives, peace commissions, fact-finding missions, etc.),

(d) increase the percentage of women in delegations to national, regional and international meetings concerned with peace and security, as well as in formal peace negotiations,

(e) require international diplomatic peace teams to systematically consult with women's community-based peace groups and organisations, ensuring that their problems and priorities are reflected in the official peace process;

14. Calls on the Council and the Member States to promote the gender sensitisation of peace, security and reconstruction operations in which they participate, and to that end:

(a) make a gender analysis an automatic element in the planning and practice of external interventions. Specifically, analysing the extent to

which women's social, economic and political marginalization increase as a result of the conflict, as well as the opportunities for improving women's position as a result of the changed situation,

(b) ensure that all military personnel – male as well as female – and specifically peace-building, peacekeeping, and peace-enforcement personnel have thorough gender training,

(c) have magistrates and human rights observers accompany peacekeepers to ensure that international law is upheld;

15. Stresses that current conflicts demand the increased use of non-military crisis-management, which means that new non-military skills are required of peacekeepers, resulting in enhanced opportunities for women, and calls on the Member States and the Council to:

(a) include women in all reconciliation, peacekeeping, peace-enforcement, peace building, and conflict preventive posts – including fact-finding and observer missions – in which Member States participate,

(b) secure that women participating in peacekeeping operations are bound by United Nations norms and international human rights principles and not by discriminatory local restrictions,

(c) promote the use of all female fact-finding and assistance teams to respond to sexual violence and other situations where demanded by the cultural context;

16. Stresses that reconciliation of deep-seated conflicts present an unequalled opportunity to create the framework for a democratic and equal society, and to that end, calls on the Commission and the Member States to promote constitutional protections of women's equality in the design of the peace accords;

III. Community-based participation in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts

17. Points out that most women are traditionally associated with non-violence, while their lives and value systems are interwoven with the protection of life, dialogue, reconciliation, negotiation and the peaceful settlement of disputes, values which may provide an alternative solution to the modern culture of violence and lay the foundations for a new culture, the culture of peace, the strengthening of dialogue at all levels, the equitable distribution of the planet's resources and respect for racial, religious and cultural differences;

18. Stresses the importance of active local involvement in the peace and reconciliation process; and calls upon the Member States and the Commission to:

(a) support the creation and strengthening of non-governmental organisations, including women's organisations, active in conflict prevention and in post-conflict peace and reconstruction work,

(b) work towards the education of women's organisations in non-violent conflict resolution;

19. Calls on the Member States and the Commission to systematically promote the participation of women in the official conflict resolution process, and to that end:

(a) encourage that warring factions incorporate women into their peace negotiation teams,

(b) ensure that gender inequalities and repercussions are discussed systematically in each area of negotiation,

(c) ensure that the peace process is deeply rooted, through requesting that warring factions incorporate civil society representatives into their peace negotiation teams,

(d) support public awareness raising campaigns and debates about the contents of the peace negotiations;

20. Calls on the Commission and the Member States to ensure that women who are frequently the most vulnerable, and who often have a crucial role in the rebuilding of their societies, are not marginalised by inappropriate demobilisation and reconstruction initiatives, and to that end:

(a) promote a public debate in post-conflict regions concerning gender-based abuses in order to avoid a repetition of violence,

(b) ensure that both women and men benefit from reconstruction initiatives, specifically that female ex-combatants are not excluded or made worse off from demobilisation programs,

(c) set aside a specific percentage of demobilisation and reconstruction funds for women's political and economic empowerment,

(d) pay particular attention to the specific rehabilitation needs of girl soldiers within demobilisation initiatives;

21. Calls on the Commission and the Council to inform the European Parliament on an annual basis on the progress, programmes and initiatives undertaken as a consequence of this resolution

22. Calls on the Council, Commission, and the UN Secretary General to in all reporting on peace and security related initiatives include a chapter covering gender related aspects;

23. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, and the UN Secretary General.

18. G8 ROMA INITIATIVES ON CONFLICT PREVENTION

Conclusions of the meeting of the G8 Foreign Ministers

Rome, 18–19 July 2001

1. STRENGTHENING THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN CONFLICT PREVENTION

The international community has increasingly recognized the positive contributions women can make to preventing conflicts and consolidating peace. For example, the role of women in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building has been emphasized in the final document of the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly „Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century.“ In October 2000, the Security Council adopted Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. These efforts indicate a growing realization that in conflict situations women are more than victims requiring the protection of the international community: they are negotiators, peacemakers and advisors whose efforts are vital to sustainable peace.

Despite studies, conferences, and pledges to do so, the international community has failed to ensure women's full and equal participation in conflict prevention, peace operations and post-conflict peace-building. International efforts to address mounting political, economic and humanitarian crises can be substantially strengthened by involvement of women. Our comprehensive approach to conflict prevention is incomplete if we neglect to include women. Women bring alternative perspectives to conflict prevention at the grass-roots and community levels. We must encourage creative and innovative ways to better draw on the talents women bring to preventing conflict and sustaining peace. Furthermore, we should identify practical steps and strategies that we can support individually and collectively to advance the role of women in conflict prevention and post conflict peace building.

Building on the 1995 "Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action" adopted at the 4th World Conference on Women, the guidelines of the 1997 OECD/DAC statement on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation on the Threshold of the 21st Century, as well as its Supplement approved in April 2001; the 1998 Agreed conclusions on „Women and Armed Conflict“ of the UN Commission on the Status of Women Agreed Conclusions on Women and Armed Conflict; the 8 March 2000 Security Council Presidential Statement on International Women's Day; the 2000 UNIFEM report „Women at the Peace Table: Making a Difference“; the final document of the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly „Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century“ the study „Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective in Multidimensional Peace Operations“ by the

Lessons Learned Unit of DPKO; the Report of UN Secretariat on the implementation of the Brahimi Report, G-8 partners will seize the opportunity to set an example for the international community.

On the basis of these premises, the G8:

- Emphasizes the importance of the systematic involvement of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, as well as women's full and equal participation in all phases of conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding.
- Encourages the participation of all actors of civil society, including women's organizations, in conflict prevention and conflict resolution as well as encourage and support the sharing of experiences and best practices. In line with the 1997 OECD/DAC statement, and its April 2001 Supplement, the G-8 is confident that women's full and equal participation in all the phases of the process of conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding will enhance the opportunities for building a just and peaceful society. Special attention should be given, in this context, to identifying and working with local women who represent an influential voice for peace.
- Encourages those involved in planning for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs to consider the specific needs of female ex-combatants and to take into account the needs of their dependents, particularly in the design of reintegration approaches to education, training and resource distribution.
- Supports the provision of appropriate gender-sensitive training for participants in peace-related operations, including military observers, civilian police, human rights and humanitarian personnel.
- Encourages the appointment of more women to national and international posts, including SRSGs, Special Envoys, Resident Coordinators and other operational positions.
- Commits, where appropriate, to the integration of a gender perspective and to the participation of women in the development, design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of bilateral and multilateral assistance programmes.

2. CORPORATE CITIZENSHIP AND CONFLICT PREVENTION

Following the recognition contained in the conclusions of the July 2000 Miyazaki Foreign Ministers' Meeting regarding the role that corporate social responsibility (CSR) can play in conflict prevention, the G8 has identified this issue as a priority area for attention and initiative.

Although the political nature of violent conflict can hardly be doubted, economic factors frequently turn out to be highly relevant – both

as objectives and instruments of conflict. With a greater number of companies selling to, investing in, and sourcing from a greater number of foreign markets, the private sector is more internationalized than ever. There is a growing awareness of the impact companies can have in conflict-prone regions.

They in turn have a direct interest shared by all in conflict prevention and peace building to ensure a stable environment for their operations.

A great deal of work is being done internationally to address CSR issues through the development of multilateral standards and norms. At the World Economic Forum in Davos in 1999, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan launched the "Global Compact" – a call to world business leaders to adopt a set of nine principles based on existing UN instruments including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and the Rio Declaration. OECD Ministers recently adopted revised Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. International efforts to stem the illicit trade in rough diamonds from conflict zones provide a good example of areas where the private sector can make an active contribution to conflict prevention.

Based on these premises, the G8:

- recognizes that the private sector through good citizenship can play an important and positive role in conflict prevention and post-conflict reconstruction
- welcomes the UNGA Resolution A/55/215 entitled "Towards Global Partnership" adopted by consensus in December 2000, and takes note of initiatives such as the UN Secretary General's Global Compact, the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises and similar work in other multilateral fora, including the World Bank.
- expresses its intention to co-operate with private and non governmental sectors using these initiatives as points of reference.
- intends to work further with the private and non-governmental sectors to explore best practices to respond to specific challenges faced in high-risk environments.
- stresses the valuable contribution that partnership between corporations and local communities can make to the development of civil society.

PART III

NATIONAL ACTION PLANS (excerpt II, CoE Handbook)

1. What are national action plans?

National action plans are commitments made by governments to promote equality. Their implementation is entrusted to various actors, mainly the national equality machinery and its different agencies at the national, regional and local levels. In some countries specific regional actions plan exist. Non-governmental associations working for equality and/or the social partners often assist with the implementation of these plans. A growing practice, encouraged by many governments through national action plans, is the adoption of equal opportunities plans in private enterprises.

It is interesting to note that most member States of the Council of Europe set up action plans to promote equality (or “equal opportunities plans”) after the Beijing World Conference on Women, sometimes taking strategies directly from the Beijing Platform for Action. The countries having a longer tradition of national machinery have sometimes set up a more focused plan, working on specific areas of concern in the Platform.

By co-ordinating the preparation of a national plan for action, the division, council or ministry strives to make the rest of the central government take responsibility for the promotion of gender equality. The use of this tool is based on the political activity of the minister and on the political will of the government. The initiative, however, can also come from Parliament, or from an advisory council.

Action plans often include measures implying compulsory procedures and target setting. Target setting is necessary in order to monitor the action plans and to measure the progress made thanks to the plan. Targets are also useful as a tool to benchmark countries.

2. EXAMPLES OF NATIONAL ACTION PLANS

2.1. AUSTRIA

AUSTRIA'S NATIONAL REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE "PLATFORM FOR ACTION" FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN BEIJING 1995¹⁸

G. Women in power and decision-making

G1: Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making

Women in public life

The actual representation of women in public life is an important yardstick for the involvement of women in all spheres of the society. It is evident that the number of women involved in politics, both through institutions or on their own initiative, is constantly growing, furthered by the rising levels of educational attainment and by the integration of ever more women in productive employment.

The public image of women politicians, and consequently of women in general, depends to a great extent on the practice, increasingly witnessed in recent years, of nominating women for top positions on candidates' lists or of electing them as the chairpersons of party organisations (The Greens from 1994 to 1996, the Liberal Forum since 1993). In the last presidential elections in 1992, the first woman candidate in the history of the Austrian Republic ran for the highest office in the state. In the 1998 presidential election this situation will be repeated.

Four of currently (1998) 16 cabinet members are women, three of them holding the positions of Federal Ministers and one the position of Assistant-Secretary of State. Of 211 Members of the European Parliament 14 are men and 7 women. The proportion of women among the 183 Austrian Members of Parliament is 26%.

All of the five parties represented in Parliament are committed, to varying degrees, to the increased involvement of women in politics. The Greens, for example, have a 50% quota for women anchored in their statutes. The Social Democratic Party of Austria has adopted a women's

¹⁸ forwarded by the Federal Minister for Women's Affairs and Consumer Protection, Vienna, March 1998

quota of 40, the Austrian People's Party one of 33%. Neither the party programme of the Liberal Forum nor that of the Austrian Freedom Party contains fixed quotas for women.

The situation in the Federal Provinces is characterised by substantial differences in the political presence of women. It is still highest in the Provincial Parliament of Vienna, with 34% in 1997 as compared with 31% in 1994; in the remaining 8 Federal Provinces the proportion of women varied between 6% and 26% in 1997 as compared with 8% and 25% in 1994. At the local government level the average percentage of women was about 8% in 1994; at the beginning 1998, only 36 of the 2359 local communities in Austria (1.5%) had women mayors.

In 1994, the first woman judge was called to the Constitutional Court; in 1997 another female lawyer was appointed judge at the Constitutional Court. Somewhat less than 30% of the posts for judges, one fifth of the posts for public prosecutors and one sixth of all leading positions in the judicial sector are held by women (1997). Women account for almost two thirds of the candidates for judicial office (1997), which means that the overall proportion of women in the judicial sector is expected to rise continuously.

In the organisations representing employer and employee interests, the proportion of women is about 10 to 13% (1994). From 1994 to 1996, the Federal Chamber of Labour, the statutory body representing the interests of employees in Austria, was, for the first time, headed by a woman.

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

H1: Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies

Representing women's interests at government level

At government level the interests of Austrian women have, since 1991, been represented by a woman Federal Minister attached to the Federal Chancellery. Her support structure at civil service level is the Department for Women's Issues and Consumer Protection, established at the Federal Chancellery in 1997.

In 1997, a special Internet homepage of the Federal Minister for Women's Issues and Consumer Protection (www.bminfv.gv.at) was set up to present the department and to provide information about its tasks, publications, functions and other activities.

Moreover, the Federal Minister for Women's Issues and Consumer Protection is the publisher of a report on the current situation of women in Austria. This report, which is based on scientific findings and a variety of statistic data, is issued at ten-year intervals (most recently in 1995). In

addition, she is the publisher of a series addressing various women-specific issues of socio-political relevance.

On the occasion of Austria's EU Presidency in the second half of 1998, the Federal Minister for Women's Issues and Consumer Protection will share the chairmanship of the informal EU Council of Ministers for Labour, Social Affairs and Equality of Women and Men with the Federal Minister of Labour, Health and Social Affairs. Their chairmanship is seen as an opportunity to boost the Austrian priority topic „Equal Opportunities and Employment“ at the EU level.

2.2. DENMARK

DENMARK
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
3 April 1996
S.Q.File No. 28.B.98

Statement to the Folketing on Follow-up at national and international Levels to the United Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women

All relevant Danish ministries have been requested to compare their fields of work with the recommendations of the Platform for Action with a view to identifying already implemented recommendations and suggesting new initiatives. The Committee on International Equality Affairs has debated the follow-up at the international level. Follow-up at the national level has been submitted to the Danish Equal Status Council. Women's organisations are represented in both fora.

The Platform for Action recommends governments to review and, where appropriate, to strengthen the national equal status bodies.

The present structure and mandate of the Danish Equal Status Council date, with a few amendments, back to 1978 when a parliamentary act gave statutory effect to the Council. As a follow-up to the Beijing Declaration, the government has decided to set up a committee to consider organisational changes and come up with suggestions for innovative approaches to equality work in the light of the tasks which are to be given priority in the future also at the international level. The committee shall also consider whether the recommended changes require the present Equal Status Act to be amended.

Under its mandate, the committee shall i.a. review equality work in the other Nordic countries. The committee will have a broad spectrum of members representing ministries, the Equal Status Council, organisations,

including women's and men's organisations, local government authorities and relevant research circles. In accordance with wishes expressed by several parties during the parliamentary debate on 8 December 1995 in which the participation of young people in equality work was emphasized, two representatives from the Joint Council of Danish Youth Organisations will be invited to join the committee.

The government awaits the outcome of the committee's work, which can form the basis of innovative and intensified approaches to equality work.

The integration of gender aspects (mainstreaming) into policies and planning is already a central element of the Danish strategy for equality between women and men. Examples are:

– In the autumn of 1995, the government initiated a pilot project whereby all bills within the purview of the Ministry of Labour should be assessed from a gender perspective. The objective of this assessment is to analyze the gender-impact of a bill. The result shall be included in the comments to the bill. The project is temporary only and functions within such areas as leave of absence and education, active labour market politics, and the working environment. Experience gained from the pilot project shall establish whether such a gender-impact assessment can be extended to include other areas under the purview of the Ministry of Labour and perhaps other ministries.

– Effective from 1 September 1995, the Local Administration Act has been amended i.a. to the effect that local district and county authorities at least every second year shall inform their citizens about the status of equality for their employees. The local authorities shall state whether an equal opportunities policy has been formulated and, if so, go into its particulars.

– The government is considering the possibility of preparing the prognoses on labour force, employment and unemployment in the Economic Surveys on the basis of gender-distribution

The objective of the national plan of action for equality is to map out in terms of equality the problems of the central government institutions and to suggest activities which may contribute to establishing real equality. The government expects all central government institutions to have completed the drafting of plans of action indicating objectives and time horizons by the end of 1996 when the third national plan of action is to be evaluated. The question of equality must be dealt with in all spheres of society and must include all parties, including NGOs and the business community – in Denmark as well as at regional and international levels. The Equal Status Council and the Committee on International Equality Affairs will monitor this process. Full equality between women and men by the year 2000 should not be an unrealistic goal for a country such as Denmark.

DENMARK
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
File No. S.Q. 28.B.98
Copenhagen, May 13, 1996

In follow-up of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Government of Denmark has presented a memorandum to the Folketing describing the initiatives planned by relevant ministries. The memorandum was discussed and taken note of by the Folketing on April 25, 1996. The Folketing also adopted a decision to encourage the Government to mainstream a gender perspective in administrative, policy and planning activities, nationally as well as internationally and to work towards a continuation of the UN's women's conferences in the year 2000 and onwards. The main follow-up initiatives in the memorandum are:

At the national level:

- the Prime Minister has set up a committee to consider possible changes of the organization of the work for equal status between men and women and to propose priorities for future activities on equality, nationally as well as internationally;
- the already considerable efforts for providing equal opportunities for girls and boys in the educational system – especially at primary school level – will be increased;
- elimination of occupational segregation at the labour market and improvement of the reconciliation of working life and family life will be continued;
- intensified efforts to reach the goal of equal pay for equal work and for work of equal value will be initiated;
- a statistical project on equal pay has been launched by the Ministry of Labour and the Equal Status Council;
- elimination of „double discrimination“ of women belonging to ethnic minorities;
- intensifying efforts to improve women's participation in decision-making;
- setting up of a working group to plan a campaign against female genital mutilation.

At the international level:

- strengthened efforts to integrate a gender perspective in Danish development co-operation policies and programmes (mainstreaming) will be initiated, especially with regard to poverty alleviation, sexual and reproductive health and rights, education, women's human rights and elimination of violence, particularly female genital mutilation (FGM);
- a set of guidelines on the prevention of FGM has just been issued;

- at annual negotiations with programme countries, implementation of the Platform for Action will be a priority;
- likewise implementation of PFA and integration of gender aspects will be emphasized vis a vis multilateral development organisations;
- with regard to the EU development co-operation, Denmark will pursue a consolidated EU-policy concerning women and development to be integrated in the general objectives of the EU-development co-operation;
- finally, Denmark will pursue integration of the recommendations concerning equality in the Platform for Action from the 4th World Conference on Women into plans of action and activities in connection with the follow-up of other previously held international conferences.

2.3. FINLAND

EQUALITY PROGRAMME OF THE FINNISH GOVERNMENT¹⁹

The Programme in hand is the instrument of the Finnish Government's quality policy. It lays down objectives and the measures necessary to achieve them. It aims at promoting an increasingly gender-sensitive approach, for example a willingness to monitor the effect of various measures on men's and women's status. Finally, it is a channel through which the Government informs citizens of its principles and practices in matters of equality. Promoting gender equality is also the objective of the international community, as represented by the United Nations. It is essential that governments demonstrate their commitment to implement the Beijing Platform of Action. Through the Equality Programme the Finnish Government conveys to the rest of the world its concern with the promotion of equality. At the same time the Programme is Finland's contribution to the international debate on the topic. A comparison of the equality programmes drafted in different countries will serve as an interesting survey of the international status of men and women and of governments' priorities. The promotion of gender equality in all walks of life is called mainstreaming. Implementing the mainstreaming principle is a key item on the agendas of the Beijing Platform of Action, the Fourth Action Programme for Equal Opportunities and the Equality Programme of the Nordic Council of Ministers. As part of mainstreaming, a gender perspective is reflected in all policies at all levels, whether local, regional, national or international. Reaching these goals is made easier by a residential and general environment created according to this same principle.

¹⁹ Approved on 6 February 1997

1. PROMOTING EQUALITY BY MAINSTREAMING

1.1. Basis provided by the fundamental rights in the Constitution Act and by the Equality Act

In recent years the general obligation of public authority to promote gender equality has been integrated into Finnish legislation. The related acts form the basis for the adoption of the mainstreaming principle in public administration and more generally in Finnish society.

According to the reform of the Constitution Act that was completed in 1995, gender equality shall be promoted in social activities and in working life. In the same year the provision in the Act on Equality between Women and Men (the Equality Act) concerning the obligation of authorities to promote gender equality was complemented by a statement whereby all authorities shall act in a determined and methodical manner and remove any obstacles to equality. According to the mainstreaming principle, such measures must be taken in all sectors of public authority. Furthermore, the Equality Act prescribes that government committees, municipal bodies and the executive and administrative bodies in public authority and municipal and state-majority companies shall comprise an equitable proportion of both women and men.

While deliberating on the reform of the Equality Act, the Committee on Employment Affairs mandated by Parliament proposed that the effects of the legislative reform be considered separately for women and men. A similar, more general, guideline was already included in the instructions for drafting government proposals; it stated that an evaluation should be made of the impact of these proposals on the economy, organisations, staff policies and the environment as well as on the status of the different non-governmental groups. Usually, however, little attention has been paid to the gender perspective. For example, a study of the government bills presented in 1994 showed that the impact of these bills on non-governmental groups was considered only in about ten percent of the cases. The figure was under one percent (two Government bills) when it came to assessing the effect on the promotion of equality.

1.2. The mainstreaming principle in administration

The promotion of equality between women and men must be an overriding principle in all decision-making related to public administration and also when planning and taking measures and evaluating their impact. A condition for successfully implementing the mainstreaming principle is that decision-makers and the persons responsible for drafting proposals be fully committed to advancing equality. For this purpose they must have sufficient basic information on

the status of women and men in all sectors of social policy, acquired for example from gender-specific statistics, studies, impact analyses and scientific research.

Equality is promoted not only by obligating the ministries and other authorities to do so, but also by highlighting the gender perspective in certain specific branches of administration.

As laid down in the Equality Plan of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry must consider the equality principle when preparing matters and must follow and participate in international debates on the issue. The gender perspective is realised by having women participate equally with men in planning and decision-making. The Ministry strives to promote equality in budgeting as well as in operating and economic plans. The long-term objective of the Ministry is to abandon operational equality plans and instead to use operating and economic plans as the framework for equality projects. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

The mainstreaming principle has been applied to several equality issues at the Ministry of Education, and new applications are constantly being sought. The Ministry stresses the importance of mainstreaming especially in sports and youth policy. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Education)

The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry promotes equality according to the mainstreaming principle in its entire administrative branch. There will be increased research and statistics on women's employment and economic status, women will continue to be provided with counselling and training and the compilation of gender-specific statistics on income formation will be introduced in order to improve administrative services. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)

Promoting equality in all its aspects is one of the basic responsibilities of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. Every year, the Ministry prepares a number of reforms that affect the everyday lives of citizens. In the future, the role of these reforms in the promotion of gender equality will be scrutinised even more carefully as early as in the preparatory stage. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)

While the Ministry of Labour observes the mainstreaming principle in its administrative branch in general, it is especially aware of its importance in employment management. Attention is paid to the gender perspective in all decision-making, including preparations, implementation and monitoring. Monitoring must include equality analyses. Improvements are made whenever results and observations give cause for doing so. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Labour)

The Ministry of the Environment develops environmental and community policy according to the objective of gender equality. To this

end, practices are laid down that improve the opportunities of both women and men to participate in environmental and community policy. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of the Environment)

For the purpose of developing methods and producing the necessary reports, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health will launch in 1997 a project for developing and testing administrative practices in line with the mainstreaming principle. Models will be created for applying this principle to the preparation of government proposals and to budget and information control. The project is part of a larger mainstreaming project prepared by the Nordic Council of Ministers and implemented in co-operation with other ministries responsible for developing the mainstreaming principle. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health in co-operation with the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and the Ministry of the Environment) (Project/the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health: Developing the Mainstreaming Principle)

Plans have been made to conduct a study on the practical effects of the Equality Act, especially application practices. In this connection an evaluation will be made of the social impact of the Act, especially in working life and social decision-making. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health) (Project/the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health: Evaluation of the Effects of the Equality Act)

The Association of Finnish Local Authorities will launch a study on the implementation of the equality principle. The aim is to chart the situation in municipalities before and after the reformed Equality Act entered into force on 1 March 1995.

1.3. Training at the highest level

Equality cannot be promoted without the commitment of political decision-makers and authorities. Their interest in and knowledge of the issue can be increased by providing information and training and by acquainting them with the situation.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is presently co-ordinating a project under which the highest-ranking officials are acquainted with equality issues. The first stage will involve a meeting in January 1997 for the training and information officers of Ministries. This will be followed by training events for secretary generals, office heads and heads of the provinces. The training provided in this context will be relatively restricted, its purpose being to complement the other events arranged for top-level authorities. Training will be continued on the basis of experience gained and extended in 1998 to other decision-makers in society, for example university rectors (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health) (Project/the Ministry of Social Affairs and

Health: Training Highest-ranking Officials). Municipalities will be responsible for the corresponding training of its own decision-makers and high-level authorities.

The experts, presenting officials and drafting secretaries of the different offices also need to be taught to use impact analyses, statistics and research related to equality issues. Such training could be planned as part of the above mentioned Nordic mainstreaming project. Ministries and offices are expected to encourage equality training on their own initiative. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, all ministries) (Project/the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health: Training Users of Statistics and Research)

1.4. Developing statistics

Statistics cast light on the inequalities prevailing in society. Thus the Beijing Platform of Action accentuates the need for developing national, regional and international statistical services that would produce gender-specific information for the purpose of planning and evaluation. For example the statistics on education and training, population factors, labour force, salaries and income compiled by Statistics Finland provide the elements necessary for building a picture of women's and men's position in society. Other information essential in the assessment of gender balance can be obtained from ministries and national boards.

However, even these sources are not yet sufficient to fulfil the requirements set out in the Platform. There is a special need for more detailed statistics on women in social decision-making and power wielding and on women's economic activities, in particular unremunerated work.

Statistics are an important tool when integrating a gender perspective into state administration. The effect of measures on gender balance cannot be evaluated without more advanced statistical material and new processing methods. In this context, the various authorities and Statistics Finland will evaluate statistical compilation methods as part of the mainstreaming project undertaken at the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, all ministries and Statistics Finland) (Project/the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health: Compiling Statistics in View of Gender Equality)

The Finnish Government wishes to monitor citizens' impressions about gender equality and changes in the situation. Therefore a so-called equality barometer will start being published at least every other year to provide information on the experiences of women and men regarding equality in personal relationships, family life, organisations, working life and society. The first barometer will appear in 1997. In support of this, Statistics Finland will design, in co-operation with users, equality

indicators to gauge gender bias in education and work, earned income, the distribution and availability of services, participation in society, decision-making, health and crime. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and Statistics Finland) (Project/the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health: The Equality Barometer and Equality Indicators)

The Association of Finnish Local Authorities will be responsible for compiling statistics on the implementation of equality in the municipal sector.

1.5. Promoting research

The promotion of equality faces persistent obstacles that have their roots deep within the structures of society, culture and the practices of various institutions. These problems can be grasped and weeded out only with the help of extensive basic and applied research such as that conducted within the framework of women's studies. Finnish equality policy has benefited greatly from the essential information thus gathered.

The vast knowledge produced by women's studies is called for when implementing the mainstreaming principle according to the Equality Programme of the Finnish Government and evaluating the impact of decisions on gender equality. In order for research results to be useful to equality work, it is necessary to improve the national information and documentation services related to women's studies, which up to now have received only modest resources.

Today women's studies are taught at nearly all of Finland's universities. In the future experts will need to master not only their own branch of study but should also be aware of the key issues related to gender equality in their field, and this is an important argument in favour of including women's studies in the curricula of all universities. It is also a big step on the path to integrating a gender perspective into society as a whole.

Women researchers should be encouraged in their careers. A working party set up by the Academy of Finland is presently examining ways of removing obstacles to the advancement of women researchers and improving their status.

As part of a five-year project, the Ministry of Education is providing funds for seven new professorships for women in 1995–1997. The different administrative branches base their decisions on studies and investigations. In line with the mainstreaming principle the focus should be on women's and men's living conditions and interests whenever this is relevant. Under investigation at present are the attitudes towards equality and women's issues in rapidly growing research on different sectors. (Ministries in charge: the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)

Research grants exempt from tax are not taken into account when determining maternity leave, paternity leave or parental leave benefits. This means that if the parent has no other income, he or she is entitled only to the basic daily allowance. The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health is planning to correct this situation. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)

2. THE GLOBAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. Promoting human rights in international organisations

Finland places increasing emphasis on human rights in its foreign and security policy stances. Promoting the human rights of women and children is an important objective of the Finnish Government in such forums as the United Nations and the Council of Europe. The Finnish Government works to integrate a "women's perspective" in all human rights activities and in other political decision-making of the UN. The Government nominates an equal number of women and men when appointing representatives to international bodies or candidates for elections. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

Finland wishes to include a gender dimension in the assignments of UN human rights rapporteurs. Reported violations especially against the human rights of women can be more easily brought before bodies dealing with such issues. The detailed definition of war crimes and crimes against humanity, pre-trial detention and the implementation of punishments are all instrumental to the promotion of the equality principle in humanitarian law. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

At the United Nations and the Council of Europe, Finland actively supports two projects in preparation that would expand the human rights appeal system. One project concerns including a provision on an appeal procedure in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), while the other would provide for an opportunity to appeal against gender-based discrimination on the grounds of the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

In November 1996 it was Finland's turn to start presiding over the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe for a term of six months. In this connection Finland has taken the initiative to arrange a seminar on equality in Finland in spring 1997. It will deal with the theme "women in politics and in political decision-making". Guests at the seminar will include researchers and officials in addition to actors in political life. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs) (Project/the Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Women in Politics and in Political Decision-Making)

A Division on the Human Rights of Women was established under the Committee on International Human Rights mandated by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In 1997 the Committee will organise an international seminar on sexual rights as part of human rights. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs) (Project/the Ministry for Foreign Affairs: Seminar on the Human Rights of Women)

The various aid programmes within the scope of trade policy will be directed to projects that also promote the advancement of women. The link between human rights and trade laid down for example in the aid schemes of the European Union or in the Generalised System of Preferences (GSP) helps place emphasis on the advancement of women. It might be worth resuscitating small-scale systems such as the import promotion programme that encouraged production by developing countries and was planned by FINIPO, which ceased operations in 1995. Promoting import, namely the import of products manufactured by women, is concrete action in favour of women in developing countries. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

2.2. Promoting gender equality as Finland prepares for presidency of the European Union

Promoting equality within the European Union is one of the objectives of the Finnish Government when preparing EU-related matters and deciding on courses of action. This is best realised by having Finnish women hold visible roles in co-operation at European level. Prior to its presidency in 1999, Finland will highlight the gender perspective when planning specific training and issuing instructions and recommendations related to the preparations. This in order that ministries and persons being trained for functions pertaining to Finland's presidency would promote equality when planning matters that will be dealt with in EU task forces. (Ministries in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Finance) If the EU eventually decides to take new members, gender equality issues will become all the more crucial.

At the Intergovernmental Conference, Finland will insist on the promotion of equality between women and men. Its objective is to supplement the Treaty with a ban on gender-based discrimination and a provision on the promotion of equality between women and men. The European Union would then be obliged to mainstream the equality principle in all its areas of operation. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

2.3. Co-operation in developing countries and adjacent countries

The strategic objective of the development co-operation carried out by the Finnish Government in the 1990s is to combat wide-spread

poverty, prevent environmental hazards and promote social equality, democracy and human rights in developing countries. This is not possible without the full participation of women in decision-making, responsibility sharing and the reaping of benefits. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

According to its decision in principle made on 12 September 1996 concerning development co-operation, the Government undertakes to promote measures that reinforce women's participation in society, improve the access of girls and women to basic education and help implement the Platform of Action that was laid down at the Fourth World Conference on Women and aims at the empowerment and advancement of women and girl children. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

The Finnish Government strives to integrate a gender perspective into all development co-operation. To this end it provides continuing training to its staff and plans and implements projects on the basis of a gender-role analysis. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

The Government sees to it that strategic objectives are met in bi- and multilateral projects and in the development co-operation carried out by NGOs. It reminds parties of the need to safeguard sustainable development by promoting the equal participation of women and men in all stages and at all levels of development co-operation. This point of view has been included in resolutions at EU level and in courses of action decided by the OECD/DAC (Development Aid Committee). (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

The strategy for co-operation in adjacent countries, approved on 10 May 1996 by the Ministerial Committee on Foreign and Security Policy appointed by the Finnish Government, draws attention to equality issues. Accordingly, bilateral funding granted by Finland will be directed to projects that strengthen democracy, especially to educational programmes for women and young people and to development of the related infrastructure. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry for Foreign Affairs)

In international co-operation in the forestry sector, Finland emphasises the importance of women and their contribution to forestry. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)

2.4. Monitoring and assessing municipal policy

Municipal administration generates projects that also focus on equality issues. Examples include monitoring the implementation of the new Municipalities Act and the state subsidy system. In 1999 the Government means to present Parliament with a report on the consequences of the new Municipalities Act. In this task the Ministry of the Interior will be assisted by the University of Tampere. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of the Interior)

The reform of the state subsidy systems aims at improving the availability of municipal basic services throughout the country and implementing citizens' fundamental rights in a fair manner. A proposal for monitoring the new system is being drafted at the Ministry of the Interior in co-operation with the Association of Finnish Local Authorities and the appropriate ministries. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of the Interior)

In the preparation of EU schemes and the allocation of funds, the different ministries should work together to improve the formation of regional and local network economies, financing opportunities and the exploitation of data networks. (Ministry in charge: Ministry of the Environment)

2.5. Local activities

In the end of 1996 the Council of State mandated the Co-operation Group for Urban Policy to follow and evaluate development in urban areas, to outline the content of the State's urban policies and to make related proposals (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of the Interior). In its work, the Co-operation Group relies on the report on the state of Finnish cities and on the proposal for future urban policies made by the Working party for Urban Development. The Co-operation Group will tap the expertise of state sector administration, cities, business life and industry as well as universities when planning the development of metropolitan areas.

Investigations have revealed that women's unemployment has grown faster than men's in the 1990s. The number of jobless women is mounting especially in big cities and it will probably continue to rise owing to the large-scale dismissals of personnel from financing institutions. Consequently, unemployment-reducing measures should target cities, especially the many victims of long-term unemployment dwelling in the cities. Measures taken to create jobs in the service sector often benefit women. However, as urban women tend to be highly educated, they should be able to choose from a wide selection of job openings in several different sectors.

Earlier the Council of State mandated the Co-operation Group for Rural Policy to co-ordinate efforts to develop the countryside and to make the use of resources for rural development more efficient. The work of the Co-operation Groups for Rural Policy is presented in more detail in Subchapter 5.7. „Diversifying the activities of farmers“.

In Finnish local government citizenship is enforced mainly by means of traditional representative democracy. The promotion of gender equality cannot depend on this alone, however. Although it is important to increase women's share in the decision-making bodies in local government, it should be kept in mind that citizenship is not limited to

one range of action. The fewer the possibilities of influencing decisions, the greater the number of passive local residents. (Ministry in charge: Ministry of the Interior)

Citizenship should be defined as part of the efforts made to promote equality. A Swedish power study has come up with clear differences between the ways women and men influence decision-making in society. Men wield power in the various structures of representative democracy, for example in political parties and networks and as elected officials and highest-ranking officials, while women are active at the level of „large-scale democracy“ in protests and demonstrations. The study defines „small-scale democracy“ as people's direct possibility of influencing decisions concerning their own environment. This refers to parents' position with respect to schools and day-care centres, that of students with respect to educational establishments, that of patients and their relatives with respect to institutions and, naturally, that of occupants and residents with respect to their dwelling or residential area. Small-scale democracy in working life refers to the forms of action at individual working places.

With the exception of working life, all forms of „small-scale democracy“ belong to women's sphere of activities. In recent years municipalities have brushed aside issues related to participation opportunities. When discussing democracy, the emphasis has been on developing representative democracy. However, small-scale democracy and large-scale democracy are complementary. Citizenship should be looked at from different angles when striving towards gender equality. Participation opportunities must be the same not only between women and men but also among the different residential areas and population groups of a municipality. Citizenship is secured through dialogue and multiple channels of influence. (Ministry in charge: Ministry of the Interior)

The purpose of the Participation Project started by the Ministry of the Interior is to create and gather Finnish models of non-governmental participation at local level. The project will concentrate on the experiments carried out by municipalities and assisted by the State. The Ministry is considering the possibility of granting exceptional permissions for the purposes of the experiments. (Ministry in charge: Ministry of the Interior)

3. SOCIAL PARTICIPATION AND DECISION-MAKING

Women still have less say than men in decision-making in society. The share of women Members of Parliament has remained at one third for a long time; the figure is slightly lower in municipal councils. Before 1997 only 17% of the members of central councils and federal governments in provinces were women. These bodies are responsible for regional development. Women find it even harder to reach the top in business life. In 1993 one third of Finland's biggest companies had no women managers, and women accounted for only 11% of all the managers in these companies.

In the private sector as a whole, the percentage of women was 21% in 1990. The only area where women managers are the rule is human resources. Companies themselves decide on their choice of managers.

The quota provision in the Equality Act has increased women's participation in the preparing of decisions in state administration. Prior to the reformed Equality Act, the share of women was at least 40% in 20% of all state committees and similar bodies. Now 68% of these bodies comply with the quota provision. The composition of the various bodies in municipal administration has been altered following the 1996 election and entry into force of the quota provision, permitting women to exert markedly more influence at local level. The presence of women will also grow in the co-operation partners of municipalities: the central councils and administrative boards of provinces.

According to the Equality Act, those elected to the executive and administrative bodies of state-majority companies shall be women and men in an equitable proportion, unless other considerations exist. In spite of this, women form only 24% of the members of the administrative bodies set up since the new Equality Act. The Government plans to raise women's percentage to 30 in the executive and administrative bodies of state-owned companies and businesses composed during 1997–1999.

Women should be better placed to influence decisions concerning the countryside, farms and forestry. This should be possible at all levels, especially in related counselling activities and organisations. The objective is to give women more power in the administrative branch of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry and in the rural sector, and to increase their numbers in the administrative bodies of advisory organisations. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry)

3.1. Developing civil defence

Only about 30% of the members of organisations concerned with public civil defence are women. A woman's position in such organisations depends on her official rank in the municipality. The Government stresses the importance of including women in civil defence, especially in the independent organisation of civil defence and in training. Training is sometimes a gentle propaganda tool: for example the latest educational campaign featured a film dealing with house protection, where the head of civil defence was a woman. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of the Interior)

3.2. Providing consistent government aid to women's organisations

Women's organisations have an undeniable role in promoting gender equality. They too face new challenges in a world of increasing

international activities, especially since Finland's accession to the European Union. Women's organisations that keep a high profile in international and European arenas serve the purpose of Finnish society as a whole. Therefore these organisations should be aided in their co-operation and participation efforts in Finland and abroad and granted more public funds. The possibility of providing aid on a permanent basis will be studied in 1997. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of the Interior)

3.3. Increasing the participation of women belonging to minority groups

Immigrant women are in special danger of being left out of mainstream society. A priority goal of the Finnish Government is to improve the participation opportunities of women belonging to certain minority groups such as Lapps, Romanies and immigrants, and encourage them to transmit and develop their cultural traditions. The voice of minority women often goes unheard in mainstream society, as minority groups are typically represented by men. Minorities, both women and men, have particular needs that must be attended to. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health)

The Committee on Refugee and Immigrant Affairs (PAKSI) operating within the Ministry of Labour has mandated a working party to examine immigrant women's status in Finland. The focus will be on unemployment, discrimination, the risk of marginalisation, the preservation of women's native culture, violence against women and the illegal importation of women. (Ministry in charge: the Ministry of Labour)

2.4. ITALY

8 MARCH 1997: ITALY ADOPTS A NATIONAL PLAN TO IMPLEMENT THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Promoting equal opportunities and women's rights has been a priority for the new Italian government from the moment it took office. A first sign of this was the appointment, for the first time in Italian history, of a Minister for Equal Opportunities Ms Anna Finocchiaro.

This decision was the result of ten years' experience in Equal Opportunity policies, leading to the creation of a vast network of local, national, public and civic bodies, coordinated by the National Commission for Equality and Equal Opportunities. In 1991 Italy enacted legislation on „affirmative action to implement equality between women and men in the workplace“. The law established a special committee under the Ministry of Labour, the National Committee for Labour and Employment Equality and Equal Opportunities.

Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in the specific Italian context and mainstreaming gender policies into government action were the first commitments made by the new Minister for Equal Opportunities. The Prime Minister's Directive 1/, adopted by the government on 8 March 1997, is a concrete result of such work. The guidelines for this Directive, focused on the two notions of women's empowerment and mainstreaming of gender policies, were discussed and adopted by the Italian Parliament on 6 March 1997.

1. Empowerment – strategic objective G.1.

Create conditions for a wide-spread presence of women in decision-making fora dealing with matters of high relevance to the life of the community.

Actions

1.1. Ensure a significant presence of women in government-appointed bodies and in all policy-making positions of public administration, fully recognising the value of women's expertise and experience;

1.2. Analyse the impact of existing electoral systems at the European, national and local levels, on women's representation in elected bodies;

1.3. Analyse the impact of training, education and continuing education systems and curricula on women's access to decision-making positions, in the framework of the reform of public administration, suggesting appropriate changes;

2. Mainstreaming a gender perspective into government policies – strategic objective E.1

Strengthen and enhance institutional mechanisms for mainstreaming.

Actions

2.1. Ensure structural and standing co-ordination in the actions of all government departments, in order to re-examine provisions, policies and programs, to monitor implementation of the objectives indicated in this directive, and to study any innovative proposals.

2.2. Take initiatives and adopt rules and regulations and any other acts that may be necessary for the purpose of a full and timely implementation of this directive.

2.3. Monitor the implementation of existing equality provisions, particularly Act 125 of 10 April 1991, also in view of assessing whether existing institutional and legal instruments are up to standard; trigger a process of reform, with the contribution of the National Commission for Equality and Equal Opportunities and of the National Committee for Labour and Employment Equality and Equal Opportunities, targeted at building a comprehensive system of mainstreaming implementation programs.

3. Statistical analysis and impact evaluation – strategic objective H 3.

Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information. Evaluate gender-equality impact of government policies.

Actions

3.1 Evaluate the gender-equality impact of the welfare reform, with a particular focus on gender relations and relations between generations.

3.2. Before undertaking any government action, adopt the method of evaluating its impact on social structures and gender relations.

3.3. Prepare a White Paper on Labour and Employment Issues, specifically focusing on the influence of gender difference on changes in work experiences and patterns, and on the types of work characterising different age groups, and different sectors and areas of the country.

3.4. Develop, collect and process gender-disaggregated and age-disaggregated statistics, through instruments such as ISTAT (National Statistics Agency) and the National Statistics Systems; when planning statistical studies, data collection and data analysis, prioritize the identification of gender-specific features.

3.5. Promote studies aimed at highlighting gender-related issues, basing such studies on official statistics.

4. Disseminate gender-sensitive culture in education – strategic objective D 4.

Integrate women's innovative knowledge into proposals to reform the school system, universities and teaching approaches; promote cultural understanding and studies on gender difference and learning processes that acknowledge gender difference.

Actions

4.1. Introduce into curricula the teaching of women's basic rights, as enunciated in UN Conventions and documents.

4.2 Promote and enhance knowledge of women's history, and of the contribution of women, women movements and feminist movements to societal development and progress, also by promoting mono- or multi-disciplinary education projects and teacher training and refresher programs, and by developing specific teaching aids on these issues.

4.3. Promote educational activities fostering respect for difference and peaceful resolution of conflicts and controversies.

4.4. Use a wide range of learning paths to promote the teaching of sex education, gender awareness, and recognition of the value of gender difference and of gender relations based on affection, reciprocity and sharing responsibilities.

4.5. Integrate into the drafting and reading of school and university reform bills, a process of consultation of women who are researchers, education experts, teachers and students.

4.6. Promote women's access to research and professorial posts.

5. Employment and job-creation policies – strategic objective F

Support innovation-focused production structures; invest in sectors related to improved quality of life, education, culture, environmental protection and the protection of urban and local sustainable development patterns.

Actions

5.1. Evaluate the gender equality impact of decision-making when selecting development sectors and investment programs.

5.2. Measure the impact on women's jobs of public investment into job creation and vocational training.

5.3. Introduce financial incentives for women's employment growth in crisis areas and in Southern Italy, where women's unemployment is particularly high.

5.4. Consider local tripartite agreements between local authorities and social partners, as well as other local bargaining practices, to be special opportunities to identify and pursue specific strategic objectives for increasing women's employment.

5.5. Adopt special programs: to promote targeted training and education activities; to facilitate the transition from school to work; to promote women's skills within the experiences of "socially useful" community work and non-profit-making activities; to introduce new highly skilled career paths for women.

2.5. NORWAY

NORWAY'S NATIONAL FOLLOW-UP TO THE UNITED NATIONS' FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN
May 1997, Oslo

Introduction

The basic strategy for the further promotion of gender equality in Norway is the mainstreaming of a gender perspective. This means that all ministries are expected to integrate a gender perspective and the goal of gender equality in policy formulation, decision-making and executive procedures at all levels and in all policy areas. In addition, all parts of the

central administration are expected to follow up the Beijing conference in their activities. Other actors as listed in the Platform for Action are encouraged to take necessary action within their own mandates and levels of authority. The Ministry of Children and Family Affairs is responsible for co-ordination and accountability. A successful mainstreaming process requires the active dissemination of information to all relevant actors.

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as the report from the preparatory conference in Vienna 1994, have been circulated to all ministries and relevant public bodies and to more than a hundred NGOs, including the social partners, women's organisations, financial and media institutions. They were all invited to report on their own plans for follow-up and to communicate concrete proposals and more general views on national follow-up activities. All responses have been collected and distributed back to the contributors, including the public authorities.

It is especially important to educate ministries on the implications of the mainstreaming process. A national strategy to follow up Beijing was discussed by high-level representatives, including state secretaries, from all the ministries at a conference on mainstreaming strategies in 1996. The first reports on how the implementation of gender equality measures is progressing in the individual ministry were produced the Spring 1997 in connection with the preparation of a report on gender equality to the Norwegian parliament. This report was delivered to and debated in parliament in May.

A follow-up conference on Beijing was jointly organised in December 1995 by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and the women's umbrella organisation, FOKUS. The women's organisations and other NGOs formed the primary target group for the conference and the objective was to transmit and exchange experiences from the official and NGO conferences in Beijing and to discuss relevant areas and proposals for national implementation strategies. The resulting report was transmitted to all the ministries.

Areas which were identified for possible follow-up by the NGOs include:

- Equality in the economic field, including a more effective use of women's resources and potential for top-level management and entrepreneurship and the use of satellite accounts for social and economic planning;

- Human rights, including the prevention of sexual violence, trafficking in women and genital mutilation;

- Promotion of gender equality and gender-sensitive education programmes for male professionals in the armed forces, the police, the social and medical services and the legal system;

- Development of the mainstreaming strategy, in particular with regard to the systematic use of gender-impact analyses.

At the international level, Norway has given high priority to the improvement of international instruments and other measures to improve the promotion and protection of the human rights of women. A Nordic-Baltic conference in the wake of Beijing was organised by the Nordic Council of Ministers at the end of 1995. Implementation strategies on a Nordic and a Nordic-Baltic level were discussed. As a result of the successful co-operation between the eight Nordic and Baltic countries during the preparation for and the follow-up to the Beijing conference, a Nordic-Baltic conference on gender equality is scheduled for the beginning of August 1997 in Latvia. Some 1000 women and men are expected to attend the conference.

Efforts to promote gender equality are an integral part of Norwegian foreign policy as a whole and in particular of development co-operation. In 1996 the Norwegian Parliament, the Storting, adopted the improvement of the status of women and the promotion of gender equality as one of the five primary objectives in Norwegian development co-operation. Norway is following a two track path to integrate the gender equality perspective in all levels of development co-operation:

1. Mainstreaming, i.e. to integrate the gender perspective in all policies and programmes.

2. Support women-targeted (and/or men-targeted) activities aimed at levelling out gender disparities.

A Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Co-operation was adopted in 1997 and constitutes a basis for communicating Norwegian gender equality policies to partners in bilateral as well as multilateral development co-operation. In the period 1997–2005, Norway will, in accordance with the PFA, give particular focus to six priority areas:

- Women's rights: human rights and women, women and armed conflict, violence against women, and the girl-child (pp. 210–233, pp. 24–130, pp.276–285);

- Women's role in decision-making processes: women in power and decision-making, and institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women (pp.190–195, pp.203–209);

- Women and the economy: (pp.165–178);

- Women and education: (pp.80–88);

- Women's health: (pp.106–111);

- Women and natural resource and environmental management: (pp.253–258).

Norway's role in development co-operation is to support development processes in partner countries. The recipient country is responsible for planning, implementing and following up development assistance activities.

Achieving gender equality is a national responsibility, as underlined in the Beijing documents, and to make conditions for time-bound targets in development co-operation is therefore the partner country's responsibility.

In general, the issue of promoting gender equality is a recurring element in our dialogues with partner countries and organisations. This kind of political commitment is necessary if efforts aimed at enhancing the status of women and promoting gender equality are to succeed.

Getting satisfactory feedback on the impact of development co-operation on gender equality is not always easy. A mainstreaming strategy adds to this complexity. Norway is taking an active part in international efforts to find satisfactory reporting mechanisms, for instance within the OECD.

According to the Strategy for Women and Gender Equality in Development Co-operation, a yearly report will be produced, showing the objective of strengthening the status of women and promoting gender equality is being followed up in Norwegian development assistance.

G. Women in power and decision-making (pp.190–195): National follow-up

G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making

Quotas have proved the most effective means of achieving a more equal balance of women and men in political bodies. Four of the six major Norwegian parties apply a gender quota system in nominations for elections and in the composition of committees at all levels. The goal of 40 per cent women in parliament and the Government, as well as in county councils, has been achieved. At the municipal level, the current proportion of women representatives is approximately 33 per cent.

The Gender Equality Act and the Local Government Act prescribe a 40 per cent representation of both sexes on all public boards, councils and committees.

During the election period of 1993–1997 the Sami Assembly has had 12 female representatives of a total of 39 representatives. In connection with the election to the Sami Assembly in September 1997 a campaign has been launched to increase the number of women representatives.

G.2. Increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership

Issues such as women's right to training and opportunities for promotion are agreed on in the negotiations between the social partners. Various programmes for recruiting more women to positions of leadership have been initiated by the central and local social partners, in the public as well as in the private sector.

The Ministry of National Planning and Co-ordination has initiated a project called „Women, Quality and Competence“ to contribute to an

increase in the number of women in executive positions in public administration.

G. International follow-up

G.1. Take measures to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making

The inclusion of women as equal participators at all levels of decision-making, both in the planning and the implementation of aid and development projects, is being given special attention in Norwegian development co-operation. Women's equal participation in decision-making is essential to a successful mainstreaming process, and to the empowerment of women. Without gender equality in decision-making, full democracy cannot be achieved.

Norway continues to support national machineries for the advancement of women and the promotion of gender issues in partner countries. Norway is often requested to share its own experiences in this field.

Norway works actively to promote gender equality within the UN system and other multilateral organisations, to increase the number of women in decision-making positions and adapt policies to facilitate working conditions for women. In March 1996, Norway suggested an amendment to the UN-charter, Article 101 on staff recruitment, to include a requirement for gender balance.

Information about the electoral process which is specifically directed at women is an important part of our support for electoral campaigns in developing countries.

H. Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women (pp. 203–209): National follow-up

H.1. Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies

The Gender Equality Council is currently undergoing reorganisation. As of 1. August 1997, the reorganised Council will take the form of a resource centre for gender equality.

Together with the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and the Gender Equality Ombud, the Gender Equality Council today constitutes the governmental machinery for gender equality. The Council's role has changed during the 25 years that the Council has existed. From being mainly an advisory body for public authorities, politicians and organisations at a time when gender equality went unrecognised in these areas, the Council has successfully developed into a body that specialises in promoting

public awareness of gender inequality and in changing the attitudes of specific target groups, such as the municipal authorities, the media, trade and industry and of the public at large.

The change of focus in the Council's work has been fruitful, and the reorganisation is intended to promote further development in the same direction. The resource centre will function as a meeting-place for organisations and others involved in work on gender equality issues and as a source of information. It will also actively disseminate knowledge by arranging conferences and seminars, publishing books and pamphlets, using modern information technology, etc.

Amendments to the Gender Equality Act

The Gender Equality Act entered into force in 1979. The Act applies to all areas of society and is enforced by the office of the Gender Equality Ombud and the Gender Equality Appeals Board.

The Act was last amended in 1995. One of the amendments allows for modest forms of positive action in favour of men, another introduced a reversed burden of proof in cases on wage discrimination and discrimination in connection with recruitment and promotions.

The Act is currently undergoing revision, the aim being to increase its impact in questions of equal pay and other issues relating to the labour market. There are also plans for an overall revision of the Act as it bears the marks of being drafted and adopted at a time when gender equality was a less observed and a more delicate matter than it is today. The Gender Equality Ombud finds that although the law is still an important tool in gender equality work, the law needs to be strengthened to be an efficient tool in the battle against more complicated and subtle forms of discrimination.

H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programmes and projects

The mainstreaming strategy involves incorporating a gender perspective into all levels of public administration. The Government is working towards implementing the mainstreaming strategy at both governmental and municipal levels. In May 1997 the Government presented a report to the Storting on the achievements made so far, the current status of gender equality in Norway and its plans for the future. The plan is to present a similar report at each parliamentary period (every four years). The intention is to strengthen the promotion of gender equality in the ministries, among politicians and in the public at large.

A handbook on gender equality in the municipalities was published and distributed in 1996 and several copies were sent to each municipality.

Bi-annual conferences on the subject are arranged by the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs and the Gender Equality Council, for municipal gender equality councils and advisers.

H.3. Generate and disseminate gender-disaggregated data and information for planning and evaluation

Gender-disaggregated statistics and gender-related research are fundamental conditions for purposeful gender equality work. Gender-disaggregated statistics are prepared by the Central Bureau of Statistics and frequently used by the public authorities, for example in the yearly survey on income progress in Norway. The Gender Equality Council annually publishes and distributes a free folder containing gender-specific extracts of the latest statistics.

The Research Council of Norway, which is financed and administered by the Government, promotes basic and applied research in all fields. The Council is responsible for promoting gender equality in research and integrating a gender perspective in all areas of research.

The Government finances several gender-relevant research programmes. The programme „Gender in transition: Institutions, norms, identities“ will run from 1996 to 2000 and has a budget of approximately NOK 25 million. Other programmes and projects related to gender quotas, violence and crisis centres, women's careers and health concerns are also currently in progress.

H. International follow-up

H.1. Create or strengthen national machineries and other governmental bodies

Norway has supported national machineries for the advancement of women for several years and assists partner countries in competence-building and in the development of gender policies and programs designed to integrate a women and gender perspective into national policy and development planning.

Norway also supports international institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women, such as UNIFEM.

H.2. Integrate gender perspectives in legislation, public policies, programs and projects

Norway is following a two-track path to promote equal rights and opportunities for women and men in development co-operation. One is the mainstreaming strategy, the other is providing support for specific projects targeted at women designed to level out gender-based differences

in opportunity. The budget allocation for the women-targeted projects was increased in 1996.

2.6. SWEDEN

GOVERNMENT OFFICES

Ministry of Labour

Sweden's Follow-Up to the UN Fourth World Conference on Women

July 1997

Women in power and decision-making

The attainment of an equal distribution of power and influence between women and men is an important goal of Swedish policy for equality. From an international perspective, Sweden has come a long way with regard to the distribution and redistribution of power between women and men. The equal number of women and men in the Government and the forty per cent share of women in the Swedish Parliament are the result of political will, combined with demands from NGOs and individuals.

Notwithstanding progress that has been made, continued efforts are required in order to increase women's power and influence in all areas of society, within both the private and the public sectors. In Sweden, the Government has limited possibilities for detailed control and direct influence upon developments in this area, apart from cases in which the Government itself appoints persons to governmental posts or in those cases where the Government decides upon employment. An understanding that, in certain cases, increased power for women can only be achieved through a redistribution of power from men to women must, therefore, be disseminated and gain acceptance in society in general.

Women and men on state boards and committees

The Government has a goal that, by 1998, 50 per cent of the members of state boards and committees at central and regional level will be women. In 1996, 39 per cent were women.

Measures 1995–1997

The following measures were carried out in order to further the development towards an equal distribution of the sexes in state boards and committees:

- * The distribution between men and women in state boards and committees at central and regional level is reported annually to Parliament.

- * The various Ministries' proposals for assignments are notified to the Cabinet Office's Equality Affairs Division and the Division has to approve of the proposal in writing prior to the matter being brought

before the Government for a decision. When organisations or agencies are offered to be represented on a committee or a state board, they are requested to submit proposals containing two names, a man and a woman, for each place offered so that the Government can choose, according to the need to achieve an even distribution between women and men.

* Financial support is given to NGOs and agencies etc. for projects and other efforts to increase the portion of women in various decision-making fora.

Continued measures

* The Government will continue its work to achieve an equal distribution between the sexes on state boards and committees. Special efforts will be made to attain an equal distribution between the sexes in 1998.

* During 1996, the Government granted funds to the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and the Federation of County Councils for a project conducted in three municipalities and two county councils aimed at stimulating more active work towards, inter alia, increased female representation on municipal tribunals and boards. The experience gained from this project will be disseminated throughout the country and an evaluation will be presented prior to the general election to the Swedish Parliament in 1998.

Women and men as managers in the public and private sectors

The Government is actively working to achieve an equal distribution between male and female managers within the public sector and is attempting to stimulate the development in this field within the private sector as well.

One target is that, during the Government's present term of office, at least half of the positions as agency managers appointed by it within the public administration, should be awarded to women. The governmental agencies have been encouraged to establish corresponding targets with regard to the distribution of women and men at management level.

Measures 1995–1997

* Twice a year, the Government produces statistics regarding the number of women and men employed at different levels within the Cabinet Office. A statistical survey of the pay differences between women and men employed in the Cabinet Office is also published regularly.

* During 1997, Statistics Sweden presented, at the request of the Government, a survey of the portion of women and men serving as managers within the public and private sectors, and their salary levels.

* The State's Renewal Fund has, during the period 1995–1996, carried out a managerial development programme for female managers.

Continued measures

* Work will be intensified towards attaining the goal that at least half of the public agency managers appointed by the Government during its term of office will be women.

* When Statistics Sweden has completed its study, the Government will consider how statistics can be produced on a regular basis regarding the portion of male and female managers within the public administration.

* The Government intends to adopt measures for the promotion of more active work within governmental agencies with regard to the issue of the portion of male and female managers.

* Employers and employees in the state sector will be invited to participate in discussions concerning further measures which might be required in order to intensify the work in recruitment and management issues.

* During 1997, the State's Renewal Fund will continue its work with the managerial development programme for female managers.

* The National Agency for Government Employers is planning a mentor programme for new and future female managers within the state sector.

* The primary responsibility for increasing the portion of women in higher positions in the private sector lies with the representatives of the business community. A newly established foundation, the so-called Business Leadership Academy, which has been established on the initiative of the business sector and with the support of the Government, is undertaking several measures in this respect.

Institutional mechanisms and mainstreaming

A national machinery for the advancement of women has been in place at central governmental level since the early 1970s. Also since the 70s, a Cabinet Minister has held the overall responsibility for the Government's policy for equality between women and men. At the beginning of the 80s, a separate Equality Affairs Division was established at central governmental level. At present, the Division is located at the Ministry of Labour, and the Minister for Equality Affairs is also located in that same Ministry. However, since there is a conviction in Sweden that a policy for equality cannot be developed independently of other policy areas, each Minister in the Swedish Government is responsible for promoting, analysing, evaluating and following-up the work for equality in his or her respective field of responsibility.

The Equality Affairs Division and the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman are the two main components of the Swedish national machinery for equality. In recent years, however, there is an expert for equality in each of the 24 counties in Sweden. This expert is located at the County

Administrative Board and has the responsibility for the mainstreaming of a gender perspective at regional level.

It can also be noted that the Government regularly consults with NGOs, mainly through the Equal Opportunities Commission, in which more than 30 NGOs are represented and which the Minister for Equality Affairs chairs.

The Equality Affairs Division is charged, inter alia, with:

- * Supporting and pushing through the work for equality centrally and regionally, and developing methods and tools for the integration and implementation of a gender perspective into all policy areas.

- * Reviewing, for example, proposals from other Ministries regarding Bills and written communications to Parliament, terms of reference for committees and proposals for assignments in committees and state boards, in order to ensure that a gender perspective has been taken into account and in order to monitor the work towards fulfilling the target of an even distribution of women and men in committees and state boards.

- * Initiating education and training for the Cabinet Office and Government Authorities regarding equality between women and men.

- * Processing applications for the funding of development work and projects on equality issues.

PART IV

ANTIDISCRIMINATIVE LAWS

1. Equality Acts and Ombuds

The Equality Acts in the Nordic countries came into effect in: Iceland, 1976; Denmark, 1976 and 1978; Norway, 1979; Sweden, 1980 and Finland, 1986. They differ from each other to a certain extent, but their most essential objectives are the prohibition of discrimination by sex the regulation of investigations into alleged cases of discrimination and the creation of the official post of Equality Ombuds. The Ombuds is responsible for ensuring that the provisions of equality law are complied with. A special post for the Office of the Equality Ombuds exists in Norway, Sweden, and Finland.

The Equality Ombuds is an independent government authority. It is the task of the Ombuds to give information concerning equality law and the promotion of equality. The Ombuds and the Acts on Equality are very visible.

The statements of the Ombuds and the rulings of courts of law concerning cases of discrimination attract a great deal of public attention. Additionally, the Ombuds publishes bulletins and annual reports in which certain cases are discussed in detail. This system effectively increases women's awareness of their rights.

Other essential principles of the equality acts include temporary special measures aimed at accelerating *de facto* equality between women and men, the prohibition of direct and indirect discrimination²⁰, the reversal of the principle of the burden of proof and the Ombuds' right to obtain information and sanctions.

²⁰ Both direct and indirect discrimination should be prohibited. Legislation in general prohibits direct discrimination on grounds of sex and marital status. Direct discrimination encompasses sexual harassment, and discrimination on the ground of pregnancy. Indirect discrimination made unlawful tends to consist of a prohibition of any practice, policy or situation which is continued, allowed or introduced and which has a significant adverse impact on a particular sex, and which cannot also be demonstrated to be necessary by the person adopting that practice or policy. (See Introductory report by Dr C. McCrudden, Proceedings of the international workshop on national machinery to promote equality between women and men in central and eastern European countries.

The Equality Acts in Nordic countries prohibit discrimination by sex; hence both women and men have the right to appeal. Cases are usually brought by people who feel that they have been discriminated against. An individual can request a statement from the Ombuds on whether the prohibition of discrimination defined by the Act on Equality has been violated in her/his case. The Ombuds issues a statement to the individual who then uses it to solve her/his case. The Ombuds can provide assistance in solving the cases.

A lawsuit can be pressed on the basis of the presumption of discrimination in a court of law, which can order compensation for the victim of discrimination. Punitive damages can also be ordered. The Swedish Ombuds can advocate the case in the Labour Court. **The aim of the institution of the Ombuds has been to create an organ that is more approachable than a court of law so that people who have actually faced discrimination will seek assistance.** In Norway and Finland, the Ombuds receives approximately 200–300 requests for statements per year, and additionally provides consultation by telephone.

1.2. Example of an Equal Opportunities Act

Finland

*Act on Equality between women and men*²¹

- aims at promoting equality between women and men;
- prevents direct and indirect discrimination based on gender;
- improves the status of women particularly in working life;
- facilitates the reconciliation of working life and family life for women and men;
- prohibits discrimination in advertising jobs and training vacancies;
- gives those discriminated against in working life a right to claim compensation;
- obliges the authorities to change such circumstances that prevent the achievement of equality;
- requires that men and women shall be provided equal opportunities for education and occupational advancement;
- demands an even distribution of male and female members in state and municipal bodies.
- The observance of the Act is monitored by the Ombuds for Equality
- The Act does not apply to activities connected with the religious practices of religious communities;

²¹ The Act on Equality between women and men is in the process of being reviewed.

- the Act does not authorise anyone to interfere in families' internal affairs or in people's private lives.

Sweden

The Swedish Equal Opportunities Act makes clear that its primary concern is the improvement of women's conditions in working life. The law may be divided into two major parts. The first relates to the employer's obligation to actively promote equal opportunity plans and to follow them up.

The second major part of the Act concerns the prohibition of discrimination against individual employees or job applicants on the grounds of their sex, and the prohibition of sexual harassment.

The Act also contains rules on the monitoring of compliance with the law and on the sanctions employers may expect if they fail to live up to it.

1.3. Examples of Ombuds

Finland

– *Ombuds for Equality*: Set up in 1987, the Ombuds is attached to the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health. His/Her objective is to supervise the application of the Act on Equality between Women and Men. He/She brings about action if a breach of law has occurred, provides information on equality legislation and its application and monitors the attainment of gender equality in different sectors of society. The Ombuds for Equality is assisted by the *Office of the Ombuds for Equality* that also carries out work for the Council for Equality. This Office is responsible for drafting and issuing statements concerning discrimination related to equality.

Norway

– *Ombuds for Equal Status of Women and Men*: The Ombuds was established in 1979 by the Equal Status Act. It is an independent body, administratively attached to the Ministry of Children and Family Affairs. His/Her objective is to ensure the implementation of the Act in collaboration with the Gender Equality Boards of Appeals. The Ombuds receives, examines and tries to resolve complaints of sex discrimination in all areas. If no friendly settlement can be achieved between the parties, he/she submits the case to the *Gender Equality Board of Appeals*. The Board settles disputes, in which a friendly settlement has proved impossible. It also issues orders and injunctions and can impose sanctions in case of non-execution of its own, or the Ombuds', decisions.

Sweden

– *Equal Opportunities Ombuds*: it is a governmental authority under the auspices of the Ministry of Industry, Employment and Communications and was established in 1980 when the Act concerning Equality between Men and Women came into force. The primary task of the Ombuds is to ensure compliance with the Act. This takes place through advice and information and through negotiations with individual employers and employees or their organisations. The Ombuds also provides assistance in disputes regarding violations of the Act's ban on sex discrimination and may also invoke other legislation. The Ombuds may also, upon request or on her/his own initiative, review matters regarding provisions in the Act governing the duties of the employers to take active measures for equality at the workplace. Another important responsibility of the Equal Opportunities Ombuds is to inform the public and in other suitable ways facilitate equality in the workplace. Through information and education, the Ombuds also works to achieve equality in the area of education.

1.4. Equality plans in the workplace

The acts on equality in Sweden and Finland, for example, oblige employers to carry out active equality work or to promote equality. This obligation concerns employers in both the public and private sectors. The obligation to promote equality includes developing working conditions in such a manner that they are suitable for both women and men, to allow both men and women to have the opportunity to combine work and family life, to ensure that employees are not exposed to sexual harassment, to promote equal pay and an appropriate gendered division of labour in different tasks and hierarchy levels.

Even though the law obliges the employer to draw up an annual equality plan, this may not happen if union members or other active individuals do not press for it. This is even more true for the execution of the plan. Actual promotion of equality is once again dependent on the will of the participants in the process. Equality law and regulations are tools that must be used by individual women and men who are aware of their rights and want to protect them.

1.5. Examples of equality plans

Sweden

According to Swedish law, an employer who has at least 10 employees has to draft an annual equality plan which includes gender-specific pay statistics, distribution of employees by position and occupation, new recruits, promotion, etc.

Finland

Equality planning offers a tool for promoting equality in working life. The act obliges each employer with a workforce of at least 30 employees to include measures for furthering equality between women and men at the workplace in the annual personnel and training plan, or to include such measures in the plan of action for labour protection. A separate equality plan can also be drawn up at the workplace. Equality planning can cover, e.g. the development of recruitment procedures, promotion of women's career advancement, working conditions, remuneration, personnel training, participation in working groups, exercise of family policy rights, the equal placement of women and men in jobs, attitudes to equality, the creation of a system of equality contact persons and the promotion of equality in the management.

2.2. NORWEGIAN ACT ON GENDER EQUALITY Norwegian Act on 45 of June 9th 1978 on Gender Equality

Article 1 Objectives of the Act

This Act shall promote equal status between the sexes and aims in particular at improving the position of women.

Public authorities shall promote gender equality in all sectors of society.

Women and men shall be given equal opportunities in education, employment and cultural and professional advancement.

Article 2 Subject of the Act

This Act applies to discrimination between men and women in all areas, except for internal conditions within religious communities.

With regard to family life and purely personal matters, this Act is not to be enforced by the authorities mentioned in Art. 10.

In special cases the king may determine that the act shall not apply, in whole or in part, to certain specific sectors. The opinion of the Board (of Art. 10) shall be obtained in such cases.

Article 3 General clause

Differential treatment of women and men is not permitted.

The term "differential treatment" means treatment differentiating between men and women because they are of different sexes. The term also covers treatment which de facto results in an unreasonable disadvantage for one sex compared to the other.

Differential treatment which promotes gender equality in conformity with the objective of this Act, is not in contravention with the first

paragraph. This also applies to special rights given to women based on the biological differences between the sexes.

The king may issue regulations regarding the kinds of differential treatment, which can be accepted pursuant to this Act, including provisions on positive special treatment of men in relation to care for and education of children.

Article 4 Recruitment etc.

A job vacancy must not be advertised as being restricted to one sex unless there is an obvious reason for doing so. Nor must the announcement give the impression that the employer expects or prefers one of the sexes for the position.

In recruitment, promotion, notice to leave or temporary lay-off of employees, no difference must be made between men and women in contravention with Art. 3.

A job applicant who has not obtained an announced position may require that the employer state in writing the education, experience and other clearly demonstrable qualifications for the position which are possessed by the person of the opposite sex appointed to the job.

If differential treatment of women and men in recruitment, promotion, notice to leave or temporary lay-off can be established, the employer must substantiate that this is not due to the gender of the applicants or the employees.

Article 5 Equal pay

Women and men employed by the same employer shall have equal pay for work of equal value.

The term „pay” includes ordinary remuneration for work as well as other supplements or cash bonuses, and other benefits given by the employer.

The term “equal pay” means that the pay is to be determined in the same manner for men and women regardless of gender.

If differential treatment regarding wages can be established between men and women performing work of equal value, the employer must substantiate that this is not due to the gender of the employees.

The king may prescribe by regulation what is to be considered the same employer in central and local government service.

Article 6 Education

Women and men shall have equal right to education.

The employer shall consider women and men on equal terms regarding training, further education and granting leave of absence in connection with education etc.

Regarding admission to courses, schools and studies, and other efforts designed to promote recruitment to a particular trade or profession

and when conditions are approximately equal, it will be possible to give priority to one sex if this will help to regulate in the long term any imbalance between the sexes in the trade or profession in question.

If differential treatment relating to circumstances mentioned in the second paragraph of this article can be established, the employer must substantiate that this is not due to the gender of the employees.

Article 7 Teaching aids

In schools and other educational institutions the teaching aids used shall be based on gender equality.

Article 8 Associations

Any associations shall be open to women and men on equal terms if:

1. The membership of the association is of importance for the individual member's possibility for work or professional advancement, or
2. The object of the association is essentially to contribute to a solution to general problems of a social nature.

The injunction of the first paragraph does not apply to associations where the main object is to promote the interests of one of the sexes.

Article 9 Gender Equality Council

The King shall appoint a Gender Equality Council where the authority and the number of members are to be decided by the Storting at any time.

Article 10 Enforcement of the Act

The King shall appoint a Gender equality Ombud and a Board – the Gender equality Board of Appeals – to collaborate in the implementation of this Act. The competence of the Ombud and the Board shall comprise, with the limitations given in the second paragraph of Art. 2, all private enterprise as well as all-administrative and commercial activities in the public sector. The Ombud is appointed by the king for six years at a time.

The board shall consist of seven members with personal deputies. Two of the members with deputies shall be appointed at the recommendation of the Norwegian Employer's Confederation respectively. The king shall appoint the chairperson and the deputy chairperson, one of whom must possess the qualifications specified for a judge.

The King may issue regulations regarding the functions and organisation of the Ombud and the board. The opinion of the board shall be obtained in advance.

Article 11 Functions of the Ombud and the Board

With regard to gender equality, the Ombud shall ensure that no offences under this Act is committed. The Ombud shall on his/her own

initiative or on the basis of a request from others seek to ensure that the provisions of this Act are observed. If a voluntary arrangement cannot be reached, the Ombud may bring the case before the Board for a decision, pursuant to Art. 13.

If the Ombud decides not to submit a case before the Board, it may be submitted by anyone who is a party to the case or has brought action without being a party. These cases shall be decided by the Board unless the aggrieved party opposes this.

The Board may require the Ombud to submit certain specific cases to the board.

Article 12 decisions by the Ombud

In cases where the Ombud cannot reach a voluntary arrangement and it must be assumed that waiting for a decision from the Board will result in inconvenience or harmful effects, the Ombud may grant a decision as provided for in Art. 13.

The Ombud shall state the grounds for the decision at the time it is made. The Board shall be informed of the decision. An appeal about the decision may be brought before the Board.

Article 13 Decisions by the board

The board may prohibit any act which is in contravention with Art. 3 – 8 of this Act if the Board finds that intervention is required with regard to gender equality. The Board may impose measures necessary to ensure that the said act ceases or is not repeated. If the Board is unable to make a decision pursuant to the second paragraph it shall state its opinion as to whether the situation brought before the Board is in contravention with this act.

The Board may not repeal or alter administrative decisions made by others. Nor may the board issue injunctions as to how the authority to adopt administrative decisions must be exercised in order to avoid violation of this act. The term “administrative decisions” means any decisions which is covered by Art. 2 first paragraph, litra (a) of the Public Administration Act. The Board cannot make decisions binding for the King or any Ministry.

The Board shall give grounds for a decision at the same time it is made.

The decision cannot be appealed to the king or to the Ministry but may be brought before the courts for the full trial of the case within the framework of this Act.

Article 14 The Board’s relation to the Labour Disputes Court

Under this Act if a case, which indirectly raises a question about the validity, interpretation or continued existence of a collective agreement, is brought before the Board, with postponing effects, each of the parties to

the collective agreement may have this question determined by the Labour Disputes Court. The king shall issue regulations for such lawsuits.

In no circumstances can the board make decisions which come under the competence of the labour Disputes Court according to the Act of May 5th 1927 regarding Labour Disputes and the Act of July 18th 1958 No. 2 regarding Public Service Disputes.

Article 15 Duty to provide information

Regardless of their pledge of secrecy, public authorities are required to provide the ombud and the Board with such information necessary for the implementation of this Act. Such information may also be required of others who have an obligation to give evidence in accordance with the Civil Disputes Act. Article 211 of the civil Disputes act applies correspondingly. Decisions referred to in Art. 207 first subsection, second sentence, Art. 209 third paragraph, third sentence of the Civil Disputes Act shall be rendered by the District or City Court.

The Board and the Ombud may undertake such investigations and inspections as they find necessary to execute their duties pursuant to this act. If necessary, they may demand assistance from the police.

The Board or the Ombud may require that information shall be given to, or investigations may be carried out by, other official bodies, which are enjoined to be conducive to the implementation of this Act.

Article 16 Pledge of secrecy

Anyone who serves or undertakes assignment for the Board or the Ombud must not without just or sufficient cause allow others to acquire knowledge of information emerging in the course of such service or assignment concerning:

1. Any individual's personal affairs
2. Technical devices, production methods, plans and prognoses etc., which other enterprises could exploit in their own operations to the detriment of the undertaking to which the information refers.

In addition such information may not be exploited by the person in question in his own activities.

Article 17 Liability for damages

By wilfully or negligently violating the provisions of this act the tort-feasor shall be liable for damages according to the ordinary rules.

The Court may modify liability under the first paragraph if the effect would be unreasonably onerous or if other considerations indicate so.

Article 18 Criminal liability

Anyone who wilfully or negligently, violates decisions made in pursuance with Art. 12 or 13, or who aids and abets therein shall be fined.

Violations committed by persons in subordinate positions shall not be punished if the violation is due mainly to the offender's subordinate relation to the person for whom the act is carried out.

Enterprises, associations or foundations on whose behalf such violation has been committed or whose interests the said violation was intended to promote, or which have derived considerable benefit from the violation, may be fined.

The wilful or negligent violation of injunctions pursuant to Art. 15 shall be punished by fines or by imprisonment up to three months, or both. Violations of Art. 16 first paragraph shall be punished pursuant to art. 12 of the Penal Code even if the guilty party is not a public servant. Violation of art. 16 second paragraph shall be punished by fines or imprisonment up to one year, or both.

Article 19 Prosecution

Violations of art. 18 first to third subsection shall not be subject to public prosecution, except at the request of the Board, unless it is required in the public interest.

The prosecuting authority, in connection with the criminal case, may request judgement in respect of measures to ensure the unlawful act to cease and to prevent its repetition.

Article 20 Geographical scope

This Act applies in the realm, in Svalbard and on board Norwegian vessels and aircraft in areas not subjected to any State's sovereignty. This act also applies to activities on installations and devices on the Norwegian part of the continental shelf.

The king may make exceptions to the provisions of the first paragraph and of the act. The opinion of the Board shall be obtained before such a decision is made.

Article 21 Representation of both sexes on all official committees etc.

Each sex shall be represented with at least 40% of the members when a public body appoints or elects committees, governing boards, councils, etc. with 4 members or more. Both sexes shall be represented in committees etc. with 2 or 3 members. These provisions also apply to deputy members.

Exceptions from the first paragraph may be granted if special circumstances make it evidently unreasonable to demand that the requirements are fulfilled.

Committees etc. which pursuant to statutory law consists only of members from directly elected bodies need not fulfil the requirements of the article.

For committees etc. elected by local, municipal or county democratically elected authorities, the provisions of the act on local and county authorities will apply.

The King adopts rules regarding the enforcement and reporting and may issue supplementary provisions in accordance with this article.

The provisions in this article do not restrict any provisions otherwise applicable concerning representation on official committees etc. pursuant to the provisions of this Act concerning discriminatory treatment.

Article 22 Entry into force etc.

This Act enters into force at the time decided by the king.

From the same time, the second paragraph (new) of Art. 1 in Act No 47 of 16th June 1972 regarding Marketing Control reads:

„An advertiser and anyone who creates advertising matter shall ensure that the advertisement does not conflict with the inherent parity between the sexes and that it does not imply any derogatory judgement of either sex or portray a women or a men in an offensive manner”

This page was last updated October 15 1996.

LITERATURE

1. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, article 26 and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, article 3, of the United Nations. Both were adopted in 1966 and entered into force in 1976.
2. Report of the *ad hoc* Committee of the Whole of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (A/S-23/10/Rev.1)
3. Requirements, function and authorities of the Parliamentary Commission for Equal Opportunities, presented at a seminar held in Skopje (6 April 2001) on “the establishment of the Parliamentary Commission for Gender Equality” and prepared by Ms Violeta Neubauer
4. Universal Declaration on Democracy, Inter-Parliamentary Union Inter-Parliamentary Council, 161st session (Cairo, 16 September 1997)
5. Mainstreaming a Gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system The Commission on the Status of Women, 6–16 March 2001
6. Plan of action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life, Adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council, the plenary policy-making body of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, at its 154th session (Paris, 26 March 1994)
7. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, *The General Assembly, Adopts* the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration 1 and Platform for Action, 2 annexed to the present resolution. *10th plenary meeting, 10 June 2000.*
8. Concluding statement of the specialized Inter-Parliamentary Conference „Towards partnership between men and women in politics“ *Organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union New Delhi (India), 14–18 February 1997*

9. Declaration on equality between women and men as a fundamental criterion of democracy, CoE: 4th European Ministerial Conference on equality between women and men (Istanbul, 13–14 November 1997)
10. Final Document of the IIIrd Inter-Parliamentary Conference on security and co-operation in the Mediterranean *Organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union Marseille (France), 30 March–3 April 2000*
11. Commitments of Governments to implement the Beijing Platform for Action (Background Paper prepared by the Division for the Advancement of Women based on the statements delivered during the Fourth World Conference on Women)
12. FWCW Platform for action, Women in power and decision-making, United Nations A/RES/S-23/3 General Assembly Distr.: General, 16 November 2000, Twenty-third special session, Agenda item 10,00-65205
13. Beijing Parliamentary Declaration, Adopted by consensus by participants to Parliamentarians' Day on the occasion of the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 7 September 1995)
14. OSCE Action Plan for Gender Issues, Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe 1 June 2000 Permanent Council Decision No. 353
15. Handbook on National Machinery to promote Gender Equality and Action Plans Guidelines for establishing and implementing National Machinery to promote equality, with examples of good practice, prepared by Giorgia Testolin, Consultant expert, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, May 2001
16. Austria's National Report on the implementation of the „Platform for action“ Fourth World Conference on Women Beijing 1995, forwarded by the Federal Minister for Women's Affairs and Consumer Protection, Vienna, March 1998
17. Denmark Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Statement to the Folketing on Follow-up at national and international Levels to The United Nation's Fourth World Conference on Women, 3 April 1996, S.Q.File No. 28.B.98.
18. Equality Programme, of the Finnish Government, Approved on 6 February 1997

19. Italy, a National Plan to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, 8 March 1997
20. Norway's National Follow-up to the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women, May 1997, Oslo
21. Swedish Government Offices, Ministry of Labour, Sweden's Follow-Up to the UN Fourth World Conference, on Women, July 1997
22. Norwegian Act on 45 of June 9th 1978 on Gender Equality
23. United Nations <http://www.un.org>
24. Council of Europe www.coe.int
25. European Commission http://europa.eu.int/comm/index_en.htm
26. OSCE www.osce.org
27. Inter-parliamentary Union <http://www.ipu.org/>
28. Council of European Municipalities and Regions: www.ccre.org

CIP – Katalogizacija u publikaciji
Narodna biblioteka Srbije, Beograd

32-055 .1/.2
305-055 .1/.2

MR[EVI], Zorica

**STANDARDS AND MECHANISMS FOR GENDER EQUALITY IN
DEMOCRATIC COUNTRIES** / Zorica Mr{evi}. - Belgrade
: Institute of Social Sciences, 2003 (Belgrade :
Caligraph). - 163 str. ; 23 cm

Tira` 100. - Napomene i bibliografske
reference uz tekst.

- Bibliografija: str. 161-163.

ISBN 86-7093-101-X