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Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”

Report of the Secretary-General on measures taken and progress achieved in follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

Summary

The present report responds to General Assembly resolution 59/168. It reviews steps taken by the Assembly and its Committees during its fifty-ninth session to promote the achievement of gender equality through the gender mainstreaming strategy. The report reviews outcomes of major events during the past year and assesses the extent to which the reports of the Secretary-General and the resolutions of the Assembly have taken into account gender perspectives and made specific recommendations for action, in particular in relation to follow-up to major summits and conferences, including the United Nations Millennium Summit. The report also assesses gender perspectives in the preparations for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, which is to be held in Tunis in November 2005.

* A/60/150.

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I. Introduction

1. The General Assembly, in its resolution 59/168, requested the Secretary-General to report annually to the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and on the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly, with an assessment of progress made in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system and to recommend further measures and strategies for future action within the United Nations system. The present report has been prepared in response to that request.

2. A report of the Secretary-General entitled “Measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to and implementation of the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, with an assessment of progress made on mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system” (E/CN.6/2005/3), which focused on good practices and lessons learned, was submitted to the forty-ninth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. A report of the Secretary-General on follow-up to and progress in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (E/2005/54), which focused on gender mainstreaming action plans of United Nations entities, was submitted to the Economic and Social Council.

3. The present report reviews steps taken by the General Assembly and its Committees during its fifty-ninth session to promote the achievement of gender equality through the gender-mainstreaming strategy. The report reviews outcomes of major events during the past year and assesses the extent to which General Assembly resolutions and selected reports of the Secretary-General have taken into account gender perspectives and made specific recommendations for action, in particular in relation to follow-up to major summits and conferences, including the United Nations Millennium Summit. The report also assesses attention to gender perspectives in preparation for the forthcoming second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society to be held in Tunis in 2005, in response to paragraph 33 of resolution 59/168, in which the Assembly encouraged Governments and all other stakeholders to integrate a gender perspective into the preparatory processes and outcome documents, taking into account the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-seventh session in 2003.

II. General Assembly

A. International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

4. The Mauritius Declaration¹ adopted at the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Port Louis, Mauritius, from 10 to 14 January 2005, recognized that women play a key role in promoting

sustainable development activities in small island developing States and encouraged them in their efforts. The main outcome document of the meeting, the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,² considered gender equality as a basis for sustainable development and essential in the context of a national enabling environment. The Strategy reaffirmed gender equality and promoting the full and equal access of women and men to political participation, economic opportunity, health-care services and programmes and decision-making systems for sustainable development and the full and equal access of girls and boys, and women and men to all levels of education. The Strategy stressed that further action is required by small island developing States, with the necessary support of the international community, to further education for sustainable development through promoting comprehensive and accessible universal primary education and ensuring gender equality, assisting with basic infrastructure, curriculum development and teacher training, and working towards an integrated gender perspective.

B. World Conference on Disaster Reduction

5. The Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015, adopted by the World Conference on Disaster Reduction held in Kobe, Hyogo, Japan, from 18 to 22 January 2005, reaffirmed that a gender perspective should be integrated into all disaster risk management policies, plans and decision-making processes, including those related to risk assessment, early warning, information management and education and training. The Framework for Action listed among key activities the development of early warning systems that are people centred and take into account the demographic, gender, cultural and livelihood characteristics of the target audiences. The Framework for Action also suggested as a key activity that equal access to appropriate training and educational opportunities for women be ensured and that gender and cultural sensitivity training be promoted as integral components of education and training for disaster risk reduction.

C. Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

6. The Bangkok Declaration on Crime and Justice, Synergies and Responses, adopted by the Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, held in Bangkok, from 18 to 25 April 2005,³ referred to gender perspectives in the context of juvenile justice only. States agreed to consider ways to ensure the provision of services to children and also to ensure that those services take into account their gender, social circumstances and developmental needs. The Declaration stressed the need to combat trafficking in persons but did not make specific references to the gender perspectives of this phenomenon.

7. The documentation for the Congress included numerous references to gender perspectives that were not reflected in the outcome of the Congress, including on trafficking and violence against women. The report of the Secretary-General on the state of crime and criminal justice worldwide (A/CONF.2003/3) noted concern about the reliability of the estimate figure relating to trafficked women. The report

also noted the high risk of rape for women and differences in regional statistics on rape. The results of the International Violence against Women Survey were expected to be made available in 2005. The report of the Secretary-General on preparations for the Congress (A/59/123-E/2004/90) included references to proposals made by regional preparatory processes for the inclusion of gender perspectives in the work programme of the Congress.

8. The working paper prepared by the Secretariat on effective measures to combat transnational organized crime (A/CONF.2003/4) referred to the significance of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, including its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The paper suggested that it would be important to incorporate combating organized crime into the work of the United Nations in post-conflict and peacebuilding operations and to collaborate in preventing and combating trafficking in persons, especially women and children, to and from conflict and post-conflict zones. The working paper of the Secretariat on making standards work (A/CONF.2003/8) referred to technical assistance, including in relation to gender issues, in particular in connection with peacekeeping operations and post-conflict situations. It suggested a new approach to implementation, focusing on witnesses and victims of crime, including the special needs of women in the criminal justice system.

D. High-level Meeting of the General Assembly to review the progress achieved in realizing the commitments set out in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS

9. The note by the President of the General Assembly on the High-level Meeting on HIV/AIDS (A/59/852) transmitted the summaries of five round tables. One of the round tables focused on human rights and gender and resulted in a number of key recommendations, including the need for: (a) applying a human rights framework and the integration of gender equality concerns in order to reduce vulnerability to infection, advance prevention goals, ensure equal access to treatment, care and support and mitigate social and economic impacts of HIV/AIDS; (b) enacting, strengthening and enforcing national legislation to protect the rights of people living with HIV/AIDS and all vulnerable and displaced populations; (c) upholding and protecting the human rights of people living with HIV/AIDS and women, including confidentiality and equal protection under the law, sexual and reproductive rights and rights to health, housing, education and employment; (d) strengthening of mechanisms for monitoring of national compliance with the human rights components of the Declaration of Commitment to protect the rights of people affected by HIV; and utilizing other international frameworks such as the Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to accelerate the response to AIDS.

10. The summary of the round table on prevention highlighted that an inclusive process was essential and required reaching out, inter alia, to women and, in particular, to young girls. Prevention efforts must include improving access of women and girls to education, developing gender-sensitive interventions, ensuring equal access for women and girls to health care and services, promotion and protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights, protection from gender-

based violence and greater access to female-controlled prevention methods. The summary of the round table on treatment, care and support suggested that action is needed to reduce the continuing impact of stigma and discrimination in limiting access to prevention and treatment for those who may need it most, including women. Systems to record and monitor the access to treatment and prevention services by women, girls, children and vulnerable populations, including through sex-disaggregated data, should be strengthened.

E. Implementation of and follow-up to major international conferences and summits, including follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Goals

11. In General Assembly resolution 59/177 on global efforts for the total elimination of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance and the comprehensive implementation of and follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, the Assembly stressed the responsibility of States to mainstream a gender perspective in the design and development of prevention, education and protection measures. It also called upon all States to formulate and implement without delay policies and plans of action to combat racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, including their gender-based manifestations. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/375) included references to action in relation to gender equality and racism.

12. General Assembly resolution 59/146 on implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and of the twenty-fourth special session of the General Assembly reaffirmed the commitment to gender equality and to strengthening policies and programmes that improve, ensure and broaden the full participation of women in all spheres of political, economic, social and cultural life and to improving their access to all resources. It reaffirmed that education, employment creation and improvement in working conditions are some of the indispensable elements of poverty eradication, social integration, gender equality and overall development and underlined the responsibility of the private sector regarding not only the economic and financial, but also the development, social, gender and environmental implications of their activities.

13. General Assembly resolution 59/239 on the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) encouraged Governments and UN-Habitat to continue to promote partnerships with local authorities, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and others, including women's groups, in order to empower them to play a more effective role in the provision of adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlement development in an urbanizing world. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/198) included references to successful partnerships with women's group and to gender mainstreaming activities.

14. General Assembly resolution 59/150 on the follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing recommended that the Commission on the Status of Women continue to consider the situation of older women, including those living in rural areas. This recommendation corresponded to a recommendation contained in the relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/164). The report contained further

analysis of attention given to the situation of older women and gender perspectives of ageing by intergovernmental bodies or other United Nations entities.

15. A number of reports included attention to gender perspectives that were not reflected in the relevant General Assembly resolutions 59/220, 59/225 and 59/244. The reports included the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2001-2010 (A/59/94-E/2004/77), his report on the implementation of Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21 and the outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development (A/59/220), and his report on follow-up to and implementation of the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development (A/59/270).

16. The report of the Secretary-General on follow-up to the United Nations special session on children (A/59/274) included attention to the situation of girls but made no specific action-oriented recommendations.

Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals

17. In its resolution 59/168, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to integrate gender perspectives in his preparations, including reports, for the review of the Millennium Declaration. It also requested the Secretary-General to include in his report on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration an assessment of the progress made in promoting the goal of gender equality, in particular in relation to the development goals set forth in the Millennium Declaration.

18. In his report on the implementation of the Millennium Declaration (A/59/282 and Corr.1) the Secretary-General noted, in relation to goal 3 on gender equality and empowerment of women, that the target of achieving parity between girls and boys in primary and secondary education by 2005 was being met in most regions, except sub-Saharan Africa and Southern and Western Asia. However, progress as measured by other indicators, inter alia, the share of seats in parliaments and non-agricultural employment rates, lagged behind.

19. In his report on follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General noted the challenges to the achievement of development across interrelated issues such as gender equality, health, education and the environment and the fact that the goal of gender equality remains unfulfilled. The report also stated that about three quarters of the world's AIDS deaths every year occur in Africa, with women being the most affected. The report recommended that at the 2005 High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly in September 2005, the Assembly reaffirm gender equality and the need to overcome pervasive gender bias by increasing primary school completion and secondary school access for girls, ensuring secure tenure of property to women, ensuring access to reproductive health services, promoting equal access to labour markets, providing opportunity for greater representation in government decision-making bodies, and supporting direct intervention to protect women from violence.

20. In a note to the General Assembly on the follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit, the Secretary-General transmitted the report of the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change (A/59/565 and Corr.1). The report addressed the situation of women in its analysis and recommended that, in the

restructuring of the Organization, attention should be paid to the need for greater consultation with and involvement in peace processes of important voices from civil society, especially those of women. It also called upon Member States to sign, ratify and implement the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. The report called upon the Security Council, United Nations agencies and Member States to fully implement the recommendations contained in Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

21. The Secretary-General transmitted to the General Assembly the overview of the final report of the Millennium Project (A/59/727), which stated that reducing gender inequality is essential for reducing hunger, containing HIV/AIDS, promoting environmental sustainability, upgrading slums and reducing child and infant mortality. The report expressed concern about gender bias in public investment and social and economic policies and suggested the promotion of overlooked priorities, including maternal health, gender equality and reproductive health. Women's participation was vital, as was support for capacity-building, including of women's organizations, as well as the training of community development agents to promote local participation and gender equality. Specific interventions to address gender inequality should be an intrinsic part of all investment packages based on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and should address systemic challenges such as protection of sexual and reproductive health and rights, equal access to economic assets such as land and housing, increased primary school completion and expanded access to postprimary education for girls, equal labour market opportunities, freedom from violence and increased representation at all levels of governance. Among a number of "quick-wins" to achieve accelerated implementation of the MDGs, the overview proposed reforming and enforcing legislation guaranteeing women and girls property and inheritance rights, supporting breastfeeding and nutrition programmes for women launching national campaigns to reduce violence against women, and empowering women to play a central role in formulating and monitoring MDG-based poverty reduction strategies and other critical policy reform processes, in particular at the local government level.

22. The report was complemented by a report of the Millennium Project Task Force on Education and Gender Equality, in which specific action to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women was proposed.

F. Main Committees of the General Assembly

23. This section presents an overview of General Assembly resolutions and selected reports of the Secretary-General, other than those in section E above, that included specific recommendations for action on gender equality and the advancement of women. The section does not cover resolutions or reports that addressed the issue of gender balance in the United Nations system.

24. The Main Committees and the plenary of the General Assembly failed to incorporate gender perspectives into their resolutions, although the Third and Second Committees paid more attention to gender equality and the advancement of women, including through specific recommendations for action. Some resolutions adopted by the Assembly following the recommendations of the Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Committees included specific proposals for action. The reports of the

Secretary-General for all Committees, in particular for the Third and Second Committees, incorporated gender perspectives, including specific recommendations for action, but these were not consistently reflected in the resolutions adopted by the Assembly.

1. First Committee: disarmament and international security

25. Gender perspectives were included in the preamble of General Assembly resolution 59/99 on the United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The resolution welcomed the fact that the Secretary-General's report (A/59/157) had highlighted the increased emphasis given by the Regional Centre to the inclusion of a gender perspective in its planned activities and the relationship between disarmament and development.

26. The report of the Secretary-General on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects (A/59/181) included references to the need for gender-sensitive research and the inclusion of women in relevant programmes, although no specific proposals for action were made. General Assembly resolution 59/86 of 3 December 2004 on the subject did not make reference to gender perspectives.

2. Second Committee: economic and financial

Women in development

27. The Second Committee addressed the agenda item on the role of women in development on the basis of the report of the Secretary-General providing a summary of the fourth *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* and its addendum on women and international migration (A/59/287 and Add.1). In its resolution 59/248 on the *World Survey*, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to update it for consideration by the Assembly at its sixty-fourth session and noted that it should continue to focus on selected emerging development themes that have an impact on the role of women in the economy.

Other issues

28. The General Assembly adopted several resolutions submitted by the Second Committee that provided specific recommendations for action on gender equality and the advancement of women in the fields of poverty eradication, migration, the international financial system and development, commodities, humanitarian assistance and the role of the United Nations system in development.

29. In its resolution 59/247 on the implementation of the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty (1997-2006), the General Assembly invited Member States to consider undertaking policies to facilitate the expansion of microfinance and microcredit institutions, reaffirmed that the eradication of poverty should be addressed in an integrated way, taking into account the importance of the need for the empowerment of women, and encouraged the use of gender analysis as a tool for the integration of a gender dimension into planning the implementation of policies, strategies and programmes for the eradication of poverty. The Assembly also recognized that urgent action is needed to address gender inequality and economic dependency and poverty in the context of HIV/AIDS. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/326) gave some attention to gender perspectives, although not in the recommendations.

30. In its resolution 59/241 on international migration and development, the General Assembly called upon all relevant bodies to continue to address the issue with a view to integrating migration issues, including a gender perspective and cultural diversity. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/325) stressed activities in relation to migrant women.

31. In its resolution 59/222 on the international financial system and development, the General Assembly called for the continued effort of the multilateral financial institutions in providing policy advice, technical assistance and financial support to member countries, to minimize the negative impacts of the adjustment programmes on the vulnerable segments of society, while taking into account the importance of gender-sensitive employment and poverty eradication policies and strategies. In its resolution 59/224 on commodities the Assembly invited all relevant stakeholders to develop strong producer associations for commodities with an appropriate role for producers, including women. The relevant report of the Secretary-General on world commodity trends and prospects (A/59/304) included a reference to women farmers.

32. In relation to special economic assistance to individual countries, in its resolution 59/215 on humanitarian and special assistance to Serbia and Montenegro, the General Assembly called upon relevant bodies to continue to provide assistance to alleviate the needs of refugees and internally displaced persons, bearing in mind the special situation of women. The report of the Secretary-General on humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation for countries and regions (A/59/293) included references to the gender dimensions of the conflict in Liberia.

33. In two of its resolutions addressing the role of the United Nations system, the General Assembly made specific proposals for action on gender equality. In its resolution 59/250 on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system, which contained a section on gender issues, the General Assembly, inter alia: encouraged the governing bodies of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into all aspects of their monitoring functions in relation to policies and strategies, medium-term plans, multi-year funding frameworks and operational activities; called upon all organizations of the United Nations system to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-level goals; urged all organizations to provide gender specialist resources in support of gender mainstreaming, working closely with national counterparts in generating the disaggregated information required to produce better analysis; and requested all entities of the United Nations system to enhance the effectiveness of gender specialist resources, gender focal points and gender theme groups. The relevant reports of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities for development of the United Nations system (A/59/387 and A/59/85-E/2004/68) included the above-mentioned recommendations and concluded that accountability for gender mainstreaming and its results remains weak; that there are gaps in sex-disaggregated data and analytical capacities; and that monitoring mechanisms are still inadequate.

34. In its resolution 59/240 on the role of the United Nations in promoting development in the context of globalization and interdependence, the General Assembly urged all Governments to ensure women's equal rights with men and their full and equal access to, inter alia, financial resources, including credit, in

particular for rural women and women in the informal sector, and to facilitate, where appropriate, the transition of women from the informal to the formal sector.

35. Some resolutions incorporated extensive analysis of gender perspectives without providing recommendations for action. In its resolution 59/246 on the role of microcredit and microfinance in the eradication of poverty, the General Assembly recognized that microcredit and microfinance programmes have led to the growing participation of women in the mainstream economic and political processes of society, as well as the need to create inclusive financial sectors in order to facilitate access for people living in poverty, especially women, to microcredit and microfinance. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/326 and Add.1) included an extensive analytical section on the gender dimensions of microcredit for the eradication of poverty. In its resolution 59/231 on the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, the Assembly recognized the importance of integrating a gender perspective as well as of engaging women in the design and implementation of all phases of disaster management. In its resolution 59/249 on industrial development cooperation, the Assembly reaffirmed that industrialization is an essential factor in the integration of women into the development process. The note of the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) included some references to the advancement of women in relation to economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.

3. Third Committee: social, humanitarian and cultural

36. The General Assembly adopted a number of resolutions proposed by the Third Committee that addressed: gender perspectives in relation to the areas of social development; crime prevention and criminal justice; international drug control; refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions; promotion and protection of the rights of children; elimination of racism and racial discrimination; and human rights. Several of these resolutions provided specific recommendations for action on gender equality or the advancement of women.

Advancement of women

37. The Third Committee devoted two agenda items to gender equality issues: one on the advancement of women and another on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Assembly adopted four substantive resolutions proposed by the Third Committee: resolution 59/165 on working towards the elimination of crimes against women and girls committed in the name of honour; resolution 59/166 on trafficking in women and girls; resolution 59/167 on the elimination of all forms of violence against women, including crimes identified in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly; resolution 59/168 on follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. The Assembly also adopted resolution 59/260 on the future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women.

38. Reports that focused specifically on gender equality and the advancement of women included: the report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (A/59/38); the reports of the Secretary-General on violence against women (A/59/281); on trafficking in women and girls (A/59/185 and Corr.1); on

measures taken and progress achieved in follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third session of the General Assembly (A/59/214); on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system (A/59/357); on the future operation of the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (A/59/313); and the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (A/59/135 and Corr.1).

Human rights

39. The General Assembly addressed the gender perspectives of human rights in a number of substantive resolutions on thematic issues, some of which included specific recommendations for action. Other resolutions that contained specific proposals for action dealt with country situations, international human rights instruments and the work of human rights mechanisms, such as treaty bodies and special rapporteurs.

40. In its resolution 59/202 on the right to food, the General Assembly encouraged all States to take action to address discrimination against women, particularly where it contributes to the malnutrition of women and girls, including measures to ensure the realization of the right to food and ensuring that women have equal access to resources, including income, land and water, to enable them to feed themselves. In its resolution 59/182 on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, the Assembly urged Governments to take effective measures to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, including their gender-based manifestations, and invited States parties to the Convention against Torture to incorporate a gender perspective and information concerning children and juveniles when submitting reports to the Committee against Torture. The report of the Special Rapporteur on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (A/59/324) included an analysis of sexual violence as torture. These above-mentioned resolutions encouraged the respective Special Rapporteurs to continue mainstreaming gender perspectives. In its resolution 59/176 on the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Assembly encouraged States parties to continue to include a gender perspective in their reports and invited the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to take into account a gender perspective in the implementation of its mandate.

41. In its resolution 59/194 on the protection of migrants, the General Assembly requested all Member States effectively to promote and protect the human rights of all migrants, in conformity with, inter alia, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. States, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, were encouraged to undertake information campaigns aimed at clarifying opportunities, limitations and rights in the event of migration so as to enable everyone, in particular women, to make informed decisions and to prevent them from becoming victims of trafficking. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/328) included some information on migrant women and recommended that the Special Rapporteur on the human rights of migrants be encouraged to continue addressing the situation of migrant women.

42. In its resolution 59/197 on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, the General Assembly encouraged Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to include a gender perspective in training or educating military forces, law enforcement officers and government officials in human rights and humanitarian law issues. The relevant interim report of the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions (A/59/319) included an analytical section on violations of the right to life of women.

43. In its resolution 59/199 on the elimination of all forms of religious intolerance, the General Assembly reaffirmed the call for all Governments to take all appropriate measures to counter intolerance and related violence based on religion or belief, including practices of discrimination against women. In the same resolution, the Assembly urged States to devote particular attention to combating all practices motivated by religion or belief that lead to human rights violations and to discrimination against women. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/366) included some attention to the gender perspectives of religious intolerance.

44. In its resolution 59/188 on human rights and unilateral coercive measures, the General Assembly urged all States to take steps to avoid and to refrain from adopting any unilateral measures that impede the full achievement of economic and social development by the population of the affected countries, in particular children and women. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/436) noted that the most vulnerable groups, including women, are among the primary victims of such measures.

45. The General Assembly made specific recommendations for improving the situation of women and girls in relation to a number of country situations. Some reports provided relevant background information. For example, in its resolution 59/205 on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Assembly expressed its serious concern at the systemic discrimination against women and girls in law and in practice and called upon the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran to abide by its obligations under international human rights instruments. In its resolution 59/207 on the situation of human rights in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Assembly urged all parties to the conflict to take special measures to protect women and children from sexual violence, to promote the full enjoyment of all human rights by women and children and to meet the special needs of women and girls in post-conflict reconstruction, as well as to ensure the full participation of women in all aspects of conflict resolution and peace processes, including peacekeeping, conflict management and peacebuilding, and called upon the Government of National Unity to continue its programme to demobilize, disarm and reintegrate former combatants, taking into account the special needs of women and children, including girls, associated with those combatants. In its resolution 59/263 on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, the Assembly called upon the Government of Myanmar to end systematic violations of human rights, including the use of rape and other forms of sexual violence persistently carried out by members of the armed forces, as well as discrimination and violations suffered in particular by persons belonging to ethnic minorities, women and children. The report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on assistance to Sierra Leone in the field of human rights (A/59/340) included a section on gender-based violence and women's rights and recommended support for the work of the Government in the review of the status of women in Sierra Leone through funding, capacity-building and technical assistance from the international community.

46. A few resolutions acknowledged linkages between substantive human rights issues but did not make specific recommendations for action, including resolution 59/185 on the right to development and resolution 59/195 on human rights and terrorism. The report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on the implementation of the programme of activities for the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (1995-2004) (A/59/277) included some attention to the situation of indigenous women but in its resolution 59/174, the General Assembly did not make action-oriented recommendations in this field.

47. The report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people (A/59/258) included a section on indigenous women and girls and recommended that Governments should act in consultation with indigenous women to formulate and adopt specific measures and programmes to benefit such women and their families. The report of the Secretary-General on globalization and its impact on the full enjoyment of all human rights (A/59/320) also included an analysis of the impact of globalization on women. The report of the special representative on human rights defenders (A/59/401) discussed discrimination against women human rights defenders. The report of the Secretary-General on strengthening of the rule of law (A/59/402) provided information on activities in the field of gender equality. The report of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health (A/59/422) included attention to gender perspectives in relation to indigenous women and sexual and reproductive rights.

Other issues

48. Resolution 59/261 on the rights of the child contained a section on the girl child and made a number of recommendations for action. In the resolution, the General Assembly underlined the need to mainstream a gender perspective in all policies and programmes relating to children, encouraged States to strengthen their statistical capacities and to use sex-disaggregated statistics, requested the United Nations system to incorporate a strong child rights perspective as well as a gender perspective throughout all activities and called upon all States to ensure that children benefit from education programmes, materials and activities reflecting the values of peace, non-violence, tolerance and gender equality. In the same resolution, the Assembly called upon all States to take all necessary measures to ensure the full and equal enjoyment by girls of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, to take effective actions against violations of those rights and freedoms and to base programmes and policies on the rights of the child, taking into account the special situation of girls. The Assembly also called upon all States to eliminate all forms of discrimination against girls and all forms of violence by enacting and enforcing legislation and formulating plans, programmes or strategies to protect girls, to consider ratifying or acceding to the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children and to implement effective measures for rehabilitation, physical and psychological recovery and reintegration into society, taking into account the rights and the specific needs and capacities of girls.

49. In its resolution 59/171 on the new international humanitarian order, the General Assembly recommended specific action by inviting States to promote a culture of protection, taking into account the particular needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities. In its resolution 59/172 on assistance to refugees, returnees and displaced persons in Africa, the Assembly recognized that, among refugees, returnees and internally displaced persons, women and children are

the majority of the population affected by conflict and bear the brunt of atrocities and other consequences of conflict. In the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the recommendations contained in his report on the causes of conflict and promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa (A/59/285), the need to eliminate gender-based violence and all forms of discrimination against women was noted. In its relevant resolution 59/255, the Assembly did not propose specific action but referred to Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security.

50. The linkages between crime prevention and criminal justice and gender equality were acknowledged in some resolutions. In its resolution 59/163 on international cooperation against the world drug problem, the General Assembly reaffirmed that cooperation is needed to counter the challenges and threats posed by the continuing links between illicit drug trafficking and terrorism and other criminal activities, such as trafficking in human beings, including women and children. In its resolutions 59/157 on international cooperation in the fight against transnational organized crime: assistance to States in capacity-building with a view to facilitating the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto and 59/159 on strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme, in particular its technical cooperation capacity, the Assembly welcomed the entry into force of the Convention and its Protocol. The latter resolution recommended specific action by requesting that a gender perspective continue to be integrated into all activities of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/205) included attention to gender perspectives in relation to trafficking, penitentiary reform and victim support and recommended further action on trafficking. The report of the Secretary-General on the African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (A/59/175) included references to programmes aimed at the elimination of trafficking in women and children. It recommended, *inter alia*, that the Institute continue to focus on these programmes. In its resolution 59/158, the Assembly did not make reference to gender issues.

51. In its resolution 59/149 on the United Nations Literacy Decade: education for all, the General Assembly recommended specific action by requesting all relevant entities of the United Nations system, in particular the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), in cooperation with national Governments, to take steps to address the needs of countries with large populations of illiterate adults, with particular regard to women. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/267) included extensive attention to the gender dimensions of illiteracy and recommended action in this regard.

52. In its resolution 59/147 on the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the International Year of the Family and beyond, the General Assembly did not make specific recommendations for action on gender equality. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/176) provided some analysis of gender perspectives in relation to family policy, caregiving, community issues and domestic violence.

4. Fourth Committee: special political and decolonization

53. The General Assembly addressed gender issues in its resolution 59/300 on a comprehensive review of a strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations recommended for adoption by the Fourth Committee. Without specifically mentioning gender perspectives of sexual exploitation and abuse, the resolution urged Member States, the Secretariat and

relevant United Nations organs to take all necessary steps to implement the proposals, recommendations and conclusions of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations and requested the Secretary-General to provide a progress report.

5. Fifth Committee: administrative and budgetary

54. Only one of several resolutions on financing of peacekeeping missions recommended action on gender equality. In its resolution 59/285 on financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include in the proposed budget for the Mission for the period from 1 July 2005 to 30 June 2006 the resources necessary to ensure the integration of gender perspectives into the entire electoral process. The revised budget for the mission for the period from 1 July 2004 to 30 June 2005 (A/59/707) provided for an additional Gender Affairs Officer to facilitate the integration of gender perspectives into the entire electoral process.

55. In his report on the implementation of the recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations (A/59/608 and Corr.1), the Secretary-General noted the reinforcement of the gender mainstreaming capacity of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and in peacekeeping missions through the appointment of gender advisers and training in gender equality and women's rights. The report also pointed out the enhancement of African peacekeeping capacity, including through a focus on gender equality.

56. In its resolution 59/266 on human resources management, the General Assembly made specific requests and recommendations for action with regard to the advancement of women in relation to human resources. The requests related largely to the issue of gender balance but also included a request to clarify the role of departmental focal points on women.

6. Sixth Committee: legal

57. The only resolution adopted by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Sixth Committee that referred to gender perspectives was resolution 59/280 on the United Nations Declaration on Human Cloning, in which the Assembly called upon Member States to take measures to prevent the exploitation of women in the application of life sciences.

7. Resolutions adopted without reference to a Main Committee

58. General Assembly resolutions adopted without reference to a Main Committee that made specific recommendations on gender equality addressed areas of humanitarian assistance, including in relation to: Afghanistan; African development; peace culture, cultural understanding and sport; oceans and the law of the sea; and cooperation between the United Nations and other organizations.

59. In its resolution 59/141 on strengthening of the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations, the General Assembly invited States to promote a culture of protection, taking into account the particular needs of women, children, older persons and persons with disabilities. In his report on strengthening the coordination of emergency humanitarian assistance of the United Nations (A/59/93-E/2004/74), the Secretary-General recommended that humanitarian organizations should strengthen their efforts to integrate a gender

perspective into the planning, programming and implementation of humanitarian activities.

60. In its resolution 59/112 on emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan and the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security, the General Assembly called for voter and civic education, with a particular focus on women, and for full implementation of the human rights provisions of the new Afghan Constitution regarding the full enjoyment by women of their human rights. The Assembly emphasized the necessity of investigating allegations of violations committed against women and girls and reiterated the continued importance of the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of Afghan life. The Government was urged to actively involve women in the development and implementation of relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction programmes. Sex-disaggregated statistical data was called for to accurately track progress. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/581-S/2004/925) included a section on gender issues that analyses some of the current challenges, including maternal mortality, security issues, and restrictive cultural norms. At the same time, the report provides information on progress in the participation of women in public life.

61. The General Assembly recommended action on gender equality in three resolutions that dealt with a culture of peace and understanding, as well as sports as a means to achieve these goals. In its resolution 59/142 on the promotion of religious and cultural understanding, harmony and cooperation, the Assembly specifically encouraged Governments to apply a gender perspective while promoting, including through education, understanding, tolerance and friendship among human beings. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/201) mentioned gender perspectives in the context of the work of UNESCO. In its resolution 59/143 on the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World, 2001-2010, the Assembly encouraged relevant United Nations bodies to continue and further strengthen and expand their efforts, including in the field of gender equality. The relevant report of the Director-General of UNESCO (A/59/223) gave extensive attention to organizational activities to achieve gender equality. In its resolution 59/10 on sport as a means to promote education, health, development and peace, the Assembly invited Governments, the United Nations and sport-related institutions to work collectively so that sport and physical education can promote a culture of peace and social and gender equality.

62. The General Assembly made specific recommendations for action in its resolution 59/254 on progress in implementation of and international support for the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) and encouraged African countries to track progress in the full integration of women into African social, political and economic life. It also urged the Commission on the Status of Women to give prominence to NEPAD in future priority themes. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/206 and Corr.1) described the efforts of NEPAD to promote women's participation in its activities and in relation to gender mainstreaming.

63. Under the biannual agenda items on cooperation between the United Nations and other international organizations, in its resolution 59/9 on cooperation with the League of Arab States, the General Assembly called upon the specialized agencies and other organizations and programmes of the United Nations system to increase their cooperation with the League of Arab States in its priority sectors, including the

empowerment of women. In its resolution 59/19 on cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Assembly encouraged the United Nations and the Inter-Parliamentary Union to continue to cooperate closely in various fields, including on gender issues. In its resolution 59/257 on cooperation with the Organization of American States, the Assembly expressed appreciation to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean for the initiatives to strengthen cooperation with inter-American institutions, including on women and development. The relevant report of the Secretary-General (A/59/303) discussed cooperation in the field of gender equality and the advancement of women.

G. Preparations for the second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society, Tunis, 16 to 18 November 2005

64. The Declaration of Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society, adopted in Geneva on 12 December 2003,⁴ committed Member States to ensuring that the information society enabled women's empowerment and their full participation in all spheres of society and decision-making processes as well as to mainstreaming gender perspectives and using information and communication technologies (ICT) as a tool to that end.

65. The second phase of the World Summit on the Information Society will be held in Tunis from 16 to 18 November 2005. Two meetings of the Preparatory Committee were held in June 2004 and February 2005, respectively, with a third scheduled to take place in Geneva from 19 to 30 September 2005. The current proposed draft text was forwarded by the second meeting of the Preparatory Committee to the third meeting. It is divided into a political chapeau, the Tunis Commitment and operational parts, the Tunis Agenda for Action and the Tunis Plan of Implementation. One of the draft paragraphs of the Tunis Commitment recognizes that ICT could reinforce and increase existing social and economic divisions and widen the gap between individuals, including men and women. This proposed text is currently in square brackets. The language of one of several alternate paragraphs proposes that in striving to promote universal, ubiquitous, equitable and affordable access to ICT, special attention be paid to the role and needs of women and other groups in order to ensure that the benefits of the information society are more evenly distributed and to bridge the digital divide.

66. In its resolution 59/168, the General Assembly encouraged Governments and all other stakeholders to integrate a gender perspective into the preparatory processes and outcome documents, taking into account the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-eighth session in 2003. In view of the importance of ICT for development, including the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 8 on a global partnership for development, and the need to ensure gender mainstreaming in the follow-up to major conferences and summits, there is further scope for integrating gender perspectives in the proposed outcome document, for example, in relation to the need to overcome the gender digital divide, ensure financing mechanisms that guarantee women's equal access to and utilization of ICT, inclusive and participatory infrastructure development and women's full participation in all spheres of public life and decision-making, as well as in using ICT as a tool for such purposes. The Seoul-Gyeonggi Declaration on the Equal Participation of Women in the Information Society, adopted by the Forum on ICTS and Gender for the World Summit on the Information Society 2005, held in Seoul on 24 and 25 June 2005, made specific recommendations in respect of areas recognized as most critical, namely the development of sex-disaggregated statistics

and gender indicators; the integration of a gender perspective in national ICT policies and strategies; ensuring ICT training and capacity-building for women; promoting the economic empowerment of women; ensuring that women benefit from financing of ICT for development; and facilitating gender equality in Internet and ICT governance.

III. Conclusions and recommendations

67. The gender-sensitive presentation of issues in documentation before the General Assembly facilitates gender-sensitive policy formulation. The Third and Second Committees have paid greater attention to gender perspectives than have the other Committees of the Assembly. Reports submitted to the various Committees during the period under review contained a certain degree of gender analysis but did not systematically include recommendations on further action. Resolutions did not always include an analysis of gender perspectives or recommendations for specific action on gender equality and the advancement of women. In those cases where resolutions recommended specific action, they tended to reflect proposals made in reports of the Secretary-General.

68. The General Assembly may wish to:

(a) Request that gender perspectives, based on qualitative gender analysis and containing concrete recommendations for further action, are integrated in reports submitted to the Assembly and its subsidiary bodies;

(b) Call for greater attention to gender perspectives in resolutions adopted by its subsidiary bodies, in particular concrete recommendations for action aimed at achieving gender equality;

(c) Ensure follow-up on the implementation of these recommendations by requesting reporting on progress;

(d) Ensure the full integration of gender perspectives in the preparation for, implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the World Summit on the Information Society;

(e) Ensure gender mainstreaming in the implementation of and follow-up to other major international conferences and summits by its subsidiary bodies, in particular in the context of the 2005 World Summit.

Notes

¹ Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritania, 10-14 January 2005 (United Nations Publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

² Ibid., annex II.

³ See A/CONF.203/16, annex.

⁴ A/C.2/59/3, annex, chap. VII.