

## **ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

### **Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 10-year Review of Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action** *14-15 December 2004*

## **REPORT**

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. At its fifty-ninth session the Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) decided to convene a meeting at the intergovernmental level, at the request of the General Assembly, in order to provide a regional assessment for the 2005 Review of the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.
2. The UNECE Regional Preparatory Meeting for the 10-year Review of Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action was held in Geneva from 14-15 December 2004.
3. It was organized in partnership with the Council of Europe, European Commission, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and OSCE. Preparations for the Meeting were also made in close cooperation with the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in order to ensure the link between this regional review and the global review process.
4. Prior to the Meeting, an NGO Forum was held from 12-13 December 2004.

### **I. ATTENDANCE**

5. The meeting was attended by representatives from 53 UNECE member States: Albania, Andorra, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Serbia and Montenegro, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States, and Uzbekistan.
6. Representatives of the Holy See participated under Article VIII of the Commission's terms of reference. A representative of the Republic of Korea participated under the provisions of Article XI of the Commission's terms of reference.
7. Representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and specialized agencies as well as other intergovernmental organizations were in attendance.

8. The meeting was attended by 646 participants, including 316 representants from 157 non-governmental organizations.
9. The list of participants is available at the UNECE website: [www.unece.org](http://www.unece.org).

## II. OPENING SESSION (agenda item 1)

10. The Meeting was opened by the UN ECE Executive Secretary, Ms. Brigita Schmögnerová and by Ms. Rachel N. Mayanja, Assistant Secretary General, Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

## III. ELECTION OF OFFICERS (agenda item 2)

11. The following officers were elected:

Chairperson: Ms. Florence Ievers, (Canada)

Vice-Chairpersons: Prof. Feride Acar (Turkey), Mr. Karel van Kesteren (Netherlands), Ms. Mominat Omarova (Azerbaijan), Ms. Patricia Schultz (Switzerland),

## IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK (agenda item 3)

12. The Meeting adopted its agenda and organization of work (E/ECE/AC.28/2004/1).

## V. REGIONAL OVERVIEW OF PROGRESS (agenda item 4)

### A. High-level Panel

13. A high level panel, which reviewed the regional progress and challenges, was chaired by Ms. Florence Ievers, (Chairperson). Panellists: Ms. Tamar Beruchashvili, Deputy Chairman of the Governmental Commission on Gender Equality Issues, Minister on European Integration, Georgia; Ms. Aiticul Samakova, Minister, Ministry of Environment and Head of Gender Machinery, Kazakhstan; Ms. Valentine Dovzhenko, Minister, Family, Children and Youth Affairs, Ukraine; Ms. Magdalena Sroda, Undersecretary of State, Plenipotentiary for Gender Equality, the Chancellery of the Prime Minister, Poland; Mr. Rimantas Kairelis, State Secretary, Ministry of Social Security and Labour and Head of Gender Equality, Lithuania; Ms. Eugenia Tsoumani, General Secretary for Gender Equality, Greece.

### B. International support to the implementation of the Beijing Platform

14. Chaired by Ms. Brigita Schmögnerová, UNECE Executive Secretary. Panellists: Ms. Marta Requena, Head of Equality Division, DG II-Human Rights, Council of Europe; Ms. Luisa Pavan-Woolfe, Director, DG Employment and Social Affairs, European Commission; Mr. Jafar Javan, Head of the Policy Support and Programme, UNDP Regional Center, Bratislava; Ms. Joanne Sandler, Deputy Director, UNIFEM; Mr. Goran Svilanovic, Chair Working Table I, Stability Pact; Ms. Beatrix Attinger Colijn, Senior Adviser on Gender Issues, OSCE.

## VI. THEMATIC DEBATES

15. The Meeting was organized around the three substantive issues on the agenda. Each session or sub-session was introduced by three or four panellists consisting of at least one representative from a Government, one from an NGO as well as one independent expert on the relevant subject. Each introduction was followed by country statements and open debate. Two representatives of NGOs presented conclusions and recommendations from the NGO Forum at each substantive session.

### A. Women and the economy (agenda item 5)

#### (a) Employability

16. Chaired by Ms. Patricia Schulz, (Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting). Panellists: Ms. Marta Turk, President, Economic Commission of the National Council of the Republic of Slovenia; Ms. Jirka Marinova, KARAT Coalition; Ms. Jill Rubery, Professor, Manchester Business School, University of Manchester, United Kingdom; Ms. Eva Fodor, Professor, Central European University, Hungary.

#### (b) Social protection and pensions

17. Chaired by Ms. Mominat Omarova (Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting). Panellists: Ms. Olga Sharapova, Director, Medical and Social Problems of Family, Maternity and Childhood, Russian Federation; Ms. Kirsti Kolthoff, President, European Women's Lobby (EWL); Ms. Silke Steinhilber, Expert, Germany.

### B. Institutional Mechanisms to promote gender equality (agenda item 6)

18. Chaired by Ms. Prof. Feride Acar (Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting). Panellists: Ms. Florence Richard, Special Adviser to the Minister on Equal Opportunities, France; Ms. Jemma Hasratyan, President, Armenian Association of Women with University Education; Ms. Ruth Halperin-Kaddari, Professor, Bar-Illan University, Israel.

### C. Trafficking of women in the context of migratory movements (agenda item 7)

19. Chaired by Mr. Karel van Kesteren (Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting). Panellists: Mr. Mark Lagon, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Bureau of International Organization Affairs, US State Department; Ms. Gunilla Ekberg, Special Adviser to the Government on Trafficking on Human Beings, Sweden; Ms. Kateryna Levchenko, La Strada NGO, Ukraine; Ms. Larissa Kapitsa, Professor, Moscow State Institute of International Relations, Russian Federation.

## VII. ROUND TABLE ON EMERGING ISSUES (agenda item 8)

20. Chaired by Ms. Patricia Schulz (Vice-Chairperson of the Meeting). Panellists: Ms. Diane Elson, Professor, University of Essex, UK; Ms. Charlotte Bunch, Director of the Center for Women's Global Leadership, USA.

VIII. CLOSING SESSION AND CHAIRPERSON 'S CONCLUSIONS  
(agenda item 9)

21. The chairperson presented the Chairperson's conclusions. The meeting decided to forward the Chairperson's conclusions, together with the report of the meeting, to the Commission on the Status of Women. The Chairperson's conclusions will serve as the UNECE region's input to the Review and Appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third Special Session of the UN General Assembly, to be held during the forty-ninth Session of the Commission in the Status of Women from 28 February to 11 March 2005 in New York. The Chairperson's Conclusions are annexed to this report.

22. The meeting agreed also to attach the report and conclusions from the NGO Forum as Addendum 1 to this report.

## ANNEX

### CHAIRPERSON'S CONCLUSIONS

1. The Member States of the UNECE reaffirm the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the UN General Assembly (Beijing +5) and stress the importance of strong, sustained political will and commitment at the national, regional and international levels for achieving their full and accelerated implementation as well as the need to undertake further action to this effect, inter alia through the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, mainstreaming gender perspectives into all policies and programmes and promoting the full and equal participation and empowerment of women and enhanced international cooperation.
2. The meeting emphasized the strong links between the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It further emphasized that the full and effective implementation of both the Platform for Action and CEDAW is essential for advancing the implementation of the UN Millennium Declaration and achieving internationally agreed-upon poverty reduction and development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration. In that regard, the meeting underlined that a gender perspective should be fully integrated throughout all follow up processes of United Nations conferences, including in the Review of the Millennium Declaration in September 2005.
3. The meeting also emphasized the importance of closely collaborating with respective UN and regional institutions, in particular with the CEDAW Committee, the UN Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, the recently appointed UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children, and the OSCE Special Representative on Trafficking in Human Beings. The meeting appreciated regional efforts to strengthen measures to combat human trafficking and protect victims of trafficking, namely the OSCE Action Plan to Combat Trafficking in Human Beings, and the European Convention on action against trafficking in human beings which is currently being developed at the Council of Europe.
4. At the regional level, the meeting acknowledged the importance of the Agreed Conclusions from the Beijing plus 5 review in 2000, which includes priority areas of concern for the UNECE region and actions to be taken by Governments and other stakeholders (E/ECE/RW.2/2000/7). Recognizing the importance of their work, the meeting stressed the need for strengthened government links with civil society, including NGOs, working towards gender equality. Participants particularly recognized the constructive dialogue with NGOs present at the meeting and the important role they play in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.
5. The meeting recognized the similarity of concerns and progress made in most countries in the UNECE region in the implementation of the Beijing commitments. The region contains, however, great disparities. While progress was made by most developed market economies, a deterioration of women's position was observed in many countries of Eastern Europe and the CIS, especially in the area of employability and social protection. The meeting recognized the full diversity of women's and girls' experiences and that the situations of different groups of women and girls, as recognized in the Beijing Platform for Action, need to be specifically

addressed, particularly with respect to varying degrees of empowerment, disadvantage and enjoyment of their human rights.

6. Consequently, there is a need for each region and each country to develop specific actions tailored to the problems at hand in line with the general challenges and areas requiring further action that are outlined in the sections below. Overall, the importance of discussion, dialogue and discourse through which experiences, successes and challenges of implementing gender equality commitments are shared, was stressed as a means to identifying innovative responses to ongoing challenges.

7. The 10-year regional Review assessed progress and challenges in the implementation of the Beijing commitments in 12 critical areas of concern. The country reports highlighted three areas of concern particularly relevant to the UNECE member countries to be discussed at this UNECE meeting: (i) women and economy; (ii) institutional mechanisms; and (iii) trafficking in the context of migratory movements. Emerging issues were also discussed in the context of changes in the geopolitical as well as the economic and social situation in the region.

### I. LINKAGES ACROSS THE TWELVE CRITICAL AREAS

8. A review of country reports and statements indicated that to achieve gender equality the twelve critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action must be addressed in a comprehensive way, as they are strongly interconnected (e.g. links between poverty and economic insecurity, violence against women, HIV/AIDS and globalization). It was also clear that a number of other areas are closely linked to the three areas selected for this meeting, specifically: gender mainstreaming, violence against women, health and HIV/AIDS, poverty and the role of women in conflict resolution and decision making.

9. It was noted that the goal of gender equality has been supported by the development of the strategy of gender mainstreaming, which was introduced to the world in 1995 in the Beijing Platform for Action. Notwithstanding the continued relevance of specific policies and programmes for women, the importance of this strategy was further emphasized as was the need for political will and sufficient means and resources to ensure its effective implementation.

10. The need for increased efforts for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, including domestic violence, was reinforced. This can be achieved through the strengthening of legislations and international support, including financial and technical resources. In order to improve policy and programme development, the importance of quality indicators as well as developing, disseminating and progressively updating national data on violence against women, was recognized. Following the March 2004 UNCSW discussions, members further encouraged men and boys to take an active part in the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence.

11. Positive developments in the field of women and health were noted, although the rapid spread of sexually transmitted diseases and HIV/AIDS and the rise in maternal mortality rates in a number of countries still underline the need for progressive legislation and policies on family planning and sex education at school. The reports and statements reiterated the need for states to enhance their cooperation in the coordination to fight HIV/AIDS. The meeting emphasized the need to fully implement the Cairo/ICPD agenda, ensuring that sexual and reproductive health

and rights are an essential component of HIV and AIDS prevention and ensuring that AIDS prevention and sexual and reproductive health and rights activities are integrated.

12. Even though some countries reported a decrease in the number of women living in poverty, others signalled relatively high female poverty rates, thus highlighting the importance of the creation of an enabling environment for poverty reduction and economic growth. Particular attention was brought to the needs of disadvantaged groups, especially single mothers, girl-headed households and older women, who are particularly at risk of poverty due to factors such as discrimination in the labour market, in access to resources, to goods and services and social protection, gender wage gaps or their work in the informal sector and their unpaid work in the household. As statistics on women's poverty are inadequate, there is an urgent need to improve gender equality indicators and sex disaggregated statistics, especially those related to the feminization of poverty.

13. The need to implement fully Security Council Resolution 1325 was stressed, emphasizing the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building activities and especially the need for women's equal participation in peace building processes at the national and international levels. The reports also recognized the need for governments and the United Nations system to take further steps to ensure the integration of gender perspectives and the full and equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making and implementation in all aspects of conflict prevention and resolution and post-conflict peace-building activities and to ensure that efforts to strengthen the rule of law and transitional justice in conflict and post-conflict situations, incorporate gender perspectives with a view to achieving gender equality in constitutional, legislative and judicial reform.

## II. WOMEN AND ECONOMY

### A. Employability

#### *Challenges and Areas Requiring Intensified Efforts*

14. Through the information provided in country reports and statements, a number of challenges were highlighted with the overall goal of achieving gender equality within a productive and high employment society. These included:

- Engendering macroeconomic policies, inter alia by integrating gender equality in trade-related capacity-building programmes, to enhance women's opportunities and participation, including in countries with PRSPs;
- Reversing negative trends in women's employability in Eastern Europe and CIS;
- Enhancing labour standards and decent paid income to ensure the economic independence of women;
- Eliminating de facto discrimination against women in the economy in access to economic resources such as access to land, credit and financing, in hiring and in career development;
- Designing and implementing policies in close cooperation with the social partners to eliminate the gender pay gap, inter alia by regularly monitoring wage gaps, revising job classifications systems, and making pay levels and job evaluation systems transparent;
- Supporting employment opportunities for women of different ages, including mature women workers, and developing strategies that include training for decent and productive work for young women including in fields predominantly occupied by males;

- Ensuring better access to lifelong learning;
- Promoting equal access for young women and men to all professional disciplines through inter alia improved educational systems;
- The need to support women entering and working in ICT fields where they are in the minority and enable women to use ICTs as a tool to reach business goals and achieve high-quality employment;
- The need to support women's access to credit, ICT training, networking, business skills and market access in order to have quality work;
- Taking into account the strengths and needs of groups of women and girls who have been disadvantaged and who face structural unemployment and lack of economic opportunity, especially the needs of immigrants and ethnic minorities, indigenous women, refugees and internally displaced women to earn a living through employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship;
- Recognizing paid and unpaid care-giving as essential to the economy;
- Increasing the positive contribution of men in the care economy as a necessary means to achieve gender equality;
- Enacting a comprehensive policy including gender mainstreaming in tax and benefit policies;
- Increasing efforts to enable women to secure employment commensurate with their qualifications;
- Intensifying the design, implementation and promotion of family friendly policies and services, in accordance with the specific needs of working parents and family life, including affordable, accessible and flexible quality care services for children and other dependants, harmonization of school schedules with working hours, parental and other leave schemes and encouraging the equal sharing of employment and family responsibilities;
- Need for integrated approach to women's self-employment and entrepreneurship, paying attention to the identification and support for women entrepreneurs, gender mainstreaming in SME policies, and coordination and linkages among governments, private sector, civil society and self-employed women;
- Promoting access for women to the financial, investment and trade sectors.

### *Good Practices and Lessons Learned*

15. To address pay gaps and employment discrimination and in order to promote better results among employers to foster gender equality in the workplace, several countries used such tools as surveys, reviews, audits, training and other mechanisms to apply, enforce, and monitor their commitments. Trade unions, equal opportunities commissions and employer organizations were involved in many of these initiatives

16. Good practices also included particular efforts to promote women's employment in the new technologies sector and other new or non-traditional fields. Efforts to improve women's opportunities to gain income from self-employment and entrepreneurship included initiatives, such as business planning guides, focused on meeting the needs of groups of women who face particular disadvantages in the labour market. Supporting indigenous women's employment, self-employment and entrepreneurship was identified by several countries. Practices also indicated how entrepreneurship can play a role in empowering women to support themselves economically as well as contributing to their participation in the political and social spheres. Strengthening these types of initiatives, including micro-credit schemes and women's business

centres, is particularly important for some sub-regions, such as South Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

17. To better recognize the importance of care giving and to support the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, member States initiated innovative pilot studies, experiments and policies in areas such as flexible working hours, new forms of child care, small-scale businesses in care for children and for the elderly and designing more comprehensive approaches to early learning and care in the context of family, education and labour market policy.

## B. Social Protection and Pensions

### *Challenges and Areas Requiring Intensified Efforts*

18. The challenges with respect to social protection and pensions are largely related to integrating women's unpaid work experiences, the need for high-quality gender equality indicators, data and benchmarks, and the need for further gender mainstreaming. Challenges included:

- Reflecting unpaid work, especially care giving, in market based systems of social protection and pension systems and promoting equal sharing of family care responsibilities between men and women;
- Improving data collection by sex on social protection beneficiaries including pensions;
- Using benchmarks, such as those provided by the ILO and the OECD, to ensure decent level of retirement benefits and to assess programme efficiency;
- Reflecting the different life course trajectories between men and women in social protection and pension systems;
- Establishing integrated responses in a variety of policy areas, combining social policies with changes in employment policies and other fields (such as labour law or public education);
- Mainstreaming a gender perspective into social security reforms and pension reforms;
- Promoting further research and open policy debate on gender aspects of social protection and pension schemes as well as exchange of best practices;
- Old age security is becoming an increasingly important element in light of demographic and economic trends;
- Assessing the incentives of tax and benefit systems on the employability of women.

### *Good Practices and Lessons Learned*

19. New and/or expanded ways of taking care giving into account in policy areas such as income supplements, maternity and parental benefits and pension and taxation credits were identified by several countries as ways to improve women's access to social protection. Some of these measures apply regardless of whether a parent is employed or not.

20. Although social security schemes have been an important area of policy reforms throughout the UNECE region during the last decade, so far gender equality has been of only marginal consideration in those reforms. Evidence shows that there is a need to protect and promote public social protection measures to support women's economic independence and security.

21. Obstacles to the use of family benefits by fathers have been removed in a number of countries. In addition maternity benefits and maternity leave have been administratively and legally separated from childcare benefits and childcare leave.

### III. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS

#### *Challenges and Areas Requiring Intensified Efforts*

22. Although there have been improvements to institutional mechanisms in the last ten years, there is an ongoing need to foster gender equality and gender mainstreaming as a component of good governance through sufficient resources and reinforced cooperation of relevant stakeholders. Members expressed their concerns on a number of issues, particularly with regard to government accountability. Issues highlighted included:

- Promoting a much deeper understanding and recognition of gender equality and of women's rights as human rights;
- Strengthening institutional mechanisms by addressing weaknesses due to a lack of financial and human resources, of political will, or an inadequate understanding of gender equality issues;
- Creating comprehensive indicators, collecting and using relevant data, assuring rigorous analysis in policy, ensuring accessibility for widespread use and organizing the obligation to use them;
- Developing good models for gender equality plans of action and practices;
- Organizing comparative studies across countries, exchanging information on the impact of the various institutional mechanisms and providing technical assistance;
- Intensifying efforts to train decision-makers at all levels to improve the quality of gender mainstreaming practices, by developing and disseminating standards;
- Improving independent evaluation and accountability mechanisms, as well as mechanisms for independent evaluation and monitoring, preferably by mandatory reporting;
- Building links with line ministries and other stakeholders;
- Developing more participatory methods of gender mainstreaming;
- Promoting the meaningful participation of young women in the policies, programmes and decisions that affect their lives;
- Strengthening the link of national machineries with civil society, including the women's movement and the academic community;
- Accelerating progress in gender budgeting;
- The effort to eliminate various forms of discrimination, including ethnicity/race, religion/ faith, disability, age and sexual orientation, is increasingly understood to require integrated attention. A clear institutional focus on gender remains needed;
- Addressing gender bias in strategies that address other inequalities and ethnocentric bias in gender equality policies.

#### *Good Practices and Lessons Learned*

23. Several members either reviewed and strengthened or created equality acts or similar legislation and initiatives to enhance their legislative frameworks and improve accountability for achieving gender equality results. Some enacted legislation in policy areas where there were gaps in order to contribute to gender equality and this legislation sometimes included

enforcement mechanisms. Many countries referred to the importance of developing government plans of action for achieving gender equality, especially for those who have recently developed plans of action such as in Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

24. In several countries, new types of mechanisms were developed, such as equal opportunities commissions, ombudspersons, parliamentary committees, independent audit committees to assess progress in gender equality policies in all ministries and centres for gender studies, in order to strengthen the institutional capacity to advance equality. Gender budgeting initiatives were also developed by governments and NGOs as another tool for accountability.

25. Many countries cited new or enhanced forms of cooperation among stakeholders, such as discussing the future development of gender equality policy with women's organizations, political parties, trade unions, the media, and academics. Some of these efforts also served to raise public awareness and generate constructive public policy discussions of gender equality issues. Others helped provide information to women on their rights or fostered training to improve understanding and gender analysis capacity among government officials at all levels as well as in the private sector and civil society. Some countries improved capacity to integrate diversity issues into their gender equality work in ways that enhance their ability to address the needs of all women and others focused priority attention on groups of women who are particularly marginalized or disadvantaged in their societies. Concerned with the low numbers of women in government, especially at higher levels, countries outlined their strategies for increasing women's political participation. Some countries have also taken measures to increase women's participation on boards of large corporations.

26. Another area where there were significant new developments is statistics and indicators. These initiatives included setting up a gender statistics section within the government statistical agency, improving the collection and use of statistics disaggregated by sex and developing indicators on specific equality issues such as employment, reconciliation of work and family as well as on beneficiaries of programmes and policies. In this area as well, efforts are being made to have statistics and indicators that reflect the impact of policies among different populations of women, including those who have been marginalized or disadvantaged.

#### IV. TRAFFICKING IN THE CONTEXT OF MIGRATION

##### *Challenges and Areas Requiring Intensified Efforts*

27. The continually high number of women being trafficked over the past decade is of growing concern to most countries. More attention is required to address the human rights abuses and the root causes of trafficking, including economic causes, in women and girls, in all countries and to ensure that anti-trafficking strategies have a holistic and multi-disciplinary approach. Some of the challenges included:

- Ensuring national implementation of international obligations and support/promote regional recommendations;
- Ensuring the full enjoyment of the human rights of all women migrants, including women migrant workers documented and undocumented, and their protection against violence and exploitation;
- Introducing measures for the empowerment of documented women migrants, including women migrant workers; facilitating the productive employment of documented migrant

women and girls through greater recognition of their skills, foreign education and credentials, and facilitating their full integration into the labour force;

- Mainstreaming a gender perspective into national immigration and asylum policies;
- Building awareness at policy levels, in the media and public opinion at large on the continuingly high number of women being trafficked from Eastern Europe and CIS countries to North America and most of Europe;
- Paying attention to trafficking as linked to prostitution, sexual exploitation, and child sex tourism, as well as its links to illegal and forced labour;
- Giving more attention to economic root causes of trafficking and the emerging feminization of migration and including measures to improve women's employability into national plans of countries of origin;
- Incorporating social, cultural, political and other root causes in the development of further action;
- Improving penal legislation and its implementation and ensuring that all involved offenders are penalized according to the severity of the offence;
- Giving special attention to the trafficking of women and girls in programmes aimed at fighting organized crime;
- Information-sharing regarding challenges, lessons learned, and best practices in implementing international commitments to eliminate trafficking including the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and its Trafficking Protocol;
- Improving coordination among the stakeholders involved in anti-trafficking activities (police, justice, migration authorities, social workers and NGOs) to prevent trafficking, prosecute traffickers and protect victims.
- Developing victim protection schemes, including, as appropriate, provisions to allow legal residence status to foreign victims of trafficking, for example, at least for a stabilization period and during the legal proceedings, as well as specialized assistance, protected shelters, access to health services, including for reproductive health, and aid rehabilitation, return or social and economic integration;
- Promoting cooperation between countries, including between countries of origin, transit and destination, supported by the international community and inclusion of respective assistance measures for countries of origin into national action plans of countries of destination;
- Addressing the demand side of trafficking through new information campaigns, and increasing the understanding among men how trafficking for prostitution and sexual exploitation harms women and children and undermines gender equality.

### *Good practices and lessons learned*

28. There are several examples of countries having improved coordination and collaboration across different ministries responsible for issues such as labour, justice, immigration and foreign affairs to more comprehensively address the many dimensions of trafficking. Public awareness campaigns and ways of assisting victims of trafficking, such as a hot line, have also been featured.

29. Lessons learned include the importance of meeting the particular needs of migrant women, such as providing services in minority languages, and addressing the root causes of trafficking in order to prevent and reduce women's vulnerability.

30. As with good practices in the other themes, collaboration with women's organizations and other civil society partners was key to many initiatives related to trafficking as well as those related to violence against women more generally, to the overall situation of migrant women and to the situation of the women who are trafficked within their own borders.

## V. EMERGING ISSUES

31. The Beijing Platform provides a comprehensive framework for working in partnership to promote gender equality. However, during the past ten years a number of new issues emerged due to technological progress, new economic thinking, social changes and geopolitical developments in the region.

32. Some of the issues identified are longstanding issues that are addressed in the BPfA and are surfacing in new configurations, sometimes with new language and new challenges.

33. There is also the need to continually work on improving methods of gender-based analysis, gender mainstreaming and monitoring change, in order to identify and address evolving patterns and trends and effectively work towards gender equality.

34. Challenges:

- Mainstreaming gender into economic policies, including macroeconomic policies, public budgets, fiscal policies and trade liberalization policies;
- Increasing women's participation in economic decision-making and improving the understanding of all economic decision makers of the relevance of gender to their responsibilities;
- Broadening and deepening the scope of gender responsive budgeting to take into account diversity, and to include interactions with key issues such as employability, social security, aging population and transforming masculinity;
- Including a gender perspective and involving women in decision-making on the full range of environmental issues;
- Ensuring a gender perspective and women's participation in all aspects of developing new technologies;
- Addressing women's unequal access to the benefits of information and communications technologies as users, producers and policy-makers to support the potential of ICTs for achieving women's rights and gender equality, eliminating poverty, overcoming women's isolation and improving governance;
- Working for the empowerment of women in the private sector and fostering corporate social responsibility for promoting gender equality;
- Encouraging men and boys to play a positive role in achieving gender equality;
- Ensuring ongoing attention for gender equality and women and girls' rights in countries that integrate gender equality policies in broader policies addressing multiple inequalities;
- Further involving youth in awareness building, advocacy and policy dialogue on how to address key challenges in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.
- Addressing opportunities and challenges in terms of gender equality as new trends and patterns emerge.

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