

# **FACAMP MODEL UNITED NATIONS**

## **THE DEVELOPING WORLD UNDER DEBATE**

### **COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

## **Women empowerment and gender equality for the socioeconomic development of Africa**

### **PRESENTATION LETTER**

Dear Delegates,

The main goal of this document is to help the preparation of college students who are going to participate in the first FACAMP Model United Nations, FAMUN as delegates of the Commission on the Status of Women committee. We hope this guide gives them support in order to make the link between the gender equality and the process of development.

This committee can be the start of this new proposal of development for Africa, defining what the role of women in this process of bringing Africa to a new age of peace and prosperity is .

We are thrilled to present the committee with such an important issue to the African society. Thus, we would like to thank the delegates for committing themselves to this discussion and we hope that all the participants enjoy this opportunity.

Finally, we would like to thank for the contributions of all co-authors and Professors Acácio Almeida, Lucas Rezende and Patrícia Rinaldi. Without their insight and feedback this guide and this committee would not have been possible.

Sincerely,

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### POSITION OF MEMBER COUNTRIES

#### **Argentina**

Argentina is well known for its history of strong female leaders, who are symbols of the political participation of women in this country. There are important measures which have been adopted by the government. For instance, Argentina was the first Latin American country to insert affirmative policies to women in order to stimulate their participation in Congress. Another important improvement is the relative equality of earnings between men and women: female earnings are equivalent to 94% of men at the same position. However, this country still is strongly influenced by a sexist culture, which sometimes blocks the efforts to promote gender equality (FSD, 2005).

#### **Bangladesh**

Bangladeshi women have been struggling to establish their rights in the country. So far, women are discriminated socially, legally and are excluded from the decision-making process. Not only these formal issues are worrisome, but also practical matters should be given attention to. The fact that 30% of Bangladeshi are malnourished is a topic to be addressed immediately. Despite these difficulties, Bangladesh has made some improvements, such as the easement on school enrollment and the participation of women in local politics and development policy-making (WORLD VISION BANGLADESH, 2013).

#### **Belarus**

The state of Belarus supports the idea that women traditionally play a pivotal role in society. Since the implementation of a market-oriented economy, women have conquered a major importance in the economy, due to the fact that they can join efforts to foster economic growth and contribute to diversify the country's economy. Belarus, along with the members of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), has established and fostered principles which can gender equality. These principles were established in the so-called *OSCE Gender Action Plan*, which addresses issues such as the need to promote equal economic opportunities to women and how to ensure non discriminatory policies. Further, Belarus has established social partnerships in order to help women to start and run companies (OSCE, 2006; OSCE, 2010).

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### **Belgium**

Belgium presents a good situation concerning gender equality. The country presents governmental programs to reduce the existent asymmetries in education (GEPE, 2010), and holds the tenth position in equity remuneration between men and women (CAMPOS, 2012).

### **Brazil**

The good rates of poverty reduction and the improvement of income equality has led the Brazilian government to invest in policies for mothers, providing them with health care, child care and education. Even though changes have been in place, there is a lot still to do. For instance, there is a notable difference between the income of women and men, which creates a prejudicial work environment. A robust economic growth can come from an equal income to both men and women, because women would have more bargain power over the household and it would also show results in health care and labor capacity (“REDEEMERS...”, 2013).

### **Central African Republic**

The country deals with many charges of abuse of power and human rights violations. An UN human rights expert said that “We are seriously concerned over reported acts of killings, torture, arbitrary detention, gender-based violence, enforced disappearances, 'mob justice' and the pervasive climate of insecurity and the absence of the rule of law which have prevailed in the country in the last five months” (SMITH, 2013). Human rights defenders were targeted and threatened in order to remove evidence of abuses, such as violence against women, occupation of schools and recruitment of children (“GROUP...”, 2013).

### **People’s Republic of China**

China draws international attention to the matter of the empowerment of women, once its population control and the subordination of women in the country are matters of great questioning among human right organizations, such as the Amnesty International. However, reforms in the last 15 years have began a path that must be followed in order to reach more opportunities for women in the Chinese society (“THE SITUATION...”, 1994).

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### **Colombia**

Colombia has, under the government of President Juan Manuel Santos and with the help of the High Presidential Council for Women Equality (ACPEM, for the Spanish acronym), came up with the *National Plan for Development*, which contains the *Public National Policy of Gender Equality for Women*. These directives were released in 2012, with the commitment of President Santos to pursue gender equality. Colombia is a country marked with gender inequality and women violence due to the conflict between the government and the narcotrafic groups, but it is making noticeable improvements in the field. In the last years, Colombia has developed policies and commitments that, if put in practice, should help empowering women in the country, also serving as an example for the remainder of the region (BLANCO, 2013).

### **Comoros**

Being one of the poorest countries in Africa, Comoros relies severely on foreign aid. Women issues are strictly associated to tradition, religion and customs. Violence against women, such as domestic violence, is widespread in the country. Although women are increasing their role in politics and decision-making bodies, they are still under-represented at political level, what contributes to the challenge for gender equality in Comoros. Additionally, the country has ratified the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women* (CEDAW) in 1994, and the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa*, best known as the *Maputo Protocol* in 2004 (MEWC, 2010).

### **Cuba**

Cuba's plan for women empowerment includes improving their economic autonomy. Economic opportunities bring a better environment for working women to improve their way of life. There has been help from the Cuban government, along with different NGOs and organizations from all over the world, to boost women independence. Important measures to improve the economic autonomy of women, such as offering classes of land management, cooperative management, and boosting participation and leadership of women, have been developed in recent years. Due to these actions, Cuba has increased its food production reducing imports, has a better labor market and women are encouraged to seek new goals. The resuming of these policies has enabled women to participate actively in the economic growth of the country and has helped Cuba to achieve the Millennium Development Goals of reducing poverty and improving health care (MDG

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ACHIEVEMENT FUND, 2007).

### **Democratic Republic of the Congo**

Due to decades of civil war in the Democratic Republic of Congo, millions of women have been displaced and many of them have been raped as an instrument of war. Another currently issue is illiteracy, which affects 43% of women in the country, jeopardizing their chances to empower. Although women enjoy a few legal rights, such as the right to land, they still face many problems, such as genital mutilation, difficulties to access healthcare and under representation. On the other hand, some improvements can be presented. An example is the creation of a law that forbids girls younger than eighteen to get married (EPATKO, 2013).

### **Dominican Republic**

In the Dominican Republic the results of women empowerment have been satisfactory. They are receiving several donations from different NGOs that are helping them with better education, small business development, adult literacy classes, safety, health and maternal and child programs. This strategy have been used to empower communities, and so far, the results of these policies have shown a clear improvement on gender equality in the country (PLAN INTERNATIONAL USA, 2013).

### **El Salvador**

The project *Give 20 Women Financial and Food security Through Sustainable Agriculture* is one of the most important programs in El Salvador that supports women to establish and maintain farms and small businesses, affecting positively their communities. It is a fund-raising project which helps women to provide the basics to their families by slowly – but truly – improving their economic situation. This policy shows that El Salvador is committed with women empowerment, but is bound to do more on that matter (KARP, 2011).

### **Estonia**

Estonia holds place among the top 25 countries which have made considerable progress regarding gender equality in recent years, being one of the most advanced countries in the East Europe regarding this issue (LOPEZ-CLAROS; ZAHIDI, 2005). But despite the fact that Estonia have improved women economic opportunities

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and educational attainment, there are still a lack of health care and well-being (LOPEZ-CLAROS; ZAHIDI, 2005).

### **Finland**

Historically, Finland was the first country to give full political powers to women. Nowadays, the governmental framework supports women and gives full assistance and social security to guarantee a maternal life simultaneously to a career (MANNINEN, 2010). Furthermore, Finland occupies the sixth position in equity remuneration between genders (CAMPOS, 2012).

### **Gambia**

In February 2013, Gambia was the host of a workshop organized in partnership with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization), which aimed at implementing a plan of action to improve the life conditions of women that have been abused. Previously, the country has launched studies to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats suffered by Gambian women. The next steps intent to promote social change that can result in equality between men and women in the country. Furthermore, Gambia is trying to develop initiatives to foster female leadership in socio-economic, political and cultural areas (UNESCO, 2013).

### **Georgia**

Since its independence after the dismantle of Soviet Union, in 1991, Georgia has been committed to establish democratic values in its society. In this sense, the promotion of gender equality is essential to Georgia, since equality among citizens is an important characteristic of democracy. However, there are some social and economic obstacles, such as the high unemployment rate, poverty and ethnic conflicts. These issues hamper the efforts from the government and civil society to fully implement gender equality (CHKHEIDZE, 2010).

### **Germany**

Despite of being one of the most developed countries, Germany still finds difficulty in promoting equal economic opportunities to women. Even being governed by the chancellor Angela Merkel, there are some difficulties in fully assimilating women into the labor market. Only 2% of the senior corporate positions are filled by

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women in Germany (BENHOLD, 2011). Germany holds the sixteenth position in equity remuneration between genders (CAMPOS, 2012).

### **Guinea**

The Guinean Constitution, approved in 1990 and amended in 2001, grants some rights of equality between men and women. The official position of the Guinean government is that the path towards gender equality is given and the current policy is a satisfactory. However, according to the United Nations, "(...) women still face problems and difficulties such as child marriages, illiteracy, and low living standards, which prevent them from freely expressing their opinion about their intended husband. Such problems are found for the most part in rural areas" (CEDAW, 2005, p. 19).

### **Indonesia**

In this country, social-cultural norms that give importance to the men role are still rooted in the society. Nonetheless, important measures have been taken: the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was ratified and a bill which establishes quotas to women participate as candidates in elections was passed (WOMEN WATCH, 2013).

### **Iran (Islamic Republic of)**

Iran has been criticized by the international community for its discriminatory policies towards women. The main practices that raise concern are: the punishment of adultery with death; and the lack of basic rights, such as: right to choosing husbands, right to divorce, right to child custody, right to education after marriage, right to protection from violent treatment in public spaces, among others (INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN IRAN, 2010). These challenges must be met by the Iranian government in its mandate in CSW (Commission of the Status of Women).

### **Iraq**

According to the United Nations, "Iraqi women today suffer from a lack of educational opportunities, a lack of health care and limited access to the labour market as well as high levels of violence and inequality" (UNAMI, 2013). Since the ending of the Iraq War, with the withdraw of U.S. troops in 2011, Iraq has being

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receiving help from USAID (U.S. Agency for International Development) and abiding by its policies. These are guided by the principles that women play a pivotal role in the welfare and security of Iraqi families and that educated, employed and active women are paramount for the development and reconstruction of the country (USAID, 2012).

### **Israel**

Despite having issues in particular cases, Israel has come a long way towards gender equality. Rights of both women and men are similar, and the formal right to dress, to freely move and to work is respected. Furthermore, men and women have the same duties towards the military. This does not mean, although, that genders are broadly equal in Israel. Until May 2013, women had separate public spaces (such as being allowed to sit only on the back rows of buses). And even though women formally have the right to dress as they may, there are signs that advise women not to. The government of Netanyahu, along with attorney general Yehuda Weinstein, is making efforts to abolish these practices (RUDOREN, 2013).

### **Italy**

Italy is very criticized internationally for the fragility of its gender equality policies, mainly when compared to other European countries. The main issue with Italian policymaking in this matter is the patriarchal view of family and society, which connects women rights only to their role as mothers, lacking advances in their rights concerning labor and their role in politics (BONINO, 2013).

### **Jamaica**

The Minister of Jamaica responsible for gender affairs, Sandra Falconer, affirms that the country has substantially improved in the matter of empowerment of women since its independence in 1962. "We have elected a female Prime Minister, which means that we have broken the glass ceiling at the highest level of political leadership", says Falconer ("WOMEN...", 2013). Jamaica has acknowledged that a better participation of women in society can contribute to raise children in a sustainable way and even promote economic development.

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### **Japan**

Women in Japan still suffer from some types of discrimination due to its patriarchal culture. The Japanese culture recognizes man as the main agent of economic and political influence and his power is essential to administrate his family and to make important decisions. Despite being a developed country, there still are problems in terms of labor and professional equality between men and women. The majority of women have only part time jobs and do not have the same rights as men (FUJINO, 2013).

### **Liberia**

The first female president in Africa was Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the Liberian President elected in 2005 ("LIBERIAN...", 2006). Although this fact expresses a significant progress of women empowerment in Liberia, the consequences of the civil war (1989-1996; 1999-2003) – such as rape and other forms of sexual violence – remain predominantly burdensome for women. Further, the marginalization of women and gender inequality are rooted in Liberians traditions, facing women as the weaker sex. This misperception tends to limit their participation in decision-making. Another challenge in the country is the practice of early marriage and violence against women. UN Women has been working in Liberia since 2004 and currently holds one of the biggest offices in West Africa (UN WOMEN, 2011).

### **Libya**

Libya presents a society in which men traditionally make the decisions. However, since the end of Muammar Gaddafi dictatorship, a new generation of women rights activists is emerging. They gather to discuss their demands, which includes their participation in the drafting of the new constitution and a 40% quota for women in the parliamentary committee (HAWLEY, 2011). Women have promoted many manifestations on the streets acclaiming for their rights; most of them were conducted by leaders of NGOs, such The Voice of Libyan Women, an organization that focus on the economic empowerment of women and in the political participation (THE VOICE OF LIBYAN WOMEN, 2013).

### **Malawi**

Malawi seeks effective means to end the violence against women, being the empowerment of women one of the top priorities in its agenda. The country has

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included laws on its Constitution in order to protect women. Women health has also been contemplated in the politics of the country, which has managed to reduce the maternal mortality rate from 675 to 460 per 100,000 births in 2010 (MINISTER OF GENDER, CHILDREN AND SOCIAL WELFARE, 2013).

### **Malaysia**

The country faces serious problems to guarantee the respect to women rights. Recently, the government published that Muslim women should abandon the use of makeup and high heels, for the purpose of avoiding rape or any other sexual harassment. Even though those rules are not mandatory, they deprive women from their liberties and rights. Not to mention how these measures ramper the strengthen of the rule of law against aggressors ("CONTRA...", 2013).

### **Mauritania**

The first Article of the Constitution of Mauritania states the respect to gender equality. In 2001, the country ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Besides, in 2006, this country adopted an affirmative action which establishes that, at least, 20% of political representatives must be women ("MAURITANIA...", 2008).

### **Mongolia**

Under the influence of Soviet Union during the Cold War, Mongolia provided education and some betterment on women's participation in the economy. Today, Mongolia is a democratic country that promotes the perception of women empowerment. However, issues such as poverty, unemployment and income gap are likely to affect more women than men in Mongolia (ROSSABI, 2013).

### **Netherlands**

Although Netherlands is a developed country with great civil liberties and high rates of women's political participation, women empowerment still faces some challenges. The female contribution in the family income, for instance, is significantly low when compared to men; 25% of Dutch women are not financially dependent. The pay gap in Netherlands is high, but one of the reasons is that many women only work part time as a matter of choice (OLIEN, 2010).

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### **Nicaragua**

The 2012 report of World Economic Forum showed that Nicaragua was one of the countries in the world that best promoted women empowerment. Even as a developing country, Nicaragua has shown itself as a powerhouse in this matter, figuring the best position among Latin American countries and much further ahead of the United States of America. This result was due to the fact that, in May 2012, Nicaragua passed a bill of law requiring that 50% of candidates of political parties must be composed by women (CLANCY, 2012).

### **Niger**

An important part of Nigerien female population lives in the countryside. Due to the poverty and bad living conditions, it is very difficult to fulfill goals related to women empowerment. However, with the help of World Bank and other institutions, the country is reaching progress. The contraceptive prevalence rate tripled in the four years, for example, which contributes to the empowerment of women (WORLD BANK, 2013).

### **Philippines**

Despite the fact that women earn about 76% of men, Philippines has made huge improvement in this field. The Women in Development and Nation Building Act, which declares the commitment of government to foster gender equality, has been approved. Further, bearing in mind the women are the most damaged in poor families and societies, the government has created a cash transfer program in order to relieve poor families and, indirectly, empower women ("PHILIPPINES...", 2012).

### **Republic of Korea**

Despite the fact that women in the Republic of Korea are highly educated (about 80% are graduated in Universities), they earn by far less than men, at the same position and age (KIM, 2012). Due to this, the government stimulates women entrepreneurs and gives subsidies to women who desire to participate in economic activities. Further, Republic of Korea has passed a bill which states quotas for female candidates, reducing the gender gap in politics (KAKUCHI, 2010).

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### **Russian Federation**

During the Soviet regime, Russian women conquered social equality mainly in the fields of education and employment, due to the ideology of Marxism-Leninism, which supported some kinds of gender equality. However, in the matter of political representation, women were excluded from the decision making process (USHA, 2005). Until today, Russian women have been included in the social-economic aspects of life, however, the political representation is still shy. In this sense, it is important to the Russian Federation to insert the theme of political representation in the regional and international agenda.

### **Rwanda**

The constitution established in Rwanda in 2003 was a turning point to the life of many women and to its society as a whole. Before 2003, women were not allowed to inherit land, and it was culturally determined as a shame to women to speak in public. Nowadays, the female education has been considered priority to the government and it was established that women must hold at least 30% of posts in decision-making organs. Finally, the Rwandese President has credited women empowerment as a crucial role to the social improvement held in this country (BIKORIMANA, 2012).

### **Spain**

In matters of gender equality, Spain is above the average of the European Union, according to a study made by the University of Sevilla that created an index with 18 indicators. The indicator that stands out the most in Spain is the political participation of women. However, the country still needs to pursue policies that increase gender equality inside the private sector, in which men occupy most of the positions of power (BERICAT, 2011).

### **Swaziland**

In 2006, The Kingdom of Swaziland recognized the equality between men and women, which were a great conquer in favor of gender equality. However, the high levels of HIV, violence against women and unemployment are alarming. Due to this, the national gender policy seeks a change in this panorama, starting with free quality education to girls (MNISI, 2011).

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### **Thailand**

Since the last decade, the government of Thailand has been committed to empower women and diminish the gender disparity. Bills such as the *Civil Code* – which provides equal rights to men and women regarding the process of divorce – and the *Protection of Victims of Domestic Violences Act* – which creates bases to protect and rehabilitate victims of domestic aggressions – are examples of the actions from Thai government in order to promote better conditions to female citizens (UN WOMEN, 2012).

### **United States of America**

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) puts that “Long-term, sustainable development will only be possible when women and men enjoy equal opportunity to rise to their potential” (USAID, 2013). The main challenges of the country remain in the difficulty to disrupt barriers related to women’s participation in the economic and political fields; for instance, opening their own enterprises or acting in preventing and resolving conflicts (US DEPARTMENT OF STATE, 2013).

### **Uruguay**

The law 18.104 approved in Uruguay in 2007 was a major leap forward on the country’s policies towards gender equality and women empowerment, creating several bodies and recognizing the equality of rights of men and women (SENADO Y LA CÁMARA DE REPRESENTANTES DE LA REPÚBLICA ORIENTAL DEL URUGUAY, 2007). The law also establishes concrete plans and institutions towards equal rights and opportunities from a gender perspective

### **Zimbabwe**

In 2013, Zimbabwe approved a new constitution which emphasizes the importance of gender equality. This document states the respect to gender equality as a founding value. This new constitution is more aligned with international and regional declarations signed and ratified by the country. Zimbabwe has built up new institutions focused on the empowerment of women, such as the *Gender Commission*, which is responsible for recommending policies and affirmative actions and investigating gender rights violations (“ZIMBABWEANS...”, 2013)

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### UN Women

UN Women is acquainted with the fact that gender inequalities are still rooted in our society; women are not only suffering from violence and discrimination, but also facing difficulties in the access of education, work and health care. Therefore, the aim of UN Women is to address these challenges by creating programs and projects regarding the elimination of discrimination against women; the empowerment of women; and the achievement of gender equality in all fields, such as development, humanitarian action and security (UN WOMEN, 2013).

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### **SPECIAL RULES OF PROCEDURE OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

#### **RULE #1 FINAL DOCUMENT – AGREED CONCLUSIONS**

The final document accepted on the Commission on the Status of Women is an Agreed Conclusion. This document should contain recommendations of policies and practices regarding the promotion of Gender Equality and Women Empowerment. A sample of an Agreed Conclusion is provided on the next session of this Conference Handbook.

#### **RULE #2 VOTING CONSENSUS**

All substantive questions, such as the voting on Agreed Conclusions, Amendments and Division of the Question, will be only approved in case of consensus among the nations present in the meeting. Further, if more than one third of the whole quorum abstains from the voting, the document will not be approved.

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### AGREED CONCLUSIONS SAMPLE

2003/44

#### AGREED CONCLUSIONS ON FINANCING GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN

1. The following agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission are brought to the attention of the General Assembly as an input into the preparations for and outcome of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus to be held in Doha from 29 November to 2 December 2008.

#### **Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women\***

*\*For the discussion, see chap. II, paras. 61-64.*

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which emphasized the need for political commitment to make available human and financial resources for the empowerment of women and that funding had to be identified and mobilized from all sources and across all sectors to achieve the goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, which called upon Governments to incorporate a gender perspective into the design, development, adoption and execution of all policies and budgetary processes, as appropriate, in order to promote equitable, effective and appropriate resource allocation and establish adequate budgetary allocations to support gender equality and development programmes that enhance women's empowerment.

2. The Commission reaffirms the declaration adopted on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, which stressed that challenges and obstacles remained in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and pledged to take further action to ensure their full and accelerated implementation.

3. The Commission recalls the outcome of the International Conference on Financing for Development held in Monterrey, Mexico, in 2002, which affirms,

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inter alia, that a holistic approach to the interconnected national, international and systemic challenges of financing for development, sustainable, gender-sensitive, people-centred development, in all parts of the globe is essential.

4. The Commission also recalls the 2005 World Summit and reaffirms that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the International Conference on Population and Development and other relevant United Nations summits and conferences are essential contributions to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in particular, on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

5. The Commission reaffirms the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and takes note of the work of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women towards the practical realization of the principle of equality between women and men and between girls and boys.

6. The Commission also reaffirms that States have primary responsibility for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and that gender mainstreaming and national machineries are necessary and play a critical role in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and that, in order for national machineries to be effective, a strong institutional framework with clear mandates, location at the highest possible level, accountability mechanisms, partnership with civil society, a transparent political process, adequate financial and human resources and continued strong political commitment are crucial.

7. The Commission recalls that the Platform for Action recognizes that its implementation requires adequate financial resources committed at the national and international levels and that strengthening national capacities in developing countries in this regard requires striving for the fulfilment of the agreed targets of overall official development assistance from developed countries as soon as possible. The Commission recognizes the importance of the full utilization of all sources of development finance.

8. The Commission also recognizes the importance of gender mainstreaming as a tool for achieving gender equality and, to that end, the need to promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social

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spheres and to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender.

9. The Commission reaffirms that gender equality and the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all are essential for advancing development, peace and security, and stresses that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development.

10. The Commission reaffirms that the promotion and protection of, and respect for, the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women, including the right to development, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, should be mainstreamed into all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty, and also reaffirms the need to take measures to ensure that every person is entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development.

11. The Commission notes the growing body of evidence demonstrating that investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth and that increasing women's economic empowerment is central to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and to the eradication of poverty, and recognizes that adequate resources need to be allocated at all levels, mechanisms and capacities need to be strengthened and gender-responsive policies need to be enhanced to fully utilize the multiplier effect.

12. The Commission reaffirms the goals aimed at reducing maternal and child mortality, combating HIV/AIDS and improving maternal health by 2015, as contained in the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the goal of achieving universal access to reproductive health, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development, which are critical to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

13. The Commission recalls the recognition in the Beijing Platform for Action of the role of the United Nations, including funds, programmes and specialized agencies, in particular the special roles of the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), within their respective mandates, and recognizes the role of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women, as part of the United Nations system, in the promotion of gender equality and the

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empowerment of women and, therefore, in the implementation of the Platform for Action.

14. The Commission also recalls that the Bretton Woods institutions, other financial institutions and the private sector also have an important role to play in ensuring that financing for development promotes gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

15. The Commission recognizes the importance of non-governmental organizations, as well as other civil society actors, in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

16. The Commission is concerned that insufficient political commitment and budgetary resources pose obstacles to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment and continue to undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of both national mechanisms for the advancement of women and women's organizations in advocating for, implementing, supporting and monitoring the effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

17. The Commission is concerned about the growing feminization of poverty and reiterates that eradicating poverty is the greatest global challenge facing the world today, and an indispensable requirement for sustainable development, in particular for developing countries, including the least developed countries. In this regard, the Commission stresses that achieving the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals is a global effort that requires investing sufficient resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

18. The Commission remains concerned about the lingering negative consequences, including for women, of structural adjustment programmes, stemming from inappropriate design and application.

19. The Commission expresses its concern about the under-resourcing in the area of gender equality in the United Nations system, including at UNIFEM and INSTRAW, the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women, and stresses the need for more effective tracking of resources allocated to and spent on enhancing gender

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equality and the empowerment of women across the United Nations system, including on gender mainstreaming.

20. The Commission states that the global commitments for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women since the Fourth World Conference on Women, including through the Monterrey Consensus, have yet to be fully implemented.

21. The Commission urges Governments and/or, as appropriate, the relevant funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and invites the international financial institutions, civil society, non-governmental organizations and the private sector, bearing in mind national priorities, to take the following actions:

(a) Increase the investment in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, taking into account the diversity of needs and circumstances of women and girls, including through mainstreaming a gender perspective in resource allocation and ensuring the necessary human, financial and material resources for specific and targeted activities to ensure gender equality at the local, national, regional and international levels, as well as through enhanced and increased international cooperation;

(b) Ensure that sufficient resources are allocated for activities targeting the elimination of persistent obstacles to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in all critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action;

(c) Design and strengthen poverty eradication strategies, with the full and effective participation of women, that reduce the feminization of poverty and enhance the capacity of women and empower them to meet the negative social and economic impacts of globalization;

(d) Create an environment in which women and girls can fully share the benefits of the opportunities offered by globalization;

(e) Integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation and reporting of all national economic policies, strategies and plans, in a coordinated manner across all policy areas, including in national development, social protection and poverty reduction strategies, and involve national mechanisms for the advancement of women and women's organizations in the design and development of such policies, strategies and plans with the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women;

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(f) Incorporate gender perspectives into all economic policymaking and increase the participation of women in economic governance structures and processes in order to ensure policy coherence and adequate resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(g) Give priority to assisting the efforts of developing countries, including the least developed countries, to ensure the full and effective participation of women in deciding and implementing development strategies and integrating gender concerns into national programmes, including by providing adequate resources to operational activities for development in support of the efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(h) Remove barriers and allocate adequate resources to enable the full representation and full and equal participation of women in political, social and economic decision-making and in administrative entities, in particular those responsible for economic and public finance policies, in order to guarantee the full and equal participation of women in the formulation of all plans, programmes and policies;

(i) Strengthen the capacities and mandates of institutional frameworks and accountability mechanisms, including of national machineries for the advancement of women, and ensure that they are continuously and adequately resourced and given the authority necessary to carry out their critical role in advocating for, supporting, monitoring and evaluating the integration of gender perspectives in all policy areas and the implementation of gender equality plans, programmes and legislation;

(j) Strengthen a coordinated and institutionalized dialogue between national mechanisms for the advancement of women, relevant governmental agencies and entities, including ministries of finance and planning and their gender focal points, and women's organizations in order to ensure the integration of gender perspectives into all national development policies, plans and budgets;

(k) Cost and adequately resource national policies, programmes, strategies and plans for gender equality and the empowerment of women, including gender mainstreaming and affirmative action strategies, and ensure that they are incorporated into overall national development strategies and reflected in relevant sector plans and budgets to achieve international and regional commitments for gender equality, including Millennium Development Goal 3;

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(l) Allocate resources for capacity development in gender mainstreaming in all ministries, particularly within national women's machineries and finance ministries and, as appropriate, local authorities, in order to ensure that domestic resource mobilization and allocation are carried out in a gender-responsive manner, and reinforce national efforts in capacity-building in social and gender budget policies;

(m) Improve, systematize and fund the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-disaggregated and gender-related data, including data disaggregated by age and other factors and data on women's contribution to the care economy, and develop necessary input, output and outcome indicators at all levels to measure progress in financing gender equality and the empowerment of women, in particular in introducing and implementing gender-responsive approaches to public finance;

(n) Undertake and disseminate gender analysis of policies and programmes related to macroeconomic stability, structural adjustment, external debt problems, taxation, investments, employment, markets and all relevant sectors of the economy and support and facilitate research in those areas, with a view to achieving the objectives of the Platform for Action and with respect to their impact on poverty, on inequality and particularly on women, as well as to assess their impact on family well-being and conditions and adjust them, as appropriate, to promote more equitable distribution of productive assets, wealth, opportunities, income and services;

(o) Carry out gender-sensitive analysis of revenues and expenditures in all policy areas and take into account the review and evaluation results in budget planning, allocation and revenue-raising in order to enhance the contribution of Government expenditures to accelerating the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

(p) Develop and implement, where appropriate, methodologies and tools, including national indicators, for gender-responsive planning and budgeting in order to systematically incorporate gender perspectives into budgetary policies at all levels, with a view to promoting gender equality in all policy areas;

(q) Urge developed countries that have not yet done so, in accordance with their commitments, to make concrete efforts towards meeting the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national product to least developed countries, and encourage developing countries to build on the progress

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achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help meet development goals and targets and, inter alia, to assist them in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(r) Ensure the effective and equitable participation of developing countries in the formulation of financial standards and codes, with a view to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(s) Strengthen the focus and impact of development assistance, specifically targeting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls, in line with national development priorities, through both gender mainstreaming and funding of targeted activities and enhanced dialogue on those issues between donors and developing countries, and strengthen mechanisms to effectively measure resources allocated to incorporating gender perspectives in all sectors and thematic areas of development assistance;

(t) Encourage the integration of gender perspectives in aid modalities and efforts to enhance aid delivery mechanisms;

(u) Identify and implement development-oriented and durable solutions that integrate a gender perspective into the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries, including least developed countries, inter alia, through debt relief, including the option of debt cancellation under official development assistance, in order to help them to finance programmes and projects targeted at development, including the advancement of women;

(v) Encourage international financial institutions to continue to take gender perspectives into account in the design of loans, grants, projects, programmes and strategies;

(w) Identify and address the differential impact of trade policies on women and men and incorporate gender perspectives in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of trade policies, develop strategies to expand trade opportunities for women producers and facilitate the active participation of women in national, regional and international trade decision-making structures and processes;

(x) Undertake gender-sensitive assessments of national labour laws, policies and programmes and establish gender-sensitive policies and guidelines for employment practices, including those of transnational corporations, building on appropriate multilateral instruments, including the conventions of the International Labour Organization;

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(y) Allocate adequate resources for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women in the workplace, including unequal access to labour market participation and wage inequalities, as well as reconciliation of work and private life for both women and men;

(z) Establish and fund active labour market policies devoted to the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including the full participation of women in all international and national development and poverty eradication strategies, the creation of more and better jobs for women, both urban and rural, and their inclusion in social protection and social dialogue;

(aa) Take measures to develop, finance, implement, monitor and evaluate gender-responsive policies and programmes aimed at promoting women's entrepreneurship and private initiative, including through microfinance, microcredit and cooperatives, and assist women-owned businesses in participating in and benefiting from, inter alia, international trade, technological innovation and transfer, investment and knowledge and skills training;

(bb) Fully maximize the role of and ensure access to microfinance tools, including microcredit for poverty eradication, employment generation and, especially, for the empowerment of women, encourage the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacities, including through the support of international financial institutions, and ensure that best practices are widely disseminated;

(cc) Undertake legislative and administrative reforms to give women full and equal access to economic resources, including the right to inheritance and to ownership of land and other property, credit, natural resources and appropriate technologies;

(dd) Take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women and increase their access to and control over bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, giving special attention to poor, uneducated women; support women's access to legal assistance; encourage the financial sector to mainstream gender perspectives in its policies and programmes; ensure women's full and equal access to training and productive resources and social protection; and facilitate equal access of women, particularly women in developing and least developed countries, to markets at all levels;

(ee) Strengthen education, health, and social services and effectively utilize resources to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and ensure women's and girls' rights to education at all levels and the enjoyment of the highest

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attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health, as well as quality, affordable and universally accessible health care and services, in particular primary health care;

(ff) Address the overall expansion and feminization of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, taking into account that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they have become more vulnerable to violence, stigma and discrimination, poverty and marginalization from their families and communities as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis, and, in that regard, significantly scale up efforts towards the goal of universal access to comprehensive prevention programmes, treatment, care and support by 2010 and ensure that those efforts integrate and promote gender equality;

(gg) Ensure adequate financing for women's full, equal and effective participation at all levels in conflict prevention, management and resolution, peace negotiations and peacebuilding, including adequate national and international funding to ensure proper access to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and other relevant programmes for women and girls;

(hh) Reduce excessive military expenditures, including global military expenditures, trade in arms and investment for arms production and acquisition, taking into consideration national security requirements, in order to permit the possible allocation of additional funds for social and economic development, including for gender equality and the advancement of women;

(ii) Ensure that adequate resources are allocated for activities targeting persistent serious obstacles to the advancement of women in situations of armed conflict and in conflicts of other types, wars of aggression, foreign occupation, colonial or other alien domination as well as terrorism;

(jj) Integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of national environmental policies, strengthen mechanisms and provide adequate resources to ensure women's full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies related to the impact of climate change on the lives of women and girls;

(kk) Strengthen coordination, accountability, effectiveness and efficiency in the United Nations system for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, including through more effective mainstreaming in all

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aspects and enhancing its capacity to effectively assist States, at their request, in implementing their programmes on gender equality and the empowerment of women and, to that end, make adequate and reliable human and financial resources available;

(ll) Create and enhance a supportive environment for the mobilization of resources by non-governmental organizations, in particular women's organizations and networks, to enable them to increase their effectiveness and to contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of women, including through assisting in the implementation of the Platform for Action and participating in policy processes and programme delivery;

(mm) Provide assistance to States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, upon their request, to support the implementation of the obligations of States parties under the Convention.

22. The Commission invites the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to continue to give, while exercising its mandated functions, due consideration to financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women in its work.

23. The Commission requests Member States, with a view to strengthening financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, to integrate gender perspectives in the preparations for and outcome of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, to be held in Qatar in 2008.

Source: COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN. **Agreed Conclusions on Financing Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women**. 47th Session, 2003/44. Available at: <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/agreedconclusions/Agreed%20conclusions%2047th%20session.pdf>. Accessed on: 15 August 2013.