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Note by the Secretariat as an input to the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2005 of the Economic and Social Council**Summary*

In its resolution 2004/44, the Economic and Social Council requested its functional commissions, regional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies to contribute to the preparation of the input of the Economic and Social Council to the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to be held in 2005. The present note has been compiled to assist the Commission on the Status of Women in providing an input to the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2005 of the Council, on the theme “Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities”. The note highlights some of the actions referred to in relevant outcomes of the General Assembly, the Council and the Commission concerning the linkages between gender equality and the internationally agreed development goals, including the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the outcomes of major international conferences held following the Millennium Summit.

* The submission of the present note was delayed in order to complete consultations.

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I. Introduction

1. In accordance with its decision 2004/294, the Economic and Social Council will consider the theme “Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities” at the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2005.

2. In its resolution 2004/44, the Council welcomed General Assembly resolution 58/291 and requested its functional commissions, the regional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies to contribute to the preparation of the input of the Council to the high-level plenary meeting of the Assembly to be held in 2005.

3. In accordance with its multi-year programme of work, at its forty-ninth session the Commission on the Status of Women will undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly at the national level. In its resolution 48/5, the Commission decided to focus on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly through the expanded use of interactive dialogue, with broad-based participation of governmental delegations at the highest level of responsibility and expertise and of civil society and organizations within the United Nations system, bearing in mind the need to integrate a gender perspective in the implementation and review of the Millennium Declaration. The Chairperson of the forty-ninth session of the Commission was also requested to transmit its outcome, through the Council, to the sixtieth session of the Assembly, including to the high-level meeting of the Assembly on the review of the Millennium Declaration, to be held from 14 to 16 September 2005.

4. The present note highlights resolutions of the Assembly, the Council and the Commission, as well as agreed conclusions of the Commission on several critical areas of concern and other emerging issues concerning the linkages between gender equality and the internationally agreed development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration. The note also covers the relevant outcomes of major global conferences and summits held following the Millennium Summit in 2000, inter alia, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society.

5. The present note has been compiled by the Secretariat to assist the Commission in providing an input to the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2005 of the Council.

II. Gender equality, the Millennium Declaration and the internationally agreed development goals

6. Since 1990, the international community has convened 12 major conferences and summits¹ that committed Member States to address the priorities of a new development agenda. The conferences and summits played a key role in building

consensus around a rights-based framework for sustainable development. The conferences and summits focused on a more participatory and inclusive approach to development and emphasized the need for cooperation between Member States, the United Nations and all areas of society, including civil society and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and the media, and major groups of stakeholders, in particular women, to ensure the effective implementation of outcomes.

7. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were adopted by consensus in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Declaration embodies the commitment of the international community to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Platform for Action sets out measures for national, regional and international action in 12 critical areas of concern: poverty; education and training; health; violence against women; armed conflict; economy; power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights; media; environment; and the girl child. The rights of women and girl children were recognized as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. There was clear commitment to the promotion of international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Member States and the United Nations were called upon to mainstream gender perspectives into policies and programmes at the national, regional and international levels as a strategy to complement action for the empowerment of women.

8. The outcome document adopted by the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly reaffirmed the commitment of Member States to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It also identified further actions and initiatives required at the local, national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of the Platform for Action and to ensure that commitments for gender equality, development and peace are fully realized.

9. The Millennium Declaration, adopted by United Nations Member States in September 2000, represented a global political commitment to peace, security and disarmament; development and poverty eradication; protecting our common environment; human rights, democracy and good governance; protecting the vulnerable; meeting the special needs of Africa; and strengthening the United Nations. In paragraph 6 of the Declaration, Member States identified equality as a fundamental value and principle and stated that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured. The Declaration recognized the centrality of gender equality for development. In paragraph 20 of the Declaration, Member States resolved to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable. Gender equality and the empowerment of women were considered both as objectives in themselves and as means to achieve overall development goals. In paragraph 25 of the Declaration, Member States also committed themselves to the elimination of violence against women and the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

10. The objectives in the Millennium Declaration were derived from the outcomes of the major summits and conferences of the 1990s. Eight of the commitments were subsequently consolidated as the Millennium Development Goals, to be achieved by 2015, and in order to measure and monitor progress, mobilize political commitment

and initiate concrete action, 16 global targets and 48 global indicators were established for the Millennium Development Goals (for the most recent report on the Goals, see A/59/282). Country reports provide the opportunity for participatory implementation and monitoring processes and for reporting achievements and continuing challenges.

11. The Declaration and Goals responded to calls for an overall common framework for specific, time-bound action to achieve global development goals. They also served as an important reference framework for major summits and conferences held after 2000.² In a recent report on the implementation of the Declaration, the Secretary-General stressed that the goals were a measurable set of human development benchmarks that can provide clear indications of whether the world is managing to build the more “inclusive and equitable” globalization called for in the Declaration (see A/58/323, paras. 48 and 50).

12. Goal 3 of the Millennium Development Goals specifically addresses the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The target associated with goal 3 is focused on the elimination of gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005 and at all levels by 2015. The four indicators focus on the ratio of girls to boys in primary, secondary and tertiary education; the ratio of literate females to males among 15-to-24-year-olds; the share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector; and the proportion of seats held by women in national parliaments.

13. The establishment of an independent goal on gender equality and empowerment of women was an important development. However, it is critical that gender perspectives be fully integrated into the implementation and monitoring of all the other goals associated with the Declaration and the Goals. The Secretary-General has stated that there is no time to lose if we are to reach the Goals by the target date of 2015; only by investing in the world’s women can we expect to get there.³ The importance of linking the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, the Millennium Development Goals and the Beijing Platform for Action has also been emphasized. Most of the targets and indicators established for the Goals are specifically addressed in strategic objectives under the critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action or the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Full implementation of the Platform for Action, the outcome of the special session and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is essential for achieving the internationally agreed development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration, including the Millennium Development Goals.

14. The commitment and resources being mobilized for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals can provide an important opportunity to enhance the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women. Discussions have highlighted the importance of utilizing the Goals as an instrument to ensure improved monitoring of progress. This requires the sex-disaggregation of targets and indicators for all Goals; attention to critical areas of concern highlighted in the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly which are not focused on in the Goals, including violence against women, peace and security, reproductive health and rights, and human rights of women, including land and inheritance rights; and the recognition of the importance

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

III. Gender mainstreaming in relation to the Millennium Declaration and the internationally agreed development goals

15. Intergovernmental processes, including those of the Commission, the Council and the Assembly, have affirmed the integration of gender perspectives as an important principle guiding the work of all entities of the United Nations system in relation to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the development goals contained therein, including the Millennium Development Goals.

16. The Commission has adopted annual resolutions on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. Since 2003, these resolutions (see Commission resolutions 47/2 and 48/4) have welcomed the Millennium Declaration and its call for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

17. In its resolution 2004/4, the Council encouraged the governing bodies of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into all aspects of their monitoring functions in relation to policies and strategies, medium-term plans, multi-year funding frameworks and operational activities, including those relating to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields. It also requested all entities of the United Nations system, including funds and programmes, to fully incorporate gender perspectives in their programmes and operational activities and to ensure, within their mandates, systematic integration of reporting on their efforts in mainstreaming gender into existing evaluation and monitoring processes within the United Nations system, including those relating to the development goals contained in the Declaration. In the same resolution, the Council also recommended that the Assembly encourage its Committees and other intergovernmental bodies to take further measures to systematically integrate gender perspectives into all areas of their work, including the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of major United Nations summits and conferences, in particular the high-level event planned for 2005.

18. In its resolution 56/132, the Assembly welcomed the integration of a gender perspective in the Millennium Declaration, and emphasized the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the implementation of and follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and in future reports on this subject.

19. In its resolution 57/182, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include in his annual and quinquennial reports on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration an assessment of the progress made in promoting the goal of gender equality, in particular in relation to the development goals set forth in the Declaration, as well as recommendations to improve the measurement and coverage of indicators so that progress towards gender equality can be evaluated over time.

20. A similar request was made in Assembly resolution 58/148, in which the Assembly also emphasized that the promotion of gender equality and of women's

empowerment and participation, together with the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, are among the essential elements for advancing the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, with a view, in particular, to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Declaration and the outcomes of United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions.

21. In its resolution 59/168, the Assembly welcomed Council decision 2004/309, in which the Council requested the Chairperson of the Commission to submit the outcome of the forty-ninth session of the Commission, through the Council, to the Assembly at its sixtieth session, including to the high-level event of the Assembly on the review of the Millennium Declaration.

22. The Assembly also requested the Secretary-General to highlight the contribution of the Beijing Platform for Action to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and to integrate gender perspectives in his preparations, including reports, for the review of the Declaration. The Assembly further called on Member States to incorporate gender perspectives in their preparations for the review of the Declaration, and requested the Secretary-General to include in his report on the follow-up to the Declaration an assessment of the progress made in promoting the goal of gender equality, in particular in relation to the development goals set forth in the Declaration, and recommendations to improve the measurement and coverage of indicators so that progress towards gender equality can be evaluated over time.

IV. Gender perspectives in thematic areas in relation to the Millennium Declaration and the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals

23. Examples are provided below of outcomes of the Assembly, the Council and the Commission which have addressed the links between the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly with the Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals. They also include outcomes of United Nations global conferences and summits held since the Millennium Summit. It does not cover comprehensively all areas of the Declaration or all eight Goals.

A. Poverty and development, including rural development

24. Building on the commitment contained in paragraphs 11 to 20 of the Millennium Declaration to development and poverty eradication, goal 1 of the Millennium Development Goals is focused on the eradication of extreme poverty and hunger. In its 2002 agreed conclusions on eradicating poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle, in a globalizing world (see E/2002/5), the Commission recalled and reiterated the strategic objectives and actions of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, which emphasized the multidimensional nature of poverty and identified gender equality and the empowerment of women as

critical factors in the eradication of poverty. The agreed conclusions recalled the Millennium Declaration and the development goals contained therein, as well as the resolve to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.

25. The agreed conclusions also recognized that, while it is the primary responsibility of States to attain economic and social development and to achieve the development and poverty eradication goals as set out in the Millennium Declaration, the international community should support the efforts of developing countries to eradicate poverty, ensure basic social protection and to promote an enabling international environment. The Commission urged Governments and, as appropriate, the relevant funds and programmes, organizations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders, to ensure that all actions to achieve the poverty eradication goals established in the Millennium Declaration include the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle.

26. In its resolution 2004/48, the Council reiterated that the eradication of rural poverty and hunger was crucial for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that rural development should be pursued through an integrated approach which encompasses the economic, social and environmental dimensions; takes into account the gender perspective and consists of mutually reinforcing policies and programmes; and should be balanced, targeted, situation specific, locally owned, include local synergies and initiatives and be responsive to the needs of rural populations. The Council also recognized that rural development was the responsibility of each country and predicated on an enabling national environment, and reaffirmed that an enabling international economic environment was important for the support of effective national development efforts, including rural development efforts. This environment should combine effective and coherent policies, good governance and accountable institutions at the national and international levels, as well as the promotion of gender equality and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development.

27. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 56/188 and 58/206, reaffirmed the Millennium Declaration, in which it had been affirmed that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and called for, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as being effective and essential in the combat against poverty, hunger and disease and in stimulating development that is truly sustainable.

28. In its resolution 58/221, the Assembly recognized that access to microcredit and microfinance can contribute to achieving the goals and targets of major United Nations conferences and summits, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular the targets relating to poverty eradication, gender equality and the empowerment of women.

29. In paragraph 40 of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Member States noted that agriculture played a crucial role in addressing the needs of a growing global population and was inextricably

linked to poverty eradication, especially in developing countries. Enhancing the role of women at all levels and in all aspects of rural development, agriculture, nutrition and food security was imperative. Sustainable agriculture and rural development were essential to the implementation of an integrated approach to increasing food production and enhancing food security and food safety in an environmentally sustainable way. This would include actions at all levels to, inter alia, achieve the Millennium Declaration target to halve by the year 2015 the proportion of the world's people who suffer from hunger and realize the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of themselves and their families, including food, including by promoting food security and fighting hunger in combination with measures which address poverty, consistent with the outcome of the World Food Summit and, for States parties, with their obligations under article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

30. In section VIII, paragraph 67, of the Plan of Implementation, concerning sustainable development in Africa, it was noted that there was a need to achieve significantly improved sustainable agricultural productivity and food security in furtherance of the agreed Millennium Development Goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular to halve by 2015 the proportion of people who suffer from hunger, including through initiatives at all levels to, inter alia, promote and support efforts and initiatives to secure equitable access to land tenure and clarify resource rights and responsibilities, through land and tenure reform processes that respect the rule of law and are enshrined in national law, and provide access to credit for all, especially women, and that enable economic and social empowerment and poverty eradication as well as efficient and ecologically sound utilization of land and that enable women producers to become decision makers and owners in the sector, including the right to inherit land.

B. Education

31. In paragraph 19 of the Millennium Declaration, Member States made a commitment to ensure that by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling and that girls and boys will have equal access to all levels of education. Goal 2 of the Millennium Development Goals aims to achieve universal primary education for girls and boys, while target 4 aims to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education, preferably by 2005, and at all levels of education no later than 2015.

32. In its resolution 55/210, the Assembly recalled the commitments of the United Nations conferences and summits to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005 and to promote universal primary education in all countries by 2015, and, in this regard, urged Member States to take immediate measures to remove obstacles to young girls' school attendance and to reduce drop-out rates.

33. In its resolution 58/222, the Assembly emphasized the critical role of both formal and non-formal education, in particular basic education and training, especially for girls, in empowering those living in poverty, reaffirmed the Dakar Framework for Action adopted at the World Education Forum, and recognized the importance of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization strategy for the eradication of poverty, especially extreme poverty, in supporting the

Education For All programmes as a tool to achieve the goal of achieving universal primary education by 2015.

34. In section VIII, paragraph 116, of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Governments committed to, inter alia, (a) meeting the goal of achieving universal primary education, ensuring that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling; and (b) providing all children, particularly those living in rural areas and those living in poverty, especially girls, with the access and opportunity to complete a full course of primary education. Governments also agreed, in paragraph 120 of the Plan of Implementation, inter alia, to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, as provided in the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All, and at all levels of education no later than 2015, to meet the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration, with action to ensure, inter alia, equal access to all levels and forms of education, training and capacity-building by gender mainstreaming, and by creating a gender-sensitive educational system. In paragraph 62, the Plan of Implementation also referred to the linkages between poverty eradication and gender equality in education.

C. HIV/AIDS

35. Building on the commitments contained in paragraph 19 of the Millennium Declaration to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, the scourge of malaria and other major diseases that afflict humanity, goal 6 of the Millennium Development Goals aims to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. In its 2001 agreed conclusions on women, the girl child and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) (see E/2001/5), the Commission took into account the recommendations on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS contained in the Beijing Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Copenhagen Programme of Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-first, twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly, the Millennium Declaration, its agreed conclusions on women and health and Commission resolution 44/2.

36. The 2001 agreed conclusions of the Commission recommended actions aimed at the empowerment of women, prevention, treatment, care and support and creating an enabling environment for regional and international cooperation. Governments were urged to take all necessary measures to empower women and strengthen women's economic independence and protect and promote full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to allow women and girls to better protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections/HIV. Governments were also called upon to intensify efforts to determine the best policies and programmes to prevent women and young girls from becoming infected with HIV/AIDS, taking into account that women, in particular young girls, are socially, physiologically and biologically more vulnerable than men to sexually transmitted infections. It was recommended that support for people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly women and girls, should take a comprehensive approach that took account of medical, social, psychological, spiritual and economic needs, targeting the community and national levels. Relevant United Nations entities were urged to incorporate a gender

perspective into their follow-up and evaluation of the progress made on the control of sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

37. In its resolutions 47/1 and 48/2, the Commission recalled the goals and targets set forth in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session, in 2001, and the HIV/AIDS-related goals contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular the aim to have halted and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015.

38. In its resolution 2004/48, the Council recognized the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases on societies and called for measures by United Nations bodies, especially the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS co-sponsoring agencies and development partners to further mainstream HIV/AIDS concerns into rural development planning, including poverty eradication and food security strategies and multisectoral development activities covering economic and social aspects, including the gender perspective.

39. In the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, the Assembly called for the need to integrate gender perspectives into HIV/AIDS care, support and treatment. In particular, in paragraphs 14, 60 and 62 of the Declaration, the Assembly stressed that gender equality and the empowerment of women are fundamental elements in the reduction of the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS. It recommended by 2005, the implementation of measures to increase capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health-care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, and through prevention education that promotes gender equality within a culturally and gender-sensitive framework. It also recommended that strategies, policies and programmes should address the gender dimensions of the epidemic.

D. Sustainable development, environmental management and mitigation of natural disasters

40. In paragraphs 21 to 23 of the Millennium Declaration, Member States committed to protecting the common environment. Goal 7 of the Millennium Development Goals aims to ensure environmental sustainability. The Commission on the Status of Women, in its 2002 agreed conclusions on environmental management and the mitigation of natural disasters (see E/2002/5), recalled that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action recognized that environmental degradation and disasters affect all human lives and often have a more direct impact on women, and recommended that the role of women and the environment be further investigated. The agreed conclusions also took into account that, at its twenty-third special session, the Assembly had identified natural disasters as a current challenge affecting the full implementation of the Platform for Action and emphasized the need to incorporate a gender perspective in the development and implementation of disaster prevention, mitigation and recovery strategies. The Commission recalled the resolve reflected in the Millennium Declaration to intensify cooperation to reduce the number and effects of natural and man-made disasters, as well as Assembly resolution 46/182, which contained the guiding principles on humanitarian assistance.

41. In its resolution 58/217, the Assembly decided that the goals of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, should be a greater focus on water-related issues at all levels and on the implementation of water-related programmes and projects, while striving to ensure the participation and involvement of women in water-related development efforts, and the furtherance of cooperation at all levels, in order to help to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and, as appropriate, those identified during the twelfth and thirteenth sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

42. In paragraph 20 of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, Member States stated their commitment to ensuring that women’s empowerment, emancipation and gender equality are integrated in all the activities encompassed within Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Plan of Implementation of the Summit. In the Plan of Implementation of the Summit, reference was made to the linkages between sustainable development and women’s participation in and access to decision-making and economic resources. In paragraph 7 of the Plan, Member States noted that although each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication and the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized, concerted and concrete measures are required at all levels to enable developing countries to achieve their sustainable development goals as related to the internationally agreed poverty-related targets and goals, including those contained in Agenda 21, the relevant outcomes of other United Nations conferences and the United Nations Millennium Declaration. This would include actions at all levels to, inter alia, promote women’s equal access to and full participation in, on the basis of equality with men, decision-making at all levels, mainstreaming gender perspectives in all policies and strategies, eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against women and improving the status, health and economic welfare of women and girls through full and equal access to economic opportunity, land, credit, education and health-care services.

43. In paragraph 25 of the Plan of Implementation, Governments also agreed to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water, as outlined in the Millennium Declaration, and the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation, which would include actions at all levels to, inter alia, mobilize international and domestic financial resources at all levels, transfer technology, promote best practice and support capacity-building for water and sanitation infrastructure and services development, ensuring that such infrastructure and services meet the needs of the poor and are gender-sensitive; and facilitate access to public information and participation, including by women, at all levels in support of policy and decision-making related to water resources management and project implementation.

E. Financing for development

44. Building on the values and principles of the Millennium Declaration, goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals provides for the establishment of a global partnership for development. In its 2002 agreed conclusions on eradicating poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle, in a

globalizing world, the Commission urged Governments and, as appropriate, the relevant funds and programmes, organizations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders, to take action to accelerate implementation of these strategic objectives to address the needs of all women, including to provide additional international financing and assistance to developing countries in support of their efforts to empower women and eradicate poverty and mainstream gender perspectives in the official development assistance process, including specific provisions for meeting the needs of women living in poverty in such areas as education, training, employment and health, as well as in social and economic policies, including macroeconomic policies, with a view to achieving sustainable development, and to urge developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, and encourage developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help achieve development goals and targets.

45. The Monterrey Consensus called for mainstreaming a gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the global economic system's support for development; recognized that gender equality is one of the essential elements of good governance and that empowerment of women is a priority in economic development; called for gender-sensitive investments in basic economic and social infrastructure in recognition of the importance of social and economic aspects in combating poverty and ensuring sustainable development; and stressed the importance of microfinance and credit schemes and advocated gender budget policies (see paragraphs 8, 11, 16, 19, 23 and 64 of the Consensus).

F. Media and information and communication technology

46. One of the targets of goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals concerning a global partnership for development, target 18, is focused on making available, in cooperation with the private sector, the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications. In its 2003 agreed conclusions (see E/2003/44) on participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, the Commission recalled and reiterated the strategic objectives and actions of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document adopted at the twenty-third special session of the Assembly concerning the potential of the media and of information and communications technologies to contribute to the advancement and empowerment of women. It also recalled the Millennium Declaration and its support for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease; stimulating development that is truly sustainable; and ensuring that the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications technologies, are available to all.

47. The Declaration of Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society in 2003 emphasized that the development of information and communication technology (ICT) provided enormous opportunities for women, who should form an integral part of, and be key actors in, the information society. Member States expressed their commitment to ensuring that the information society enabled women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes. The Plan of Action of the Summit emphasized that gender barriers to ICT education and training should be removed and equal training opportunities in ICT-related fields promoted for women and girls. Governments, in collaboration with stakeholders, were encouraged to formulate ICT policies that foster the participation of women. The development of best practices for e-workers and e-employers, built on principles of gender equality, was encouraged, as well as the promotion of tele-working to increase employment opportunities for women. Balanced and diverse portrayals of women and men by the media should be promoted. The Plan of Action further recommended that gender-specific indicators on ICT use and needs be developed and that measurable performance indicators be identified to assess the impact of funded ICT projects on the lives of women and girls.

G. Peace and security

48. Member States made a strong commitment to peace, security and disarmament in paragraphs 8 to 10 of the Millennium Declaration, and addressed the need to protect the vulnerable in natural disasters, genocides, armed conflicts and other humanitarian emergencies in paragraph 26 of the Declaration.

49. In October 2000, the Security Council adopted a landmark resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, in which it called for women's equal participation with men and their full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security. It reaffirmed the need to protect women and girls from human rights abuses, including gender-based violence. The Security Council also called for action to mainstream gender perspectives in relation to conflict prevention, peace negotiations and the aftermath of conflicts. The Security Council has held several open debates since 2000, most recently in October 2004, to discuss progress and challenges in implementation. Three presidential statements (in 2001, 2002, and 2004) recognized the link between peace and security and gender equality, called for action to implement the resolution; and called for an end to the culture of impunity.

50. At its 2004 session (see E/2004/12), the Commission focused on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and post-conflict peace-building. It paid particular attention to peace agreements as a means for promoting gender equality and to women's participation in post-conflict electoral processes. It suggested a series of concrete measures in support of women's full participation in peace processes.

H. Violence against women

51. In paragraph 10 of the Millennium Declaration, Member States resolved to combat all forms of violence against women. In 2001, the World Conference against

Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance noted the intersection of discrimination on grounds of race and gender. In the same year, at its special session on HIV/AIDS the General Assembly recognized the need to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls as a way to reduce their vulnerability to HIV/AIDS. The 2002 Second World Assembly on Ageing drew attention to the vulnerability of older women to physical and psychological abuse, and the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development acknowledged the importance of eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against women. At its special session on children, also held in 2002, the General Assembly pledged to promote the human right of girls to live free from coercion, harmful practices and sexual exploitation.

52. The General Assembly and the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council, especially the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, have regularly adopted resolutions on violence against women. In its resolution 58/147, the General Assembly adopted for the first time a resolution on the elimination of domestic violence against women, adding this particular form of violence to its consideration of trafficking in women and girls, traditional or customary practices affecting the health of women and girls, crimes committed against women in the name of honour and elimination of all forms of violence against women. In its resolution 58/185, the Assembly also requested a study on all forms of violence against women for submission to the 2005 General Assembly. In 2003 and 2004, the Commission on Human Rights adopted resolutions which referred to crimes against women committed in the name of honour and violence against women migrant workers.

53. United Nations human rights mechanisms cover violence against women with growing regularity. The treaty bodies⁴ consider violence against women in their dialogues with States parties and in their concluding comments and observations. In particular, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women systematically and comprehensively monitors action to prevent violence against women, punish perpetrators and provide protection and support for victims. Among the special procedures of the Commission on Human Rights, the Special Rapporteur on violence against women (see Commission resolutions 1994/45 and 2003/45) has made significant contributions, including through the summary of international, regional and national developments and best practices between 1994 and 2003 (see E/CN.4/2003/75 and Corr.1 and Add.1). Other special procedures have contributed to increased awareness of harmful traditional practices and other forms of violence against women.

Notes

¹ Including the World Summit for Children (1990), the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Rio de Janeiro, 1992), the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna, 1993), the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, 1994), the World Summit for Social Development (Copenhagen, 1995), the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995), the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) (Istanbul, 1996) and the World Food Summit (1996).

² International Conference on Financing for Development (Monterrey, 2002); Second World Assembly on Ageing (Madrid, 2002); World Summit on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg, 2002); and first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva, 2003).

³ Message for International Women's Day 2003, United Nations press release dated 8 March 2003.

⁴ The treaty bodies established under human rights instruments are the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee against Torture and the Committee on Migrant Workers.
