

**Note of the Bureau of the CSW
On the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women
28 February - 11 March 2005**

Opportunities for high-level participation

At its forty-ninth session, the Commission on the Status of Women will undertake a ten-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and consider current challenges and forward-looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls.

Considering the significance of the session, it is anticipated that there will be significant high-level participation, including representation at Ministerial level, during the session. A letter of invitation dated 5 January 2005 was sent to all delegations. In order to facilitate the organization of the session, Permanent Representatives are requested to provide names of the members of delegations from their respective Governments who will attend the session to the Secretary of the Commission on the Status of Women (Email: pliner-josephs@un.org; Fax: 212-963-5935)

The purpose of this note is to outline a number of opportunities for high-level representatives from capital.

Opening of the Commission

The opening of the Commission will be held on the morning of 28 February. After the opening of the session by the Chairperson of CSW, the Secretary-General of the United Nations as well as the Presidents of the General Assembly, ECOSOC and the Security Council will address the Commission. Afterwards, representatives of the host countries of the four United Nations World Conferences on Women - Mexico, Denmark, Kenya and China - will make brief presentations. The Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women, the Director of UNIFEM, the Director of INSTRAW, the Chairperson of the Commission on Human Rights, and the Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women will also address the Commission.

High-level roundtable

To provide an opportunity for exchange of experiences and good practices between high-level representatives from capital, the Commission will organize a high-level roundtable on "Innovations in institutional arrangements for promoting gender equality at national level." The roundtable will be held in two parallel sessions on the same theme in the afternoon of 28 February. The discussion guide is already available on the webpage of the Division for the Advancement of Women (www.un.org/womenwatch/daw).

The format of the high-level round table should be a free-flowing exchange of experiences, lessons learned, good practices and gaps and challenges at national level. The discussion will be guided in a pro-active manner to ensure adherence to the interactive format. Participants are to be invited to make short comments, raise questions, or respond to previous speakers, rather than present prepared statements. Interventions should not exceed 3 minutes. Keeping the inputs short will allow all participants to take the floor. Permanent Representatives are requested to provide the names of the high-level representatives from capital planning to participate in the High-level Roundtable to the Secretary of the Commission (email: pliner-josephs@un.org; Fax: 212-963-5935) by 14 February 2005.

All delegations will be assigned to one of the two parallel roundtable discussions based on random drawing of slots, determined by geographic distribution. Delegations will be able to ascertain to which of the two rooms they have been assigned for the high level round table as of 22 February 2005.

High-level plenary

In accordance with the decision taken by the Economic and Social Council (decision 2004/309), the Commission on the Status of Women will convene a high-level plenary meeting, open to the participation of all United Nations Member States and Observers, on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. Three full days of the Commission have been allocated to the high-level plenary, two in the first week (Tuesday 1 March and Thursday 3 March) and one in the second week (Monday 7 March).

A speakers' list for the high-level plenary will be opened to participants from 31 January 2005 to 14 February 2005. Due to the high-level nature of the plenary, delegations will be inscribed on a list of speakers according to level of heads of delegation. Delegations will be able to ascertain their provisional place on the speakers' list as of 7 February 2005. Inscription received after 14 February will be placed at the end of the speakers' list.

As is the practice and to ensure wide participation, interventions by Governments, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations will be limited to five minutes, while interventions on behalf of groups of countries will be limited to ten minutes.

Commemoration of International Women's Day

The Commission will commemorate International Women's Day and 30 years of United Nations efforts to promote gender equality and empowerment of women on the morning of Friday 4 March. The Secretary-General of the United Nations has been invited to attend. Other invitees include the Secretaries-General of the four United Nations World Conferences on Women, as well as other dignitaries.

Interactive expert panels

To facilitate exchange of experiences and good practices on national-level implementation, the Commission will hold seven interactive expert panels. The Bureau has invited 5-6 expert panellists per panel. The panellists will make short introductory presentations on the different topics to stimulate discussion and exchange of views among participants.

Each panel will be facilitated by a moderator in a proactive manner. Interventions are welcomed from all delegations. Participants are invited to make short comments and raise questions rather than use prepared statements in order to facilitate interactive discussions. After the introductory statements, discussions will be opened to the floor without a speakers' list.

While it is up to delegations to decide on the level of their participation in the interactive panels, high-level representation is encouraged to share national experiences in the interactive dialogue.

Panels will be held during morning and afternoon sessions. Issues papers will be made available to delegations on the website of the Division for the Advancement of Women at (www.un.org/womenwatch/daw) and at DC2-1250.

The seven panels are as follows:

Week 1

- a) Addressing the linkages between implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the internationally agreed development goals including those contained in the Millennium Declaration: progress, gaps and challenges.
Wednesday 2 March 2005, a.m.
- (b) Synergies between national-level implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)
Wednesday 2 March 2005, p.m.
- (c) Presentation of the review and appraisal processes at regional level - achievements, gaps and challenges
Friday 4 March 2005, p.m.

Week 2

- (d) Remaining challenges in relation to statistics and indicators, building on the discussions at the High-level round table organized in the 48th session of the Commission 2004 as well as available data from the World's Women: Trends and

Statistics (2005) and the World Survey on the Role of Women in Development (2005) Tuesday 8 March 2005, p.m.

- (e) Future perspectives on the promotion of gender equality: through the eyes of young women and men
Wednesday 9 March 2005, a.m.
- (f) Integration of gender perspectives in macro-economics
Thursday 10 March 2005, a.m.
- (g) The role of regional and inter-governmental organizations in promoting gender equality (specific focus to be determined)
Thursday 10 March 2005, p.m.

Side events

In addition to the activities on the programme of work of the Commission, a large number of side events will be organized by Member States, United Nations entities and non-governmental organizations on a wide variety of important topics. Information is available on the DAW website (www.un.org/womenwatch/daw).