

## WOMEN'S CONFERENCES

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF WOMEN'S CONFERENCES (1975-1995)

*The Report of the Nairobi World Conference for Women (1985) contains an historical background of the World Conferences for Women and the major strategies.*

"In 1972, the General Assembly, in its resolution 3010 (XXVII), proclaimed **1975 International Women's Year**, to be devoted to intensified action to promote equality between men and women, to ensure the full integration of women in the total development effort and to increase women's contribution to the strengthening of world peace. The world plan of action for the Implementation of the objectives of the International Women's Year, adopted by the **World Conference of the International Women's Year at Mexico City in 1975**, was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 3520 (XXX), the General Assembly, in that resolution, proclaimed **1976 - 1985 the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace**. In its resolution 33/185, the General Assembly decided upon the sub - theme "Employment, Health and Education" for the **World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, to be held at Copenhagen** to review and evaluate the progress made in the first half of the Decade". (The Nairobi Forward - Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 1986, p. 5, paragraph 2)

"In 1980, at the mid - point of the Decade, **the Copenhagen World Conference** adopted the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace which further elaborated on the existing obstacles and on the existing international consensus on measures to be taken for the advancement of women. The Programme of Action was endorsed by the General Assembly that year in its resolution 35/136" (The Nairobi Forward - Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 1986, p. 5 , paragraph 3)

"Also in 1980, the General Assembly, in its resolution 35/56, adopted **the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade** and reaffirmed the recommendations of the Copenhagen World Conference (General Assembly resolution 35/56, annex, para. 51). In the Strategy, the importance of the participation of women in the development process, as both agents and beneficiaries, was stressed. Also, the Strategy called for appropriate measures to be taken in order to bring about profound social and economic changes and to eliminate the structural imbalances that compounded and perpetuated women's disadvantages in society". The Nairobi Forward - Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 1986, p. 5-6, paragraph 4)

*To mark the end of the Women's Decade, the United Nations convened the third World Conference on Women in Nairobi in July 1985. The Nairobi Conference adopted the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women up to the year 2000. "The Forward - looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women during the Period from 1986 to the Year 2000 .....present concrete measures to overcome the obstacles to the Decade's goals and objectives for the advancement of women. Building on principles of equality also espoused in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation, the Forward Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women reaffirm the international concern regarding the status of women and provide a framework for renewed commitment by the international community to the advancement of women and the elimination of gender - based discrimination. The efforts for the integration of women in the development process*



should be strengthened and should take into account the objectives of a new international economic order and the International Development Strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade". (The Nairobi Forward - Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, 1986, p. 6, paragraph 6)

*The IV World Conference for women will take place at Beijing, 4-15 Septembre 1995. Five regional preparatory meetings (Europe, Asia, Africa, Arab region and Latin America and the Caribbean) have been organized in order to establish the regional strategies to be discussed at the World Conference.*

## **BASIC DOCUMENTS**

**1 - Report of the World Conference of the International Women's Year, Mexico City, 19 June- 2 July 1975, United Nations, New York, 1976, E/CONF. 66/34.**

**2 - Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, Copenhagen, 14 to 30 July 1980, United Nations, New York, 1980, A/CONF.94/35.**

**3 - The Nairobi Forward - Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the United Nations Decade for women: Equality, Development and Peace, Nairobi, Kenya, 15 - 26 July 1986, United Nations, New York, SHS/DL 132.08.**

**4 - Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 4 - 15 Septembre 1995. Regional Preparatory Conferences.**

a - Economic Commission for Europe, High - Level Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women, Vienna, 17 - 21 October 1994, E/ECE/RW/HLM/L.3/Rev.2, 20 Octobre 1994., Economic and Social Council, United Nations.

b - Draft African Platform for Action, Fifth African Regional Conference on women, Dakar (Senegal), 16 - 23 Novembre 1994, E/ECA/ACW/EC.V/EXP/WP.6/Rev. 4.

c - Asia, Regional Plan of Action to the Fourth Conference on Women, Beijing 4-15 Septembre 1995, ESCAP.

d - Arab Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women, Draft Regional Platform of Action for the Advancement of Arab Women to the Year 2005, Amman, Jordan, 6 -10 Novembre 1994, E/ESCWA/SD/1994/WG.3-WOM/4.

e- Strategic Actions adopted at the twentieth meeting of the presiding officers of the regional conference on the integration of women into the economic and social development of Latin America and the Caribbean, Santiago, Chile, 16-18 Novembre 1994, ECLAC.

f - Strategic Objectives and actions as reflected in Regional Platforms and Programmes of Action, Informal consultations for the further development of the Platform for Action, New York, 7-9 Decembre 1994, Note by the Secretary- General of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Non-paper no.3., 2 December 1994.

## I. WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR, MEXICO, 1975.

The World conference of the International Women's Year, Mexico, 1975, "adopted the "Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace 1975", a 1/"**World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year**", several 2/**regional plans of action**, and a number of 3/**resolutions and recommendations**". (Report of the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for women: equality, development and peace, Copenhagen, 14-30 July 1980, p. 113)

### 1/World Plan of Action

*The World Plan of Action contains a National Plan of Action and the strategies of an international and regional action*

#### I. National Plan of Action

26. "This Plan provides guidelines for national action over the 10-year period from 1975 to 1985 as part of a sustained, long-term effort to achieve the objectives of the International Women's Year. The recommendations are not exhaustive, and should be considered in addition to the other existing international instruments and resolutions of the United Nations bodies which deal with the condition of women and the quality of life. They constitute rather the main areas for priority action within the decade" (p. 13)

*The National Plan of Action does not include numerical targets but it establishes a time-table of a five years period for the basic goals.*

46. "The achievement of the following should be envisaged as a minimum by the end of the first five-year period (1975-1980):

#### **Education**

- (a) Marked increase in literacy and civic education of women, especially in rural areas.
- (b) The extension of co-educational technical and vocational training in basic skills to women and men in the industrial and agricultural sectors:
- (c) Equal access at every level of education, compulsory primary school education and the measures necessary to prevent school dops - outs.

#### **Employment**

- (d) Increased employment opportunities for women, reduction of unemployment and increased efforts to eliminate discrimination in the terms and conditions of employment.
- (e) The establishment and increase of the infrastructural services required in both rural and urban areas.

#### **Social- Health**

- (h) Increased provision for comprehensive measures for health education and services, sanitation, nutrition, family education, family planning and other welfare services.

#### **Decision of voting. Political and social participation**

- (f) The enactment of legislation on voting and eligibility for election on equal terms with men, equal opportunity and conditions of employment including remuneration, and on equality in legal capacity and the exercise therefore.

- (g) Encouragement of a greater participation of women in policy-making positions at the local, national and international levels.
- (i) Provision for parity in the exercise of civil, social and political rights such as those pertaining to marriage, citizenship and commerce.
- (j) Recognition of the economic value of women's work in the home in domestic food production and marketing and voluntary activities not remunerated.
- (k) The direction of formal, non-formal and life-long education towards the re-evaluation of the man and women, in order to ensure their full realization as an individual in the family and in society.
- (l) The promotion of women's organizations as an interim measure within worker's organizations and educational, economic and professional institutions.

#### **Modern technology and development of women's supporting agencies**

(m) The development of modern rural technology, cottage industry, pre-school day centers, time-and-energy-saving devices so as to help reduce the heavy work load of women, particularly those living in rural sectors and for the urban poor and thus facilitate the full participation of women in community, national and international affairs.

#### **Institutional arrangements. National machineries**

(n) The establishment of interdisciplinary and multisectorial machinery within the government for accelerating the achievement of equal opportunities for women and their full integration into national life. (pp. 16-17)

## **II. Specific areas for National Action**

*Governments are called to establish goals, strategies, time-tables and target dates in some specific areas like political participation, education and employment.*

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### **B. Political Participation**

62. "Governments should establish goals, strategies and time - tables for increasing within the decade 1975 - 1985 the number of women in elective and appointive public offices and public functions at all levels" (p. 19)

### **C. Education and training**

74. "Target dates should be established for the eradication of illiteracy, and high priority given to programmes for women and girls between the ages of 16 and 25 years". (p. 21)

### **D. Employment and related economic roles**

97. "Specific target dates should be established for achieving a substantial increase in the number of qualified women employed in skilled and technical work". (p. 23)

### **G. Population**

138. "The hazards of child-bearing, characterized by too many pregnancies, pregnancies at too early or too late an age and at too close intervals, inadequate pre-natal, delivery and postnatal care and resort to illegally induced abortions, result in high rates of maternal mortality and maternity-related morbidity. **Where levels of infant and early childhood mortality as well as foetal mortality are high, their reduction- and desirable end in itself - may also be a prerequisite of the limitation of the number of pregnancies** that the average women will experience



and of the society's **adoption of a smaller ideal family size** where this is a desired goal. Fewer pregnancies may be more easily achieved when there is a desired goal. Fewer pregnancies may be more easily achieved when there is a reasonable expectation that children born will survive to adulthood". (p. 28)

141. "In the elaboration and execution of population policies and programmes, within the framework of aver - all development, Governments are urged to pay particular attention to measures designed to improve the situation of women, especially with regard to their educational and employment opportunities, conditions of work, and **the establishment and enforcement of an appropriately high minimum age at marriage**". (p. 29)

*Other specific areas for National Action are; A/International co-operation and the strengthening of international peace, E/Health and Nutrition, F/The family in modern society, H/Housing and related facilities, I/Other social questions. Special attention is also given to III/Research, data collection, analysis and IV/mass media.*

#### V. International and Regional Action

*The International and Regional Plan of Action does not include numerical targets, it establishes only global recommendations.*

182. "The United Nations should proclaim the decade 1975-1985 as the United Nations Decade for Women and Development in order to ensure that national and international action shall be sustained throughout the period" (p. 35)

183. "The decade and this Plan of Action call for a clear commitment on the part of the international community to accord importance and priority to measures to improve the situation of women, both as a means of achieving the goals of social progress and development and as an end in itself. **The plan envisages that all organizations of the United Nations system should take separate and joint action to implement its recommendations**, including the relevant United Nations organs and bodies, especially the regional commissions, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Institute for Training and Research, and the specialized agencies. Their activities should be properly co-ordinated through the existing machinery, especially the Economic and Social Council and the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination. **Each organization should evaluate what it has done to improve the status of women and enhance their contribution to development and identify the measures needed to implement this Plan**" (p. 35)

207. "The regional commissions of Africa, Asia and the Pacific, Europe, Latin America and Western Asia should stimulate interest in the Plan and provide national Governments and non-governmental organizations with the technical and informational support they require to develop and implement effective strategies to further the objectives of the Plan in the regions. Where they have not already done so, the regional commissions should establish appropriate machinery for the purpose. This might include a regional standing committee of experts from countries of the region to advise the commission on its activities directed towards the integration of women in development in relation to those of Governments and other agencies in the region....". (p.38)

## 2/Regional plans of action

### Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development adopted for the region of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

*In this Plan of Action some numerical targets are included.*

#### **Population**

1. "Raise the minimum age of marriage for girls to 18 years, reducing the total number of years exposed to risk of child-bearing and increasing the number of years that may be devoted to education" (p. 58)

#### **Legislative and administrative measures**

2. "Ensure that laws provide for a **minimum age of marriage for women of not less than 18 years the registration** of all marriages, the contracting of marriage only with the full and free consent of intending spouses, equal rights and duties in matters relating to their children and for the protection of the children's interest in case of dissolution" (p. 60)

*Other areas of interest in this regional plan are; education and training, employment, health and other social services, legislative and administrative measures, non-governmental organizations, exchange of information and experience.*

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### Plan of Action for the Integration of Women in Development adopted for the region of the Economic Commission for Africa

*Some numerical targets are established in this Plan of Action.*

#### **Population**

1. "Raise de minimum age of marriage where appropriate" (p. 69)
6. "Promote awareness of the deleterious effect, on the health of the mother, of pregnancies during early adolescence and **beyond the age of 35 years**, and awareness of the decreased chance of survival of the child" (p. 70)

*Other areas of concern in this Plan of Action are: education an training, employment, communications, mass media, health, nutrition, social services, research, data collection and analysis, legislative and administrative measures.*

### 3/Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Conference

*Some numerical targets are established in the following area.*

#### **13. Social security and family security for women, including the elderly and the handicapped**

"The World Conference of the International Women's Year,

3. Recomends that Governments should take all necessary means to ensure paid leave to all working mothers during pregnancy and delivery and **provide job security for mothers for a minimum of one year after delivery**, and that maternity benefits shall be a charge on social security and that both employers and workers shall be asked to contribute, whether or not the employers employ women;

4. Recomends that Governments should ensure free medical care to all citizens whose economic circumstances require it and **provide special services to mothers during pregnancy and delivery and to newborn infants and children up to the age of five years"**  
(p. 86)

*Other areas of interest in the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Conference are:*

1/Research and training for the advancement of women in Africa, 2/International co-operation under projects designed to achieve the objectives of the World Plan of Action, 3/The status of women in South Africa, Namibia and Southern Rhodesia, 4/Role of the United Nations system in implementing the World Plan of Action, 5/Women and Health, 6/Participation of women in the seventh special session of the United Nations General Assembly and in other meetings of the various bodies of the United Nations, 7/Prevention of the exploitation of women and girls, 8/The situation of women in the employ of the United Nations and specialized agencies, 9/Protection of maternal and child health, 10/Access of women to financial assistance, 11/Research on population and the integration of women in development, 12/Special resources for the integration of women in development, 14/Research for the formulation of policies concerning the integration of women in the development process, 15/Family planning and the full integration of women in development, 16/Popular participation, 17/The family, 18/Political and social participation, 19/Women and communications media, 20/Integration of women in the process of political, economic, social and cultural development as equal partners with men, 21/Condition of women in rural areas, 22/Women and development, 23/Revision and expansion of the International Standard Classifications of Occupations, 24/Education and training, 25/Equality between men and women and elimination of discrimination against women, 26/International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, 27/Measures for the integration of women in development, 28/Women's participation in promoting world peace and international co-operation, 29/Women's participation in the strengthening of international peace and security and in the struggle against colonialism, racism, racial discrimination and foreign domination, 30/The question of Panamanian territory called the "Canal Zone", 31/Women's contribution to world peace through participation in international conferences, 32/Palestinian and Arab women, 33/Aid to the Viet-Nameese people, 34/The situation of women in Chile.



## II. REPORT OF THE WORLD CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN: EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE, COPENHAGUEN, 1980.

*The Conference contains 1/The Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women (The Programme of Action at the national level and The Programme of Action at the International and Regional levels) and the 2/Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Conference.*

### 1/Programme of action for the second half of the United Nations Decade for Women: equality, development and peace

#### The Programme of Action at the National Level.

*The Programme of Action at the National Level establishes the national global strategies. Non numerical targets are contained, only some time-tables are noticed. Targets are included in ambiguous terms, some of the concepts utilized are; full participation, to eliminate, all women, highest level, etc. Examples of this language have been selectionated. All over the document, Governments are encouraged to establish quantitative and qualitative targets, arrangements for monitoring and time tables. The conference's report recommends that measures to accelerate the full participation of women in different areas should be in line with other international resolutions as the Strategy of the Third United Nations Development Decade.*

#### A. National Strategies for accelerating the full participation of women in economic and social development

48. "Governments should explicitly state their firm commitment to accord high priority to legislative and other measures for accelerating the equal and full participation of women in economic and social development with a view to eliminating the existing inequalities between men and women in all sectors"(p. 16)

49. "National strategies should as a matter of urgency integrate women into their efforts towards the New International Economic Order and a new international development strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade by:

- (a) Studying and identifying new areas for national projects that would accelerate socio-economic growth and at the same time enhance the socio-economic participation of women by fostering economic and technical co-operation among countries;
- (b) Providing advisory services for accelerating national self-reliance in co-operation with United Nations organizations; also ensuring that women assist in determining that technology transfer has a positive impact on the socio-economic situation and health of women, as well as on their working conditions;
- (c) Providing women in the most disadvantaged sectors of the population with the ways and means of increasing their access to infrastructure, basic services and appropriate technology in order to alleviate the heavy workload imposed by the basic requirements and demands of their families and communities, women should also be provided with opportunities to gain new skills and with job opportunities in the construction and maintenance of the above-mentioned services, as well as in other sectors;



(d) Adopting measures to make equal opportunities for development and services available to women in rural areas and to women in urban areas by reversing processes of unequal economic growth, implementing special investment and incentive programmes in disadvantaged sectors, controlling mechanism for the transfer of resources from one sector to another and, where possible, preventing the rural sector from being impoverished to the advantage of the urban sector". (p. 16)

## 1. National Development Plans and policies

51. "Governments should undertake the following:

(a) **The establishment of qualitative and quantitative targets for the second half of the United Nations Decade of Women: Equality, Development and Peace;** projections for the planning cycles of 1985-1995 should be made where appropriate, and reviews conducted in 1985 and 1990. These should especially seek to remove the gap between the attainments of men and women, between rural and urban women and between all women in underprivileged population groups, and other women in all sectors and particularly in the fields of employment, health and education; (p. 17)

(c) **"The establishment of appropriate arrangements for monitoring and evaluating** the extent to which women participate in and benefit from both general and sectoral development programmes. Reliable data should be collected and technical services provided for periodic reviews of the progress made at all levels should be established along with the allocation of physical and financial resources in every development programme, in order to ensure a more just distribution of benefits to women;" (p. 17)

(h) **"Wherever possible time-tables should be established for the achievement of particular objectives"** (p. 18)

## 2. National Machinery

52. "Where it does not exist, **national machinery preferably at the highest level of government, where appropriate, should be established (...)** in order to ensure the effective implementation of action programmes ensuring the equality of men and women with a view to:

(d) Ensuring **the full participation of women in measures taken by governments and other agencies"** (p. 18)

53. "Effective institutional links between national machinery and national planning units as well as national women's organizations, should be established with a view to:

(c) Advising on new approaches **to accelerate the full participation of women in every sector of the development process,** according to national priorities;

(d) Drawing up **national programmes for women in the priority areas of employment, health and education so as to make possible their full participation at the national level.** These should also aim at intensifying over-all efforts to

promote technical co-operation among countries and development in the areas of science and technology, water and energy resources among others, **in line with the strategy for the Third United Nations Development Decade** and the programmes of action for the New International Economic Order" (p. 18)

### 3. Legislative measures

59. **"All remaining discriminatory legislative provisions in the social, economic and political spheres and in penal and civil codes should be examined with a view to repealing all laws and regulations against women** with regard to rights concerning nationality, inheritance, the ownership and control of property, the freedom of movement of married women, the custody of children and the like, or which inhibit their effective participation in or planning, implementation and evaluation of economic transactions". (p.20)

### 4. Participation in the political and other decision-making processes, and participation in efforts to promote international co-operation and strengthen peace.

71. **"Governments and political parties should, where appropriate, establish goals, strategies and time-tables and undertake special activities for increasing, by certain percentages, the number of women in elective and appointive public offices and public functions at all levels,** in order that women should be equitably represented" (p. 21)

73. **"Women should be equitably represented at all levels, especially the senior levels, in delegations to international bodies, conferences and committees dealing with political, economic and legal questions, disarmament and other similar issues.** Governments should encourage and support increased employment of women at all levels, technical and professional, in the Secretariat of the United Nations and its subsidiary organs and specialized agencies" (p. 21) **Fundação Cuidar o Futuro**

### 5. Measures relating to education and the dissemination of information

86. **"Educational programmes and campaigns using the media should be instituted in order to eliminate prejudices and traditional attitudes that limit the full participation of women in society.** Such campaigns should also inform women and men of their rights and ways of exercising them. Women's organizations and other non-governmental organizations, political parties and trade unions should play an active role in the process of educating women politically in order to increase their capacities for participation in decision-making bodies. Special attention should be given to the role the media can play in reaching the migrant women. Women should also have access to training in the use of various forms of the media, in order to be able to present to as wide a public as possible their own perceptions of their needs, ideas and aspirations". (p. 23)

### 6. Improvement of the data base

92. **"All data-collecting agencies should give a sex and age breakdown of any information they gather, wherever relevant".** (p.24)

### 7. Role of non-governmental organizations



**B. Objectives and priority areas for action taken in connexion with the subtheme of the World Conference, "Employment; health and education"**

106. **"The objectives and priority areas of action for improving the employment, health and education status of women in every country should be promoted within the over-all context of national planning and development for the whole population.** Improvement in the condition of women in these areas is also instrumental in the development of the country. Furthermore, the improvements in any one of these sectors also affect the situation in other sectors. Recognition of this interrelated nature of the programmes is essential if their effectiveness is to be maximized. Socio-cultural values should not suffer as a result of physical economic development. Therefore, integrated and innovative programmes and new methodologies should be explored". (p. 27)

**Employment**

109. **"To promote full and equal opportunities and treatment for women in employment,** bearing in mind that this requires that both women and men have the possibility to combine paid work with household responsibilities and the caring for children. To ensure that women and men receive equal remuneration for work of equal value and equal educational and training opportunities in both rural and urban areas, so that equal educational and training opportunities in both rural and urban areas, so that women may obtain more highly skilled employment and become integrated into the development of their countries with a view to more rapid and balanced growth in agriculture, industry and other non-traditional sectors, with the aim of ensuring better over-all working conditions for women, achieving more rapid and balanced growth in both agriculture and industry and integrating women in development". (p. 27)

140. **"Equal employment opportunity programmes should be developed to promote the access of women to all levels of management and decision-making positions** and effective programmes should be devised that will promote the access of women and girls to non-traditional skilled trades". (p.31)

**Health**

*In this area we notice a time-table in article 147*

141. **"To improve the physical and mental health for all members of society through:**

(f) **The development of policies and programmes aimed at the elimination of all forms of violence against women and children** and the protection of women of all ages from the physical and mental abuse resulting from domestic violence, sexual assault, sexual exploitation and any other form of abuses". (p. 31)

145. **"Ensure accessibility for all women to maternal health care** (including care during pregnancy and childbirth and post-natal care), **nutrition** (including measures to control nutritional anaemias), **family planning, prevention and treatment of infectious diseases** - including sexually transmitted and non-communicable diseases - and parasitic diseases, through the establishment of a comprehensive family health, nutrition, and health education network, in order to give women better access to health care" (p.32)

147. **"To promote the physical and mental well-being of women, provision should be made for additional research over the next few years to facilitate analysis and assessment of the status of women".** (p. 32)

151. **"Develop simple economic, social and cultural indicators in order to obtain better data on trends in morbidity and mortality among women** and their access to and utilization of health services. Establish a national basic health information system to provide up-to-date and reliable indicators of prevailing conditions, future trends and resource productivity". (p. 33)

163. **"Promote research into the extent and the causes of domestic violence with a view to eliminating it;** take measures to eliminate glorification of violence against and sexual exploitation of women in the mass media, literature and advertising; provide effective help for women and children who are victims of violence , e.g. by the establishment of centers for treatment, shelter and counselling victims of violence and sexual assault". (p. 34)

### **Education and training**

165. **"To provide equal access to educational and training opportunities at all levels of all types for girls and women in all sectors of society,** thus enabling them fully to develop their personalities and to participate on an equal footing with men in furthering the socio-economic aims of national planning and to achieve self-reliance, family well-being and improve the quality of life". (p. 34)

174. "Education, specifically literacy, being a key to national development and a major requisite for improving the status of women, **efforts should be made to establish targets for the abolition of differentials in the literacy** and educational attainment rates for girls and boys within over-all national efforts to increase literacy and education for the whole population". (p.35)

177. **"Establish targets for the expansion of educational opportunities and facilities for women,** including courses and institutions with adequate personnel and materials, for which resources have been earmarked". (p. 35)

190. **"Monitor programmes and take measures for improving the data on drop-out rates of girls and women and their causes,** and on course content and levels of skills acquired, in order to facilitate the introduction of remedial or accelerated measures and to generate greater commitment to the policy objectives within the system". (p. 36)

### **C. Priority areas requiring special attention**

#### **1. Food**

197. "Governments should adopt the necessary measures to:

- (f) **Stimulate the participation and full voting rights of women in co-operatives and other forms of organization** relating to the production, processing, distribution, marketing and consumption of basic food products"; (p.37)

## 2. Rural Women

199. "Improve the living conditions of women in rural areas, and to this end:

(e) **Extend to all rural women free equal access to credit facilities** where these are available". (p. 38)

200. "Governments should adopt the necessary measures to:

(a) **Eliminate from legislation on rural development, where necessary, provisions that discriminated against women**". (p. 39)

*Other areas of special interest are: 3/Child care, 4/Migrant women, 5/Unemployed women, 6/Young women.*

### The programme of Action at the international and regional level

#### IV. International targets and strategies

212. **"International targets and strategies both at the regional and the global levels should be based on a clear recognition that peace, security and national independence are essential prerequisites for an environment wherein the rights, responsibilities and roles of women can be promoted and the three objectives of the Decade- equality, development and peace - can be attained"**. (p. 44)

213. "The perpetuation of global economic inequalities and economic dependence, which are the product of an economic system that is unfair and incompatible with the development of countries, slows down the process of development of all nations, particularly of the developing countries, and inhibits the full utilization of the material and human potentials of those countries, including women. **The elaboration of an international development strategy for the third United Nations Development Decade, formulated within the framework of the new international economic order and importance for the achievement of its objectives, is thus of fundamental importance for the achievement of the goals envisaging the assumption by women of full economic, political, cultural and social responsibility**" (p. 44)

#### V. International policies and programmes

227. **"In the framework of bilateral development co-operation efforts should be made, in conformity with national priorities, to strengthen national programmes aimed at the full participation and integration of women in all aspects of development,** including participation of women at the grass-roots level. In all bilateral development activities women should participate in the preparation and implementation of programmes and projects". (p. 6)

##### A. Technial co-operation, training and advisory services

1. Mobilization of human ressources.
2. Assistance to women in southern Africa.



3. Assistance to the Palestinian women inside and outside the occupied territories.
4. Assistance to women refugees and displaced women the world over.

**B. Elaboration and review of international standards**

**C. Research data collection and analysis**

**D. Dissemination of information and experience.**

**E. Review and appraisal.**

253. "The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should keep under review the reporting systems under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women once it comes into force. The Commission on the Status of Women should keep under review the reporting system for the implementation of the World Plan of Action and the implementation of the Programme for the Second Half of the Decade". (p. 53)

278. "The secretariats of all organizations within the United Nations system as well as of intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations concerned should amend their recruitment, training, promotion and remuneration policies as necessary in order to ensure equal treatment and status for men and women employed by the organizations whether as temporary, fixed-term or permanent employees or as consultants. Such organizations should, when requesting data on women's employment from member countries with a view to publication, provide and publish comparable data on the situation as regards women's employment within the organizations concerned". (p. 57)

## VI. Regional Policies and Programmes

285. "The international policies and programmes outlined above have clear application at the regional level and should also be regarded as regional priorities. In addition, the regional commissions, in co-operation with the regional offices of the specialized agencies, have specific responsibilities to provide assistance to Governments and non-governmental organizations for developing policies, strategies and programmes for the second half of the Decade in the light of the review and appraisal of progress achieved in the first half". (p.58)

### 2. Resolutions and decisions adopted by the Conference

*In the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Conference we can find a numerical target in the following area*

#### 24. Women in the United Nations Secretariat

The World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace,

2. "Urges that, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 33/143 the Secretary-General of the United Nations, all specialized agencies of the United Nations and United Nations bodies should set and pursue targets for the recruitment of staff which will ensure more equitable representation of women in professional posts subject to geographical distribution, in pursuit of the objective of 25 per cent by 1982, progressively raising that target beyond 1982, and giving particular emphasis to increasing the proportion of women at the higher levels ". (p. 86)

## THE NAIROBI FORWARD-LOOKING STRATEGIES FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN, NAIROBI, 1985.

*The Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the advancement of women considers the achievements of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, as valuable strategies to be pursued to the year 2000.*

*We have selected the main strategies and targets which are defined to be achieved by the year 2000.*

*The document refers, in some areas, to the principles of International Declarations and Conventions such as: The Programs of Action of Mexico and Copenhagen, The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women, Health for All by the Year 2000, The World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development, The Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation...*

### C. Current trends and perspectives to the year 2000

#### Paragraph 35

"The World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the objectives of the International Women's Year. The Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace, 1975, regional plans of action, the Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace, and the sub-theme - employment, health and education - the Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women **remain valid and therefore constitute the basis for the strategies and concrete measures to be pursued up to the year 2000.** The continuing relevance of the goals of the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace- and of its sub-theme- health, education and employment- should be stressed, as should the implementation of the relevant recommendations of the 1975 Plan of Action and the 1980 Programme of Action, so as to ensure the complete integration of women in the development process and the effective realization of the objectives of the Decade. **The challenge now is for the international community to ensure that the achievements of the Decade become strong building blocks for development and to promote equality and peace, especially for the sake of future generations of women.** The obstacles of the next 15 years must be met through concerted global, regional and national efforts. **By the year 2000 illiteracy should be eliminated, life expectancy for all women increased to at least 65 years of good quality life and opportunities for self-supporting employment made available.** Above all, laws guaranteeing equality for women in all spheres of life must by then be fully and comprehensively implemented to ensure a truly equitable socio-economic framework within which real development can take place. Forward-Looking Strategies for the advancement of women at the regional level should be based on a clear assessment of demographic trends and development forecasts that provide a realistic context for their implementation" (p. 15)

## D. Basic approach to the formulation of the Forward-looking Strategies

### Paragraph 37

"It is necessary to reiterate the unity, inseparability and interdependence of the objectives of the Decade- equality, development and peace- as regards the advancement of women and their full integration in economic, political, social and cultural development, for which purpose **the objectives should remain in effect in the operational strategies for the advancement of women to the year 2000**" (p. 15)

### Paragraph 41

"The Forward- Looking Strategies not only suggest measures for overcoming obstacles that are fundamental and operational, but also identify those that are emerging. Thus, the strategies and measures presented are intended to serve as guidelines for a process of continuous adaptation to diverse and changing national situations and speeds and modes determined by overall national priorities, within which the integration of women in development should rank high. The Forward- Looking Strategies, acknowledging existing and potential obstacles, include separate basic strategies for the achievement of equality, development and peace. In line with the recommendations of the Commission on the Status of Women, acting as the Preparatory Body for the Conference at its second session, **particular attention is given to "especially vulnerable and underprivileged groups of women"**, such as rural and urban poor women; women in areas affected by armed conflicts, foreign intervention and international threats to peace; elderly women, young women; abused women; destitute women; women victims of trafficking and women in involuntary prostitution; women deprived of their traditional means of livelihood; women who are sole supporters of families; physically and mentally disabled women; women in detention; refugee and displaced women; migrant women; minority women; and indigenous women". (p. 16)

*Whithin the basic achievements: Equality, Development and Peace, some important strategies, targets and time tables have been established. In some areas there are neither numerical targets nor time-tables, however because of its recognized importance for women we are including some outstanding paragraphs.*

## I. EQUALITY

### Basic strategies

#### Paragraph 53

"Changes in social and economic structures should be promoted which would make possible **the full equality of women and their free access to all types of development** as active agents and beneficiaries, without discrimination of any kind, and to all types of education, training and employment. Special attention should be paid to **implementing this right to the maximum extent possible for young women**" (p. 18)





## Measures for the implementation of the basic strategies at the national level

### Paragraph 60

"Governments that have not yet done so are urged to sign the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against women and to take all the necessary steps to ensure its ratification, or their accession to it. They should consider the possibility of establishing appropriate bodies charged with reviewing the national legislation concerned and with drawing up recommendations thereon to ensure that the provisions of the Convention and of the other international instruments to which they are parties that are relevant to the role, status and material circumstances of women are complied with". (p.20)

## Equality in social participation

### Paragraph 77

"A comprehensive and sustained public campaign should be launched by all Governments, in close collaboration with non-governmental organizations, women's pressure groups, where they exist, and research institutions, as well as the media, educational institutions and traditional institutions of communication, to challenge and abolish all discriminatory perceptions, attitudes and practices by the year 2000. Target groups should include policy-makers and decision-makers, legal technical advisers, bureaucrats, labour and business leaders, business persons, professionals and the general public." (p. 23)

### Paragraph 78

"By the year 2000, all Governments should have adequate comprehensive and coherent national women's policies to abolish all obstacles to the full and equal participation of women in all spheres of society" (p. 23)

## Equality in political participation and decision-making

### Paragraph 86

"Governments and political parties should intensify efforts to stimulate and ensure equality of participation by women in all national and local legislative bodies and to achieve equity in the appointment, election and promotion of women to high posts in executive, legislative and judiciary branches in these bodies. At the local level, strategies to ensure equality of women in political participation should be pragmatic, should bear a close relationship to issues of concern to women in the locality and should take into account the suitability of the proposed measures to local needs and values" (p. 24)

## II. DEVELOPMENT

### Basic strategies

#### Paragraph 111

**"Women should be an integral part of the process of defining the objectives and modes of development, as well as of developing strategies and measures for their implementation.** The need for women to participate fully in political processes and to have an equal share of power in guiding development efforts and in benefiting from them should be recognized. Organizational and other means of enabling women to bring their interests and preferences into the evaluation and choice of alternative development objectives and strategies should be identified and supported. This would include special measures designed to enhance women's autonomy, bringing women into the mainstream of the development process on an equal basis with men, or other measures designed to integrate women fully in the total development effort" (p. 30)

#### Paragraph 115

**"The gender bias evident in most development programmes should be eliminated** and the prejudices hindering the solution of women's problems removed. **Particular emphasis should be given to the restructuring of employment, health and education systems and to ensuring equal access to land, capital and other productive resources.** Emphasis should be placed on strategies to assist women in generating and keeping income, including measures designed to improve women's access to credit. Such strategies must focus on the removal of legal, customary and other barriers and on strengthening women's capacity to use existing credit systems". (p. 31)

#### Paragraph 116

**"Governments should seek means to increase substantially the number of women who are decision-makers, policy-makers, managers, professionals and technicians in both traditional and non-traditional areas and sectors.** Women should be provided training, in order to facilitate their equal representation at higher managerial and professional levels" (p. 31)

### Measures for the implementation of the basic strategies at the national level

#### Paragraph 125

**"Appropriate machinery with sufficient resources and authority should be established at the highest level of government as a focal point to ensure that the full range of development policies and programmes in all sectors recognizes women's contribution to development** and incorporates strategies to include women and to ensure that they receive an equitable share of the benefits of development". (p. 33)

## Areas of specific action

### Employment

#### Paragraph 137.

"Eliminating all forms of employment discrimination, inter alia through legislative measures, especially wage differentials between women and men carrying out work of equal value, is strongly recommended to all parties concerned. Additional programmes should help to overcome still existing disparities in wages between women and men. Differences in the legal conditions of work of women and men should also be eliminated, where there are disadvantages to women, and privileges should also be eliminated, where there are this advantages to women and privileges should be accorded to male and female parents. Occupational desagregation of women and men should be promoted". (p.35)

### Health

#### Paragraph 148

"The vital role of women as providers of health care both inside and outside the home should be recognized, taking into account the following: the creation and strengthening of basic services for the delivery of health care, with due regard to levels of fertility and infant and maternal mortality and the needs of the most vulnerable groups and the need to control locally prevalent endemic and epidemic diseases. Governments that have not already done so should undertake, in co-operation with the World Health Organizations, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Fund for Population Activities, plans of action relating to women in health and to promote the positive health of women at all stages of life, bearing in mind the productive role of women in society and their responsibilities for bearing and rearing children. **Women's participation in the achievement of Health for All by the Year 2000 should be recognized**, since their health knowledge is crucial in their multiple roles as health providers and health brokers for the family and community, and as informed consumers of adequate and appropriate health care". (p.37)

#### Paragraph 149

"The participation of women in higher professional and managerial positions in health institutions should be increased through appropriate legislation; training, and supportive action should be taken to increase women's enrolment and higher levels of medical training and training in health-related fields. For effective community involment to ensure the attainment of the World Health Organization's goal of Health for All by the Year 2000 and responsiveness to women's health needs, women should be represented in national and local health councils and committees. The employment and working conditions of women health personnel and health workers should be expanded and improved at all levels. Female traditional healers and birth attendants should be more fully and constructively integrated in national health planning" (pp.37-38)



Paragraph 155

"Appropriate health facilities should be planned, designed, constructed, and equipped to be readily accessible and acceptable. Services should be in harmony with the timing and patterns of women's work as well as with women's needs and perspectives. Maternal and child-care facilities, including family planning services, should be within easy reach of all women. Governments should also ensure that women have the same access as men to affordable, curative, preventive and rehabilitative treatment. Wherever possible, measures should be taken to conduct general screening and treatment of women's common diseases and cancer. In view of the unacceptable high levels of maternal mortality in many developing countries, **the reduction of maternal mortality from now to the year 2000 to a minimum level should be a key target for Governments and non- governmental organizations, including professional organizations**". (p.39)

Paragraph 158

"Recognizing that pregnancy occurring in adolescent girls, whether married or unmarried, has adverse effects on the morbidity and mortality of both mother and child, Governments are urged to develop policies to encourage delay in the commencement of childbearing. **Governments should make efforts to raise the age entry into marriage in countries in which this age is still quite low.** Attention should also be given to ensuring that adolescents, both girls and boys, receive adequate information and education". (p.40)

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Paragraph 161

"**The appropriate gender -specific indicators of monitoring women's health that have been or are being developed by the World Health Organization should be widely applied and utilized by governments and other interested organizations** in order to develop and sustain measures for treating low-grade ill health and for reducing high morbidity rates among women, particularly when illnesses are psychosomatic or social and cultural in nature. Governments that have not yet done so should establish focal points to carry out such monitoring". (p.40)

### Education

Paragraph 164

"**Special measures should be taken by Governments and the international organizations, especially UNESCO, to eliminate the high rate of illiteracy by the year 2000, with the support of the international community.** **Governments should establish targets and adopt appropriate measures for this purpose.** While the elimination of illiteracy is important to all, priority programmes are still required to overcome the special obstacles that have generally led to higher illiteracy rates among women than among men. Efforts should be made to promote functional literacy, with special emphasis on health

nutrition and viable economic skills and opportunities, in order to eradicate illiteracy among women and to produce additional material for the eradication of illiteracy. Programmes for legal literacy for low-income level and rural areas should be initiated and intensified. Raising the level of education among women is important for the general welfare of society and because of its close link to child survival and child spacing". (p. 42)

## Food, Water and Agriculture

### Paragraph 176

"Governments should establish multisectoral programmes to promote the productive capacity of rural poor women in food and animal production, create off-farm employment opportunities, reduce their work-load, inter alia, by supporting the establishment of adequate child-care facilities and that of their children, reverse their pauperization, improve their access to all sources of energy, and provide them with adequate water, health, education, effective extension services and transportation within their region. In this connection it should be noted that **the World Conference on Agrarian Reform and Rural Development**, in both agricultural and non-agricultural activities as a prerequisite for successful rural development policies, planning and programmes, and proposed specific measures for improving their condition, which are still valid. **The Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women** also included specific measures to improve the situation of women in food and agriculture, which remain a valid guide for action". (p. 43)

### Paragraph 182

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**"Rural women's access to land, capital, technology, know-how and other productive resources should be secured.** Women should be given full and effective right to land ownership, registration of land titles and allocation of tenancies on irrigation or settlement schemes and should also benefit from land reform. Women's customary land and inheritance rights under conditions of land shortage, land improvement or shifts into cash-cropping should be protected. Implementation of inheritance laws should be modified so that women can inherit a fair share of livestock, agricultural machinery and other property. Women's access to investment finance to increase their productivity and income should be supported by removing legal and institutional restrictions and by promoting women's savings groups and co-operatives and intermediary institutions, as well as training in and assistance with financial management, savings and investments and reallocation of land resources, with priority place on production, especially of staple foods" (p. 45)

*Neither numerical targets nor time-tables were found in the Sectors of Industry, Science and Technology, and others areas for specific attention, such as Trades and Commercial Services, Communication, Housing, Settlement Community Development and Transport, Energy, Environment, Social Services. There is the need for Governments to promote the full participation and integration of women in all levels ; to participate in planning, of the decision making ; To allocate resources to prepare women through training, vocational guidance and career, counseling*

### III. PEACE

#### Basic strategies

##### Paragraph 239

"The main principles and directions for women's activities aimed at strengthening peace and formulated in the **Declaration on the Participation of Women in Promoting International Peace and Co-operation should be put into practice**. The Declaration calls for Governments, the United Nations system, non-governmental organizations, relevant institutions and individuals to strengthen women's participation in this sphere and it provides the overall framework for such activities" (p.56)

##### Paragraph 240

"Women and men have an equal right and the same vital interest in contributing to international peace and co-operation. Women should participate fully in all efforts to strengthen and maintain international peace and security and to promote international co-operation, diplomacy, the process of detente, disarmament in the nuclear field in particular, and respect for the principle of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the sovereign rights of States, guarantees of fundamental freedoms and human rights, such as recognition of the dignity of the individual and self-determination, and freedom of thought, conscience, expression, association, assembly communication and movement without distinction as to race, sex, political and religious beliefs, language or ethnic origin. The commitment to remove the obstacles to women's participation in the promotion of peace should be strengthened". (p. 56)

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### Measures for the implementation of the basic strategies at the national level

#### 1. Women's participation in efforts for peace

##### Paragraph 269

"Governments should encourage women's participation in the promotion of peace at decision-making levels by providing information on opportunities for such participation in public service and by promoting equitable representation of women in governmental bodies and activities". (p. 64)

### IV. AREAS OF SPECIAL CONCERN

*Some areas of special concern are defined in the Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women. Non numerical targets or time-tables are noticed.*

- a. Women in areas affected by drought
- b. Urban poor women.
- c. Elderly women
- d. Young women.
- e. Abused women.
- f. Destitute women.



- g. Women victims of trafficking and involuntary prostitution.
- h. Women deprived of their traditional means of livelihood.
- i. Women who are the sole supporters of families.
- j. Women with physical and mental disabilities.
- k. Women in detention and subject to penal law.
- l. Refugee and displaced women and children.
- m. Migrant women.
- n. Minority and "indigenous" women.

## V. INTERNATIONAL AND REGIONAL CO-OPERATION

*In this chapter , some time-tables are established*

### Basic strategies

#### Paragraph 314

**"Information on progress in achieving the goals of the Decade and on implementing the Forward-looking Strategies should be widely disseminated in the period from 1985 to the year 2000 at international , regional, subregional and national levels, based on experience gained during the Decade.** Greater reliance is needed on audio-visual communications and expansion of networks for disseminating information on programmes and activities for women. Discriminatory, stereotyped and degrading images of women must be eliminated in the media". (p. 77)

### Measures for the implementation of the basic strategies

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### 1. Monitoring

#### Paragraph 317

**"The implementation of the goals and objectives of the Decade - equality, development and peace - and of the Forward- looking Strategies should be monitored during the period 1986 to the year 2000.** Monitoring at the international level should be based on reviews, at the regional, subregional and national levels, of action taken, resources allocated and progress achieved. The national reviews should take the form of a response to a regular statistical reporting request from the United Nations Secretariat, which should include indicators of the situation of women. The statistical reporting basis should be developed by the Statistical Commission, in consultation with the Commission on the Status of Women. The United Nations Secretariat should compile the results of such monitoring in consultation with the appropriate bodies of Governments, including national machinery established to monitor and improve the status of women. The action taken and progress achieved at the national level should reflect consultation with non-governmental organizations and integration of their concerns at all levels of government planning, implementation and evaluation, as appropriate". (p. 78)

## 2. Technical co-operation, training and advisory services

### Paragraph 324

"Agencies which do not have specific guidelines or project procedures relating to women in development interlinked with the other aims of the period up to the year 2000 should ensure that they are developed. Such guidelines and procedures should apply to all aspects of the project cycle. Existing guidelines and procedures have to be applied more vigorously and consistently; in particular, each project document should contain a strategy to ensure that the project has a positive impact on the situation of women". (p. 79)

## 5. Participation of women in activities at the international and regional levels and in decision-making.

### Paragraph 358

"In order to ensure that programmes and activities of concern to women are given the necessary attention and priority, it is essential that women should participate actively in the planning and formulation of policies and programmes and in decision-making and appraisal processes in the United Nations. To this end, **international, regional and national organizations have been called upon during the Decade to advance the status of their female staff and to increase the number of women recruited. In the absence of overall targets and effective mechanisms for their achievement, however, greater efforts are needed to ensure the recruitment, promotion and career development of women. All bodies and organizations of the United Nations system should therefore take all possible measures to achieve the participation of women on equal terms with men at all levels by the year 2000.** To achieve this goal, the secretariats of the United Nations and all the organizations and bodies within the system should take special measures, such as the preparation of a comprehensive affirmative action plan including provisions for setting intermediate targets and for establishing and supporting special mechanisms- for example, co-ordinators- to improve the status of women staff. Progress made to implement those measures should be reported to the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women on a regular basis". (p. 86)

*Other areas of measures for the implementation of the basic strategies are: 3/Institutional co-ordination, 4/Research and policy analysis, 6/Information dissemination.*



**IV. THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN, BEIJING 4-15 SEPTEMBER 1995, REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETINGS**

**A. REGIONAL PLATAFORM FOR ACTION, WOMEN IN A CHANGING WORLD, ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE.**

*The Economic Commission for Europe preparatory meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Vienna, 17-21 Octobre 1994, establishes the strategic objectives derived from the critical areas of concern, and action to be taken.*

- A. Promote, achieve and protect the full realization of all women's human rights.
- B. Promote the eradication of women's poverty.
- C. Strengthen and promote the recognition of women's full contribution to their national economies and to sustainable development.
- D. Promote equal treatment between women and men workers and the harmonization of work and family responsibilities.
- E. Promote full participation of women in public life.
- F. Develop more gender specific statistical systems and gender research.
- G. Promote intra- and interregional solidarity and cooperation for the empowerment of women.

*Some numerical targets and time-tables has been repeated in the following areas:*

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**We governments, participating in the ECE Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Vienna from 17 to 21 Octobre 1994,**

2. **Commit** our governments to achieving, by the year 2000, a more equitable and sustainable society where women's knowledge, potential and contributions are recognized and taken fully into account in all policy and decision-making. Action to achieve such a society will be based on the following basic principles:

(a) The human rights of women are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights and must therefore be promoted, protected and realized at all stages of the life cycle- childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age- and must further reflect the full diversity of women, recongizing that many women face additional barriers because such factors as their race, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic class or status as indigenous people, migrants, displaced people and refugees;

(b) The promotion of equality and partnership among women and men requires a more equitable sharing of authorities and responsibilities in family life, work and society, as well as a more equitable sharing of economic and political power. Equal opportunities for women and men are needed for the realization of the full human potential and thus the achievement of sustainable human development, democracy and peace;



(c) Partnership between women and men is the basis for a new gender contract based on equality which would entail a redistribution of the domestic and family care, contribute to economic independence for women, reduce women's double workload and break down existing stereotypes of the roles of women and men;

(d) A new gender contract involves an active and visible policy of mainstreaming a gender perspective into all relevant political, economic and social policy fields at central, regional and local levels, so that before various decisions are taken in society, an analysis has already been made on the effects for women and men respectively. Such mainstreaming is crucial, not only as a matter of achieving equality between women and men but also to contribute to sustainable development and political, economic and social efficiency in the region;

(e) Fostering democracy and promoting equality between women and men are mutually reinforcing. The participation of women, as fully-fledged protagonists, on an equal footing with men, in decision-making in all areas of political, economic, social and cultural life, is a condition and prerequisite of a fully democratic society. Based on the respect for fundamental political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights, fostering and promoting equality between women and men enables the strengthening of women's conditions and status and participation at all levels of decision-making, which is a prerequisite for the advancement of women;

(f) Solidarity for the empowerment of women within the region and with other societies is crucial to ensure women's advancement and to enhance their participation in the political, economic and social structures and institutions in all countries;

(f.bis) Education and training integrating a gender perspective is key to achieving equality for women and girls and must be a priority to ensure their effective and equal participation in society.

(g) Maintenance of peace and security at the global, regional and local levels (...)."  
(p.3)

## VI. Mobilizing financial resources for implementing the strategic objectives

168bis. "Governments and other partners in development cooperation should examine their spending priorities to ensure that sufficient resources are made available for the implementation and follow-up of the recommendations for the empowerment of women in this and other regions, made by the UN Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development as well as the recommendations of this ECE Conference. **ECE countries should also strive to fulfill the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of GNP for overall ODA, and endeavor to increase the share of ODA funding for programs to support women's empowerment**". (p. 37)

## **B. DRAFT AFRICAN PLATFORM FOR ACTION**

*The African Platform of action in preparation for the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Dakar (Senegal) from 16 to 23 Novembre 1994. The critical areas of concern which were established are the following ones:*

- A. Women's poverty; insufficient food security and lack of economic empowerment;
- B. Inadequate access to education, training, science and technology;
- C. Women's vital role in culture, the family and socialization;
- D. Improvement of women's health, including reproductive health;
- E. Women's relationship and linkages to environment and natural resource management;
- F. Involvement of women in the peace process;
- G. The political empowerment of women;
- H. Women's legal and human rights;
- I. Mainstreaming of gender-disaggregated data;
- J. Women, communication, information and arts;
- k. The girl-child. (p. 7)

### **Strategic objectives and actions to be taken**

*Some numerical targets and time-tables are established in this the following areas:*

#### **Inadequate access to education, training, science and technology**

##### 92. Objectives

- (b) "To achieve gender equality in retention, quality and achievement in both formal and non-formal education by the year 2000" (p. 26)

##### 93. Proposed actions

- (c). "Enact and ensure effective implementation of legislation to enforce a minimum basic education of at least nine years". (p. 26)

#### **Improvement of women's health, including reproductive health and family planning services and integrated population programmes.**

##### 98. Objectives

- (g) "Reduce maternal and infant mortality by 50 per cent by the year 2015" (p.30)

##### 99. Proposed actions

- (h) " Decrease maternal and infant mortality rate by 50 per cent by the year 2015" (p. 31)

**"Combat the spread of AIDS by accelerating the implementation of the 1992 Declaration on AIDS and the Child in relation to, inter alia,**

(b) Ensuring that 100 per cent of every country's adults know how HIV is transmitted and how to protect themselves and others from infection" (pp. 32-33)

## C - ASIA, REGIONAL PLAN OF ACTION TO THE FOURTH CONFERENCE ON WOMEN.

*The critical areas of concern established in this regional plan of action are the following ones:*

- A. The growing feminization of poverty.
- B. Inequality in women's access to and participation in economic activities.
- C. Inadequate recognition of women's role and concerns in environment and natural resource management.
- D. Inequitable access to power and decision-making.
- E. Violation of women's human rights.
- F. Inequalities and lack of access to health.
- G. Inequalities and lack of access to education and literacy.
- H. Negative portrayal of women in the media.
- I. Inadequate mechanisms for promoting the advancement of women.
- J. Inadequate recognition of women's role in peace-building.

### Goals, strategic objectives and action to be taken

*Some numerical targets and time-tables are considered in this plan of action. We can also noticed recommendations in order to the establishment of quantitative targets.*

"The critical areas of concern highlighted in this plan of action embrace the themes of equality, development and peace established for the United Nations Decade for Women and elaborated in the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies. **As the year 2000 approaches, with the objectives of the Strategies still far from being attained, each Government needs to adopt at the national level appropriate and relevant time bound and quantitative targets in each area to make the plan of action a reality for action and achievement**".  
(p. 21)

*The specific issues which are defined in this chapter are:*

#### **A. Vulnerable groups and feminization of poverty.**

- 1. Agriculture.
- 2. Informal Sector.
- 3. Female-headed and female-maintained households.
- 4. Elderly women.
- 5. Young women and girls.
- 6. Women with disabilities.
- 7. Structural adjustment process.



## **B. Promoting equality in women's access to and participation in economic activities.**

1. Gender-responsive planning, policy-making and implementation.
2. The visibility and recognition of women's economic activities.
3. Access to information, skills and knowledge about economic opportunities.
4. Mainstreaming women's concerns in agriculture and rural development.
5. Women in industry and commerce.
6. Women in the informal sector.
7. Women migrant workers.
8. Training and development.

## **C. Recognizing women's role and concerns in environment and natural resource management.**

1. Integration of women in environment and natural resources management.
2. Policies and planning for sustainable development.
3. Shelter and settlement.

## **D. Supporting equal access of women to power and decision-making**

### Actions to be taken

- International standards
- Public life

(iv) "Governments, citizens and political parties are encouraged to increase the percentage of women in legislative bodies and ministries, at senior levels of the civil service and in the judiciary to at least 20 percent by the year 2000, using legislation and quotas when required to address structural impediments and by providing special assistance such as training and information". (p.32)

- Gender bias in the law.
- The family.

## **E. Protecting and promoting women's rights.**

1. Violence against women.
2. Indigenous women.
3. Women under war and other conflict situations.

## **F. Promoting women's equal access to health.**

### **1. Health.**

#### Strategic objective

"To ensure that women's health needs in all stages of life-cycle are adequately articulated and properly met by the requisite provision of budgetary resources, legislative support and social and health care reorientation; to eliminate female foeticide and; to make systematic and pernicious gender discrimination in the distribution of nutrition and health care services among children in the family a

violation of law; and to set targets for the reduction in maternal mortality and morbidity rates by the year 2000, as established by various United Nations Conventions". (p. 36)

Actions to be taken

(xii) "Iron deficiency anaemia in women should be reduced by one third of the 1990 levels by the year 2000". (p. 37)

**2. Population**

Action to be taken

(iv) "All countries in the region with unacceptably high maternal mortality rates (MMRs) should set the target of bringing them down to one half of the 1990 level". (p. 37)

(v) "Governments should aim to reduce the level of infant mortality to 40 per 1,000 live births or lower". (p. 37)

**G. Supporting access to and equality of women in education and literacy.**

1. Education and literacy.
2. Science and technology.

**H. Portraying women positively in the media.**

1. Communication and technology.
2. Globalization of media.
3. Stereotyping.
4. Media ownership and decision-making.

**I. Creating adequate mechanisms for promoting the advancement of women.**

1. National machinery.
2. Gender analysis.
3. Integration of gender concerns.
4. Statistics.

**J. Enhancing women's role in peace-building**

1. Participation in peace building
2. Education for peace.
3. Peace research.

## **D - ARAB REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN, DRAFT REGIONAL PLATAFORM OF ACTION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF ARAB WOMEN TO THE YEAR 2005.**

The Draft Regional Plataform of action for the advancement of arab women took place at Amman, Jordan, 6 -10 Novembre 1994.

**The priority concerns and measures to be taken are the following ones. Some numerical targets and time-tables are established.**

### **A. Safeguarding the right of arab women to participate in power and decision-making structures and mechanism:**

29." The following are some of the measures that should be taken at the regional and international levels:

(c) Adopting the various measures taken by the United Nations system to **increase female representation, particularly in senior and decision-making positions, until full equality is achieved at all levels by the year 2000.** This would be achieved through preferential recruitment and promotion along with several other special meesues". (p. 10)

### **B. Alleviation of poverty among arab women.**

### **C. Ensuring equal opportunity for arab women to obtain an education**

38. "One major challenge in this respect is **the eradication of illiteracy in the ranks of rural women, particularly among women under 40 years of age who work both in and outside the home with no time to address the problem of their illiteracy.** Non-compliance with compulsory education policies and traditional attitudes still maintained towards females continue to deny them a part in the running of the affairs of their community. (add: Appropriate education on the importance of women's literacy and education is not provided for men, including youth, to change these traditional attitudes. The problem of dropping out of formal education, especially among females, is yet another factor that may explain the high rate of illiteracy and the low standard of education among females in a number of Arab States"(p. 13)

40. "The following are some of the measures that should be taken at the governmental level with regard to eradication of illiteracy:

(a) Action is needed to implement the Arab Strategy for the Eradication of illiteracy adopted by the Third Alexandria Conference convened in 1976. The strategy aims at **the complete erradication of illiteracy among males and females in the 15-54 age group and draws upon the experience of some Arab States in combating adult illiteracy. Steps should be taken to combat illiteracy in a compulsory manner in order to reduce illiteracy by 30 per cent in most Arab countries by the year 2005.** The illiteracy rate in the countries that have suffered from wars and conflicts has increased so drastically that rapid radical action is needed in this regard: (add: young people who have been deprived of education during periods of war and



conflict should be offered re-education. As for refugees, they should be offered equal education opportunities as local citizens in the host country;) (p.14)

**D. Ensuring women's equal access to health services.**

**E. Strengthening the capabilities of Arab women to enter the labour market and achieve self-reliance.**

**F. Coping with the effects of wars and armed conflicts on arab women.**

**E. STRATEGIC ACTIONS ADOPTED AT THE TWENTIETH MEETING OF THE PRESIDING OFFICERS OF THE REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE INTEGRATION OF WOMEN INTO THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

*The preparatory meeting for the Latin America and the Caribbean region was held in Santiago, Chile, 16-18 Novembre 1994. In the strategic actions, special attention is given to new laws for the improvement of women's status and their integration to social and political live.*

*Non numerical targets are found, only some global strategic actions as the following ones:*

Strategic action II.2.a

**"Making national legislation consistent with international and regional norms that promote the advancement of women**, especially in the areas of education, employment, health, human rights, political participation and the eradication of violence, and adopting and implementing policies, programmes and measures to guarantee the effective implementation of legal norms designed to improve the situation of women, and supplementing and amending secondary legislation, where necessary, to make it consistent with the legal provisions adopted at the constitutional level". (p. 3)

Strategic action V.I.e

**"Creating or strengthening appropriate national and subregional mechanisms and follow-up procedures for promoting the human rights enshrined in national and international instruments**, particularly the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights and the Inter-American Convention on the Forced Disappearance of Persons, as well as procedures for reporting human rights violations; guaranteeing the effective involvement of women's movements in such mechanisms and procedures, and paying special attention to all forms of violence against women in situations of vulnerability and discrimination". (p.25)