Chapter X

Women


On 1 January, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), established by General Assembly resolution 64/289, became operational. It combined the mandates and assets of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, with the aim to provide guidance and technical support to Member States on gender equality, the empowerment of women and gender mainstreaming. With transitional arrangements completed by the end of 2010, the core elements for the functioning of the new entity were in place. The UN-Women Executive Board adopted the financial rules and regulations in April; the strategic plan, 2011–2013—which set out the entity’s vision, mission and priorities—in June; and the institutional budget for the biennium 2012–2013 in December.

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its fifty-fifth session, held a high-level round table and panel discussions on its priority theme, “Access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”, and decided to transmit to the Economic and Social Council the summaries of those discussions, together with agreed conclusions related to the priority theme, as input to the Council’s annual ministerial review. The Commission further brought to the Council’s attention resolutions it had adopted on mainstreaming a gender perspective into UN policies and programmes continued to be addressed (see below).

Issues central to women’s lives on which the General Assembly adopted resolutions included follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of its twenty-third special session; women in development; women in rural areas; violence against women migrant workers; women and political participation; and the girl child.

A Security Council presidential statement in October on women and peace and security underlined the importance of women’s participation in conflict prevention and resolution efforts, including in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements. It encouraged Member States, and international and regional organizations to take measures to increase the numbers of women involved in mediation efforts and the numbers of women in representative roles in regional and international organizations.

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and Beijing+5

During 2011, the Commission on the Status of Women, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly considered follow-up to the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, particularly the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action [YUN 1995, p. 1170] and the political declaration and further actions and initiatives to implement both instruments adopted at the twenty-third (2000) special session of the Assembly (Beijing+5) by resolution S/23-2 [YUN 2000, p. 1084]. The Declaration had reaffirmed the commitment of Governments to the goals and objectives of the Fourth World Conference and to the implementation of the 12 critical areas of concern outlined in the Platform for Action: women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against women; women and armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child. The issue of mainstreaming a gender perspective into UN policies and programmes continued to be addressed (see below).

Report of Secretary-General. In response to General Assembly resolution 65/191 [YUN 2010, p. 1136], the Secretary-General, in a July report [A/66/211],


reviewed the follow-up to and the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the Assembly’s twenty-third special session. He focused on selected UN intergovernmental processes, including advances made during the sixty-fifth (2010) session of the Assembly and the 2010 sessions of the Economic and Social Council and its functional commissions, and assessed the extent to which they integrated a gender perspective. The report further evaluated preparatory documentation for, and, when applicable, outcomes of the 2011 Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (see p. 827), the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (see p. 799), and the 2013 review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (see p. 1027).

The analysis suggested that there had been some progress in incorporating a gender perspective into the intergovernmental processes examined, particularly in ensuring that reports of the Secretary-General to the Assembly and to the Economic and Social Council reflected a gender perspective, while progress had been more limited with respect to resolutions. High-level events continued to offer good opportunities for incorporating a gender perspective into intergovernmental processes and for reflecting them in major outcome documents. The review of intergovernmental documents indicated that in most cases, the inclusion of a gender perspective reflected a genuine focus on gender equality issues. However, the share of resolutions of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, and the functional commissions of the Council that included a gender perspective remained low, and even high-level events did not always give sufficient attention to gender equality issues. References to gender equality and empowerment of women issues continued to be most strongly evidenced in the intergovernmental processes focusing on social and economic issues, namely, in the processes of the Second (Economic and Financial) and Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committees.

The Secretary-General suggested that the General Assembly consider reiterating its call to UN intergovernmental bodies to mainstream a gender perspective into all issues under their consideration and within their mandates, including in all UN summits, conferences and special sessions and in their follow-up processes; requesting the Secretary-General to ensure that his reports systematically included a gender perspective through gender analysis and the provision of sex- and age-disaggregated quantitative data; encouraging Governments to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex, and age, to enhance capacity development in that regard, and to develop relevant gender-sensitive indicators to support policymaking; and calling upon Governments and the UN system to encourage and support the participation of women’s groups and non-governmental organizations specialized in gender equality issues in intergovernmental processes through increased outreach, funding and capacity development.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 89], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) Committee [A/66/455 & Corr.1], adopted resolution 66/132 without vote [agenda item 28 (6)].

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

The General Assembly,
Recalling its previous resolutions on the question, including resolution 65/191 of 21 December 2010, and recalling also the section of resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010 entitled “Strengthening the institutional arrangements for support of gender equality and the empowerment of women”;
Deeply convinced that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century” are important contributions to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and must be translated into effective action by all States, the United Nations system and other organizations concerned,
Reaffirming the commitments to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit, the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions, and reaffirming also that their full, effective and accelerated implementation is integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,
Welcoming progress made towards achieving gender equality, but stressing that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,
Recognizing that the responsibility for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session rests primarily at the national level and that strengthened efforts are necessary in this respect, and reiterating that enhanced international cooperation is essential for full, effective and accelerated implementation,
Welcoming the work of the Commission on the Status of Women in reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and taking note with appreciation of all its agreed conclusions, including the latest, on access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work, adopted by the Commission at its fifty-fifth session,
Welcoming also the full operationalization of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on 1 January 2011,

Recognizing that the participation and contribution of civil society, in particular women’s groups and other non-governmental organizations, are important to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session,

Reaffirming that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for promoting the empowerment of women and achieving gender equality by transforming structures of inequality, and reaffirming also the commitment to actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres, as well as the commitment to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender equality,

Reaffirming also the commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus,

Bearing in mind the challenges and obstacles to changing discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes, which perpetuate discrimination against women and stereotypic roles of men and women, and stressing that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of international standards and norms to address the inequality between men and women,

Reaffirming the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS and the Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS adopted at the High-level Meeting on AIDS, held on 10 June 2011, in which, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women were recognized as fundamental for reducing the vulnerability of women to HIV,

Expressing serious concern that the urgent goal of 50/50 gender balance in the United Nations system, especially at senior and policymaking levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, remains unmet, and that the representation of women in the United Nations system has remained almost static, with negligible improvement in some parts of the system, as reflected in the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system,

Reaffirming the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding,


1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the measures taken and progress achieved in follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

2. Reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as the declaration adopted on the occasion of the fifteen-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and also reaffirms its commitment to their full, effective and accelerated implementation;

3. Also reaffirms the primary and essential role of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as the catalytic role of the Commission on the Status of Women, in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women based on the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session and in promoting and monitoring gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system;

4. Recognizes that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the fulfilment of the obligations of States parties under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women are mutually reinforcing in respect of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, and in this regard welcomes the contributions of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to promoting the implementation of the Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, and invites States parties to the Convention to include information on measures taken to enhance implementation at the national level in their reports to the Committee under article 18 of the Convention;

5. Calls upon States parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto and to take into consideration the concluding observations as well as the general recommendations of the Committee, urges States parties to consider limiting the extent of any reservations that they lodge to the Convention, to formulate any reservations as precisely and narrowly as possible and to regularly review such reservations with a view to withdrawing them so as to ensure that no reservation is incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, also urges all Member States that have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to consider doing so, and calls upon those Member States that have not yet done so to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol;

6. Welcomes the progress made in the effective functioning of UN-Women in regard to its governance structure, as well as administration, budgeting and human resources;

7. Reaffirms the important role of UN-Women in leading, coordinating and promoting accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women;

8. Calls upon UN-Women to continue to support gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system as an integral part of its work and, in that regard, to place a strong and more systematic focus on support for gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system;

9. Welcomes the commitment of UN-Women to support Member States in their efforts to develop and
strengthen norms, policies and standards on gender equality and the empowerment of women as well as to integrate gender perspectives into sectoral policy and normative frameworks;

10. **Urge** Member States to increase funding for the budget of UN-Women by providing, when legislative and budgetary provisions allow, core, multi-year, predictable, stable and sustainable voluntary contributions, recognizing the importance of adequate funding in enabling UN-Women to implement its strategic plan promptly and effectively, and recognizing also that the mobilization of financial resources for achieving its goals still remains a challenge;

11. **Encourage** all actors, inter alia, Governments, the United Nations system, other international organizations and civil society, to continue to support the work of the Commission on the Status of Women in fulfilling its central role in the follow-up to and review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the sixty-third special session, and, as applicable, to carry out the recommendations of the Commission, and welcomes in this regard the Commission’s continued sharing of experiences, lessons learned and good practices in overcoming challenges to full implementation at the national and international levels and the evaluation of progress in the implementation of priority themes;

12. **Call** Governments and the organs and relevant funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, and other international and regional organizations, including financial institutions, and all relevant actors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, to intensify action to achieve the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

13. **Reaffirm** that States have an obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent violence against women and girls, provide protection to the victims and investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and that failure to do so violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, calls upon Governments to elaborate and implement laws and strategies to eliminate violence against women and girls, encourages and supports men and boys in taking an active part in the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence, encourages increased understanding among men and boys of how violence harms girls, boys, women and men and undermines gender equality, encourages all actors to speak out against any violence against women, and in this regard encourages Member States to continue to support the Secretary-General’s ongoing campaign “Unite to End Violence against Women” and the UN-Women social mobilization and advocacy platform “Say NO—Unite to End Violence against Women”;

14. **Reiterate** its call to the United Nations system, including the main organs, their main committees and subsidiary bodies, functions such as the annual ministerial review and the Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council, and the funds, programmes and specialized agencies, to increase efforts to fully mainstream a gender perspective into all issues under their consideration and within their mandates, as well as in all United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions and in their follow-up processes, including the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development in 2012 and the review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002, at the fifty-first session of the Commission for Social Development, in 2013;

15. **Request** the entities of the United Nations system systematically to incorporate the outcomes of the Commission on the Status of Women into their work within their mandates, inter alia, to ensure effective support for the efforts of Member States towards the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and in this regard welcomes the commitment of UN-Women to establish concrete results-based reporting mechanisms, as well as to ensure coherence, consistency and coordination between the normative and operational aspects of its work;

16. **Strongly encourage** Governments to continue to support the role and contribution of civil society, in particular non-governmental organizations and women’s organizations, in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session;

17. **Call** upon Governments and the United Nations system to encourage women’s groups and other non-governmental organizations specializing in gender equality and the empowerment of women to participate in intergovernmental processes, including through increased outreach, funding and capacity-building;

18. **Call** upon intergovernmental bodies of the United Nations to systematically request the inclusion of a gender perspective in reports of the Secretary-General and other inputs to intergovernmental processes;

19. **Request** that reports of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council and their subsidiary bodies systematically address gender perspectives through qualitative gender analysis and the provision of sex- and age-disaggregated data and, where available, quantitative data, in particular through concrete conclusions and recommendations for further action on gender equality and the empowerment of women, in order to facilitate gender-sensitive policy development, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to convey the importance of reflecting a gender perspective to all stakeholders who provide inputs to his reports;

20. **Encourage** Member States, with the support of, as appropriate, United Nations entities, including UN-Women, international and regional organizations and other relevant actors, to prioritize the strengthening of national data collection and monitoring capacities with regard to statistics disaggregated by sex and age, as well as national tracking indicators for gender equality and the empowerment of women through multisectoral efforts and partnerships;

21. **Call** upon all parts of the United Nations system to continue to play an active role in ensuring the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, through, inter alia, the maintenance of gender specialists in all entities of the United Nations system, as well as by ensuring that all personnel, especially in the field, receive training and appropriate follow-up, including tools, guidance and support, for accelerated gender mainstreaming, and reaffirms the need to strengthen
the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender;

22. **Requests** the Secretary-General to review and redouble his efforts to make progress towards achieving the goal of 50/50 gender balance at all levels throughout the United Nations system, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, considering, in particular, women from developing and least developed countries, from countries with economies in transition and from unrepresented or largely under-represented Member States, and to ensure managerial and departmental accountability with respect to gender balance targets, and strongly encourages Member States to identify and regularly submit more women candidates for appointment to positions in the United Nations system, especially at more senior and policymaking levels, including in peace-keeping operations;

23. **Calls upon** the United Nations system to continue its efforts towards achieving the goal of gender balance, including with the active support of gender focal points, and requests the Secretary-General to provide an oral report to the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-sixth session and to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh session on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system, under the item entitled "Advancement of women", and on progress made and obstacles encountered in achieving gender balance, with recommendations for accelerating progress, and up-to-date statistics, including the number and percentage of women and their functions and nationalities throughout the United Nations system, and information on the responsibility and accountability of the offices of human resources management and the secretariat of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination for promoting gender balance;

24. **Encourages** increased efforts by Governments and the United Nations system to enhance accountability for the implementation of commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the international, regional and national levels, including by improved monitoring and reporting on progress in relation to policies, strategies, resource allocations and programmes and by achieving gender balance;

25. **Reaffirms** that Governments bear the primary responsibility for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and that international cooperation has an essential role in assisting developing countries in progressing towards the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

26. **Requests** the Secretary-General to continue to report annually to the General Assembly under the item entitled "Advancement of women", as well as to the Commission on the Status of Women and the Economic and Social Council, on the follow-up to and progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session, with an assessment of progress in gender mainstreaming, including information on key achievements, lessons learned and good practices, and recommendations on further measures to enhance implementation.

## Critical areas of concern

### Women and poverty

#### Women in development

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/217 [YUN 2009, p. 1120], the Secretary-General submitted an August report [A/66/219] on integrating a gender perspective into national development strategies. The report reviewed measures taken by Governments, support provided by the UN system, and the role of donors and the new aid effectiveness agenda [YUN 2008, p. 942]. It also highlighted gender-responsive budgeting and planning as a good practice example.

The Secretary-General noted that despite progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), significant gaps remained between urban and rural areas and for those who were the most disadvantaged economically or because of sex, age, disability or ethnicity. The majority of maternal deaths continued to be concentrated in sub-Saharan Africa and Southern Asia, and children from the poorest households, living in rural or in conflict areas, especially girls, were the most likely not to be attending school. Access to secondary education remained restricted for girls in some regions, and worldwide, women’s access to employment, resources and decision-making positions remained a challenge. Progress in improving the share of women in non-agricultural paid employment was particularly slow. Intergovernmental bodies continued to reaffirm the importance of gender-sensitive national policies for progress towards the MDGs, gender equality and the empowerment of women—essential for development and poverty eradication—was reflected as a priority area of the Istanbul Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (see p. 828), and, in that context, least developed countries had committed to establishing and continuing to implement national development plans that took into account the needs of women and girls.

The report concluded that Governments had undertaken many initiatives, such as identifying gender issues as a priority or cross-cutting subject that was systematically mainstreamed across all sectors in all stages of the policy process. Nevertheless, in some countries, gender perspectives were only partially integrated in specific sectoral areas. Beyond awareness-raising, capacity-building and training activities, concerted efforts were needed for the effective incorporation of gender perspectives into national development policies and strategies. Common strategies included developing capacity and expertise in line ministries as well as in national mechanisms for gender equality; strengthening accountability, monitoring and evaluation mechanisms; ensuring suf-
sufficient human and financial resources; and promoting the participation of civil society, particularly women’s organizations, in the national development planning processes. With respect to the role of the UN system and donors, emphasis should be placed on integrating gender perspectives in all development cooperation work and building on the national ownership of gender-mainstreaming initiatives. Measures should include mechanisms to track resources allocated to achieve gender equality goals; coordination mechanisms with a gender equality focus; and accountability mechanisms to measure and track performance.

The Secretary-General suggested that the General Assembly call on Member States and relevant actors to undertake actions related to gender mainstreaming efforts; participation and accountability; resource allocation and tracking; measures and tools; and least developed countries.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 22 December [meeting 91], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Second (Economic and Financial) Committee [A/66/444/Add.2], adopted resolution 66/216 without vote [agenda item 23 (b)].

Women in development

The General Assembly,
Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”;
Reaffirming also the commitments to gender equality and the advancement of women made at the Millennium Summit, the 2005 World Summit and other major United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions, and reaffirming further that their full, effective and accelerated implementation is integral to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,
Reaffirming further the United Nations Millennium Declaration, which affirms that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and calls for, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as being effective in and essential to eradicating poverty and hunger, combating diseases and stimulating development that is truly sustainable,
Recalling the outcomes of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, the Outcome of the Conference on the World Financial and Economic Crisis and Its Impact on Development, and the outcomes of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, the high-level meeting on HIV/AIDS, the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-Communicable Diseases, the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and the high-level meeting on Africa’s development needs,
Welcoming the full operationalization of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) on 1 January 2011, noting that its establishment and the conduct of its work should lead to more effective coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming across the United Nations, and recognizing its role to assist Member States and the United Nations system in progressing more effectively and efficiently towards the goals of achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women,
Noting the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes, and the specialized agencies, in facilitating the advancement of women in development,

Reaffirming that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained and inclusive economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and United Nations conferences and other meetings, including the Declaration adopted in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained and inclusive economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services,
Recognizing that access to basic affordable health care, preventive health-care information and the highest standard of health, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, is critical to women’s economic advancement, that lack of economic empowerment and independence increases women’s vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, including the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, and that the neglect of women’s full enjoyment of human rights severely limits their opportunities in public and private life, including the opportunities for receiving an education and for achieving economic and political empowerment,

Reaffirming the need to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by the earliest possible date and at all levels by 2015, and reaffirming also that equal access to education and training at all levels, in particular in business, trade, administration, information and communications technology and other new technologies, and fulfilment of the need to eliminate gender inequalities at all levels are essential for gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication and to allowing women’s full and equal contribution to, and equal opportunity to benefit from, development,
Reaffirming also the significant contributions that women make to the economy, that women are key contributors to the economy and to combating poverty and inequalities through both remunerated and unremunerated
work at home, in the community and in the workplace, and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty.

Recognizing that the difficult socioeconomic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have contributed to the feminization of poverty,

Recognizing also, in this context, the importance of respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and of a national and international environment that promotes, inter alia, justice, gender equality, equity, civil and political participation and civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights and fundamental freedoms for the advancement and empowerment of women,

Bearing in mind the challenges and obstacles to changing discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes, which perpetuate discrimination against women and stereotypic roles of men and women, and stressing that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of international standards and norms to address the inequality between men and women,

Recognizing that poverty eradication and the achievement and preservation of peace are mutually reinforcing, and recognizing also that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on integrating a gender perspective into national development strategies;

2. Calls upon Member States, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, and all sectors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as all women and men, to fully commit themselves and to intensify their contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;

3. Recognizes the mutually reinforcing links between gender equality and poverty eradication and the achievement of all of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the need to elaborate and implement, where appropriate, in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, comprehensive gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies that address social, structural and macroeconomic issues;

4. Emphasizes the need to link policies on economic and social development to ensure that all people, including those living in poverty and in vulnerable situations, benefit from inclusive economic growth and development, in accordance with the goals of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development: outcome document of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus;

5. Urges Member States, the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations to accelerate their efforts and provide adequate resources to increase the voice and full and equal participation of women in all decision-making bodies at the highest levels of government and in the governance structures of international organizations, including through eliminating gender stereotyping in appointments and promotions, to build women’s capacity as agents of change and to empower them to participate actively and effectively in the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of national development, poverty eradication and environmental policies, strategies and programmes;

6. Encourages Member States to continue to increase, as appropriate, the participation of civil society, including women’s organizations, in Government decision-making in national development policy areas;

7. Encourages Member States and the United Nations system to ensure systematic attention to, recognition of and support for the crucial role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflict, in mediation and peacebuilding efforts and in the rebuilding of post-conflict society, inter alia, through promoting women’s capacity, leadership and engagement in political and economic decision-making;

8. Stresses the importance of the adoption by Member States, international organizations, including the United Nations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders of appropriate measures to identify and address the ongoing adverse impacts of the world financial and economic crisis, volatile energy prices and the food crisis, and the challenges posed by climate change for women and girls, and of maintaining adequate levels of funding for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women;

9. Also stresses the importance of the creation by Member States, international organizations, including the United Nations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders of a favourable and conducive national and international environment in all areas of life for the effective integration of women in development, and of their undertaking and disseminating a gender analysis of policies and programmes related to macroeconomic stability, structural reform, taxation, investments, including foreign direct investment, and all relevant sectors of the economy;

10. Urges the donor community, Member States, international organizations, including the United Nations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations, trade unions and other stakeholders to strengthen the focus and impact of development assistance targeting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls through gender mainstreaming, the funding of targeted activities and enhanced dialogue between donors and partners, and to also strengthen the mechanisms needed to measure effectively the resources allocated to incorporating gender perspectives in all areas of development assistance;

11. Urges Member States to incorporate a gender perspective, commensurate with gender-equality goals, into the design, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of national development strategies, to ensure alignment between national action plans on gender equality and national development strategies, and to encourage the involvement of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality, and in this regard calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts to develop methodologies and tools and to promote capacity-building and evaluation;

12. Encourages Member States to ensure inclusive and more effective participation of national mechanisms for gender equality and women’s empowerment in the formulation of national development strategies, including strategies
aimed at eradicating poverty and reducing inequalities, and calls upon the United Nations system to support national efforts in this regard;

13. Also encourages Member States, as appropriate, to strengthen capacities for gender mainstreaming by allocating adequate financial and human resources to national women's machineries as well as to and within line ministries, establishing and/or strengthening dedicated units for gender equality and the empowerment of women, and providing capacity development for technical staff, and developing tools and guidelines;

14. Encourages Member States, the United Nations system and donor countries to strengthen gender-responsive planning and budgeting processes and to develop and strengthen methodologies and tools for this purpose as well as for the monitoring and evaluation of investments for gender-equality results, as appropriate, and encourages donors to mainstream a gender perspective in their practices, including joint coordination and accountability mechanisms;

15. Encourages Member States to adopt and implement legislation and policies designed to promote the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, including through increased flexibility in working arrangements, such as part-time work, and the facilitation of breastfeeding for working mothers, to provide care facilities for children and other dependants, and to ensure that both women and men have access to maternity or paternity, parental and other forms of leave and are not discriminated against when availing themselves of such benefits;

16. Expresses deep concern about the pervasiveness of violence against women and girls, reiterates the need to further intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, and recognizes that violence against women and girls is one of the obstacles to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and that women's poverty and lack of political, social and economic empowerment, as well as their marginalization, may result from their exclusion from social policies for and the benefits of sustainable development and can place them at increased risk of violence;

17. Encourages Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society to promote and protect the rights of women workers, to take action to remove structural and legal barriers to, as well as eliminate stereotypic attitudes towards, gender equality at work, and to initiate positive steps towards promoting equal pay for equal work or for work of equal value;

18. Urges Governments to develop, adequately resource and implement active labour-market policies on full and productive employment and decent work for all, including the full participation of women and men in both rural and urban areas;

19. Calls upon Governments to strengthen efforts to protect the rights of, and ensure decent work conditions for, domestic workers, including migrant women, in relation to, inter alia, working hours, conditions and wages, and to promote access to health-care services and other social and economic benefits;

20. Encourages Member States to adopt and/or review and to fully implement gender-sensitive legislation and policies that reduce, through specifically targeted measures, horizontal and vertical occupational segregation and gender-based wage gaps;

21. Urges all Member States to undertake a gender analysis of national labour laws and standards and to establish gender-sensitive policies and guidelines for employment practices, including for transnational corporations, with particular attention to export-processing zones, building in this regard on multilateral instruments, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and conventions of the International Labour Organization;

22. Stresses the importance of developing national strategies for the promotion of sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities, and encourages Governments to create a climate that is conducive to increasing the number of women entrepreneurs and the size of their businesses by giving them equal access to financial instruments, providing them with training and advisory services in business, administration and information and communications technology, facilitating networking and information-sharing and increasing their participation on advisory boards and in other forums so as to enable them to contribute to the formulation and review of policies and programmes being developed by financial institutions;

23. Urges all Member States to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women with regard to their access to all types of financial services and products, including bank loans, bank accounts, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, regardless of their economic and social status, to support women's access to legal assistance and to encourage the financial sector to mainstream gender perspectives in their policies and programmes;

24. Recognizes the role of microfinance, including microcredit, in the eradication of poverty, the empowerment of women and the generation of employment, notes in this regard the importance of sound national financial systems, and encourages the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacities, including through the support of international financial institutions;

25. Urges Governments to ensure that microfinance programmes focus on developing savings products that are safe, convenient and accessible to women and support women's efforts to retain control over their savings;

26. Urges all Governments to eliminate discrimination against women in the field of education and ensure their equal access to all levels of education;

27. Urges Member States to adopt and review legislation and policies to ensure women's equal access to and control over land, housing and other property, including through inheritance, land reform programmes and land markets, and to take measures to implement those laws and policies;

28. Urges Governments to take measures to facilitate equitable access to land and property rights by providing training designed to make the judicial, legislative and administrative system more responsive to gender-equality issues, to provide legal aid for women seeking to claim their rights, to support the efforts of women's groups and networks and to carry out awareness campaigns so as to draw attention to the need for women's equal rights to land and property;
29. Recognizes the need to empower women, particularly poor women, economically and politically, and in this regard encourages Governments, with the support of their development partners, to invest in appropriate infrastructure and other projects, including the provision of water and sanitation to rural areas and urban slums, to increase health and well-being, relieve the workloads of women and girls and release their time and energy for other productive activities, including entrepreneurship;

30. Also recognizes the central role of agriculture in development, and stresses the importance of reviewing agricultural policies and strategies to ensure that women’s critical role in food and nutritional security is recognized and addressed as an integral part of both short- and long-term responses to food insecurity, excessive price volatility and food crises in developing countries;

31. Further recognizes the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women, and their traditional knowledge, in enhancing agricultural and rural development, improving food security and eradicating rural poverty;

32. Expresses concern at the overall expansion of the HIV and AIDS epidemic and the fact that women and girls are still the most affected by HIV and AIDS, that they are more easily infected, that they bear a disproportionate share of the caregiving burden and that they are more vulnerable to violence, stigmatization and discrimination, poverty and marginalization from their families and communities as a result of HIV and AIDS, and taking into account that despite substantial progress, the 2010 deadline of universal access has not been met, calls upon Governments and the international community to urgently scale up responses towards achieving the goal of universal access to comprehensive HIV prevention programmes, treatment, care and support and, in line with the 2011 Political Declaration on HIV and AIDS: Intensifying Our Efforts to Eliminate HIV and AIDS, to ensure that national responses to HIV and AIDS meet the specific needs of women and girls, including those living with and affected by HIV and AIDS across their lifespan;

33. Reaffirms the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out at the International Conference on Population and Development, by integrating this goal into strategies for attaining the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health, reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV and AIDS and eradicating poverty;

34. Urges Governments and all sectors of society to promote and to pursue gender-based approaches to the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases based on data disaggregated by sex and age in their effort to address the critical differences in the rapidly growing magnitude of non-communicable diseases, including cardiovascular diseases, cancers, chronic respiratory diseases and diabetes, which affect people of all ages, gender, race and income levels, as noted in the Political Declaration of the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Prevention and Control of Non-communicable Diseases, and notes that poor populations and those living in vulnerable situations, in particular in developing countries, bear a disproportionate burden and that non-communicable diseases can affect women and men differently, because, inter alia, women bear a disproportionate share of the burden of caregiving;

35. Expresses deep concern that maternal health remains one area constrained by some of the largest health inequities in the world, and over the uneven progress in improving child and maternal health, and in this context calls upon States to implement their commitments to preventing and reducing child and maternal mortality and morbidity, and welcomes in that regard the Secretary-General’s Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health as well as national, regional and international initiatives contributing to the reduction in the number of maternal deaths and deaths of the newborn and children under age 5;

36. Recognizes that there is a need for all donors to maintain and deliver on their existing bilateral and multilateral official development assistance commitments and targets, and that the full implementation of those commitments will substantially boost resources available to push forward the international development agenda;

37. Also recognizes the need to strengthen the capacity of Governments to incorporate a gender perspective into policies and decision-making, and encourages all Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system, and other relevant stakeholders to assist and support the efforts of developing countries in integrating a gender perspective into all aspects of policymaking, including through the provision of technical assistance and financial resources;

38. Encourages the international community, the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society to continue to provide the financial resources necessary to assist Governments in their efforts to meet the development targets and benchmarks agreed upon at the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations conferences and summits;

39. Urges multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies that support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reaches women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

40. Stresses the importance of improving and systematizing the collection, analysis and dissemination of data disaggregated by sex and age, and of developing gender-sensitive indicators that are specific and relevant with respect to supporting policymaking and national systems for monitoring and reporting on progress and impact, and in that regard encourages developed countries and relevant entities of the United Nations system to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems;

41. Calls upon all organizations of the United Nations system, within their organizational mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-
level goals and targets in this domain in accordance with national development strategies, and welcomes the work of UN-Women with United Nations country teams in assisting Member States, at their request, in integrating a gender perspective into national development policies and strategies, in accordance with their national priorities, and stresses its important role in leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system so as to ensure that the commitment to gender equality and gender mainstreaming translates into effective action throughout the world;

42. **Calls upon** the organizations of the United Nations development system, within their organizational mandates, to further improve their institutional accountability mechanisms and to include intergovernmentally agreed gender equality results and gender-sensitive indicators in their strategic frameworks;

43. **Requests** the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution, including on integrating a gender perspective into national development strategies;

44. **Decides** to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-eighth session, under the item entitled “Eradication of poverty and other development issues”, the sub-item entitled “Women in development”.

**Women in rural areas**

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/140 [YUN 2009, p. 1125], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/66/181] on improvement of the situation of women in rural areas, which reviewed the activities undertaken by Member States and UN entities to empower rural women.

The report noted that Member States and UN entities had taken measures to improve the situation of rural women and girls as far as expanding their access to local services, land rights, technologies, and employment and entrepreneurship; and had taken steps to protect indigenous and local knowledge, promote women’s contribution to climate change adaptation and mitigation, and recognize, reduce and redistribute women’s disproportionate burden of unpaid care work. These initiatives benefited only a small number of communities, however, and rural women continued to be economically and socially disadvantaged because of their limited access to economic resources and opportunities and their exclusion from planning and decision-making. While there was growing recognition that rural women, including indigenous women, were critical agents in poverty reduction, food security, environmental sustainability and other aspects related to achievement of the MDGs, insufficient attention was paid to the factors that deepened inequalities between rural women and men, and inadequate action was taken to eliminate discrimination and overcome the structural disadvantages faced by women. According to the Secretary-General, achievement of the MDGs in rural areas required a more coherent, systematic and strategic integration of the economic empowerment of women and girls in rural areas into national development strategies and plans, including in the areas of rural development, infrastructure and local governance. Noting that the Commission on the Status of Women would consider the empowerment of rural women as its priority theme in 2012, the Secretary-General concluded with a set of further recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 19 December [meeting 89], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/66/455 & Corr.1], adopted resolution 66/129 without vote [agenda item 28 (a)].

**Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas**

The General Assembly,


Welcoming the decision of the Commission on the Status of Women to consider the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges as its priority theme at its fifty-sixth session, in 2012,

Recognizing that rural women are critical agents in poverty reduction, that they are crucial to the achievement of food and nutritional security in poor and vulnerable households and to environmental sustainability and that, in other ways, they are also critical to the achievement of all the Millennium Development Goals, and concerned that rural women continue to be economically and socially disadvantaged because of their limited access to economic resources and opportunities, their limited or lack of access to land, water and other resources, their limited or lack of access to credit, extension services and agricultural inputs, their exclusion from planning and decision-making and their disproportionate burden of unpaid care work,

1. **Takes note** of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. **Urges** Member States, in collaboration with the organizations of the United Nations and civil society, as appropriate, to continue their efforts to implement the outcome of and to ensure an integrated and coordinated follow-up to the relevant United Nations conferences and summits, including their reviews, and to attach greater importance to the improvement of the situation of rural women, including indigenous women, in their national, regional and global development strategies by, inter alia:

   (a) Creating an enabling environment for improving the situation of rural women and ensuring systematic attention to their needs, priorities and contributions, including through enhanced cooperation and a gender perspective, and their full participation in the development, implementation and follow-up of macroeconomic policies, including development policies and programmes and poverty eradica-
tion strategies, including poverty reduction strategy papers, where they exist, based on internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(b) Pursuing the political and socioeconomic empowerment of rural women and supporting their full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels, including through affirmative action, where appropriate, and support for women’s organizations, labour unions or other associations and civil society groups promoting rural women’s rights;

(c) Promoting consultation with and the participation of rural women, including indigenous women and women with disabilities, through their organizations and networks, in the design, development and implementation of gender equality and rural development programmes and strategies;

(d) Ensuring that perspectives of rural women are taken into account and that they participate in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and activities related to emergencies, including natural disasters, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, and taking appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against rural women in this regard;

(e) Integrating a gender perspective into the design, implementation and evaluation of and follow-up to development policies and programmes, including budget policies, paying increased attention to the needs of rural women so as to ensure that they benefit from policies and programmes adopted in all spheres and that the disproportionate number of rural women living in poverty is reduced;

(f) Strengthening measures, including resource generation, to accelerate progress towards the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 5 on improving maternal health by addressing the specific health needs of rural women and taking concrete measures to enhance and provide access to the highest attainable standards of health for women in rural areas, as well as quality, affordable and universally accessible primary health care and support services, including in such areas of sexual and reproductive health as prenatal and postnatal health care, emergency obstetric care, family planning information and increasing knowledge, awareness and support for the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS;

(g) Promoting sustainable infrastructure, access to safe and clean drinking water and sanitation and safe cooking and heating practices, to improve the health of rural women and children;

(h) Investing in and strengthening efforts to meet the basic needs of rural women, including needs relating to their food and nutritional security and that of their families, and to promote adequate standards of living for them as well as decent conditions for work and access to local, regional and global markets through improved availability, access to and use of critical rural infrastructure, such as energy and transport, science and technology, local services, capacity-building and human resources development measures and the provision of a safe and reliable water supply and sanitation, nutritional programmes, affordable housing programmes, education and literacy programmes, and health and social support measures, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, and HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care, including psychosocial aspects, and support services;

(i) Designing and implementing national policies that promote and protect the enjoyment by rural women and girls of all human rights and fundamental freedoms and creating an environment that does not tolerate violations or abuses of their rights, including domestic violence, sexual violence and all other forms of gender-based violence;

(j) Ensuring that the rights of older women in rural areas are taken into account with regard to their equal access to basic social services, appropriate social protection/social security measures, equal access to and control of economic resources, and empowerment of older women through access to financial and infrastructure services, with special focus on support to older women, including indigenous women, who often have access to few resources and are more vulnerable;

(k) Promoting the rights of women and girls with disabilities in rural areas, including by ensuring access on an equal basis to productive employment and decent work, economic and financial resources and disability-sensitive infrastructure and services, in particular in relation to health and education, as well as by ensuring that their priorities and needs are fully incorporated into policies and programmes, inter alia, through their participation in decision-making processes;

(l) Developing specific assistance programmes and advisory services to promote economic skills of rural women in banking, modern trading and financial procedures, and providing microcredit and other financial and business services to a greater number of women in rural areas, in particular female heads of households, for their economic empowerment;

(m) Mobilizing resources, including at the national level and through official development assistance, for increasing women’s access to existing savings and credit schemes, as well as targeted programmes that provide women with capital, knowledge and tools that enhance their economic capacities;

(n) Integrating increased employment opportunities for rural women into all international and national development strategies and poverty eradication strategies, including by, inter alia, expanding non-agricultural employment opportunities, improving working conditions and increasing access to productive resources;

(o) Investing in infrastructure and in time- and labour-saving technologies, especially in rural areas, benefiting women and girls by reducing their burden of domestic activities, affording the opportunity for girls to attend school and women to engage in self-employment or participate in the labour market;

(p) Taking steps towards ensuring that women’s unpaid work and contributions to on-farm and off-farm production, including income generated in the informal sector, are recognized, and supporting remunerative non-agricultural employment of rural women, improving working conditions and increasing access to productive resources;

(q) Promoting programmes and services to enable rural women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share, equally with women, household, childcare and other care responsibilities;
Developing strategies to decrease women’s vulnerability to environmental factors while promoting rural women’s role in protecting the environment;

Considering the adoption, where appropriate, of national legislation to protect the knowledge, innovations and practices of women in indigenous and local communities relating to traditional medicines, biodiversity and indigenous technologies;

Addressing the lack of timely, reliable and sex-disaggregated data, including by intensifying efforts to include women’s unpaid work in official statistics, and developing a systematic and comparative research base on rural women that will inform policy and programme decisions;

Strengthening the capacity of national statistical offices to collect, analyse and disseminate comparable sex-disaggregated data, including on time use, and gender statistics in rural areas to serve as a basis for gender-responsive policy design and strategy development in rural areas;

Designing, revising and implementing laws to ensure that rural women are accorded full and equal rights to own and lease land and other property, including through the equal right to inheritance, and undertaking administrative reforms and all necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital, appropriate technologies and access to markets and information, and to ensure equal access to justice and legal support;

Supporting a gender-sensitive education system that considers the specific needs of rural women in order to eliminate gender stereotypes and discriminatory tendencies affecting them, including through community-based dialogue involving women and men, and girls and boys;

Promoting education, training and relevant information programmes for rural and farming women through the use of affordable and appropriate technologies and the mass media;

Developing the capacity of personnel working in the areas of national development strategies, rural development, agricultural development, poverty eradication and implementation of the Millennium Development Goals to identify and address the challenges and constraints facing rural women, including through training programmes and the development and dissemination of methodologies and tools, while acknowledging technical assistance of relevant United Nations agencies;

Strongly encourages Member States, United Nations entities and all other relevant stakeholders to take measures to identify and address any negative impact of the current global crises on women in rural areas, including on legislation, policies and programmes that strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women;

Requests the relevant organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular those dealing with issues of development, to address and support the empowerment of rural women and their specific needs in their programmes and strategies;

Stresses the need to identify the best practices for ensuring that rural women have access to and full participation in the area of information and communications technology, to address the priorities and needs of rural women and girls as active users of information and to ensure their participation in developing and implementing global, regional and national information and communications technology strategies, taking appropriate educational measures to eliminate gender stereotypes regarding women in the field of technology;

Calls upon Member States to consider the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women concerning their reports to the Committee when formulating policies and designing programmes focused on the improvement of the situation of rural women, including those to be developed and implemented in cooperation with relevant international organizations;

Invites Governments to promote the economic empowerment of rural women, to adopt gender-responsive rural development strategies, including budget framework and relevant assessment measures, and to ensure that the needs and priorities of rural women and girls are systematically addressed and that they can effectively contribute to poverty alleviation, hunger eradication and food and nutritional security;

Encourages Governments and international organizations to integrate the perspective of women in rural areas, including indigenous women, into the preparations for and outcome of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, with a view to accelerating progress on gender equality and women’s empowerment in rural areas;

Invites Governments, relevant international organizations and the specialized agencies to continue to observe the International Day of Rural Women annually, on 15 October, as proclaimed by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/136;

Requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution.

Education and training of women

Reports of Secretary-General. In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/15 [YUN 2009, p. 1155], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2011/3] on access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work.

The report underlined that ensuring women’s equal access to scientific and technological knowledge and skills was a rights issue, inasmuch as education was a basic human right, but also an economic imperative, as doing so would widen the pool of human resources available to apply technology and carry out research and development. Progress had been made in expanding access to basic education for girls—a prerequisite for acquiring literacy and numeracy skills, basic scientific knowledge and technological competencies—but evidence suggested that vocational education was marked by strong gender segregation, with women underrepresented in technical subject areas. As far as employment, women remained underrepresented in the field of research and development; few women
were leaders at scientific institutions, members of scientific boards or headed large technology companies; and women scientists and engineers faced difficulty in gaining recognition for their work and progressing in their career. The report also noted the importance of ensuring that the focus of science and its applications responded to women’s needs and situations, and that national and international research priorities benefited women and men equally.

The Secretary-General concluded that greater attention must be paid to gender-equality issues in science, technology and innovation. Increasing women’s access to scientific knowledge and technology; promoting women’s participation in science and technology education; and ensuring that women contributed to science, technology and innovation could contribute to accelerating development. He recommended that the Commission on the Status of Women call on Governments, the UN system and other stakeholders to mainstream a gender perspective in all science, technology and innovation policies and programmes; develop national strategies to increase the participation of women and girls in science and technology education and training and employment; promote a positive image of careers in science and technology for women; and ensure gender parity in decision-making positions in science academies, funding institutions, academia and the public and private sector.

Also in accordance with resolution 2009/15 [YUN 2009, p. 1155], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/CN.6/2011/5] on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work.

Despite an expansion of educational opportunities in the preceding decades, which included a larger share of the world’s population accessing formal education and a steady improvement in the global ratio of girls’ to boys’ enrolment, gender gaps remained in education access. Particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, Western Asia and Southern Asia, access to post-primary education remained restricted for women and girls. Gender disparities in terms of access and occupational segregation were often more pronounced in technical and vocational education than in general education, and women and girls remained overrepresented in the humanities and social sciences and underrepresented in science and engineering. Narrowed gaps in education access were visible in countries that undertook reforms to address the disadvantages faced by girls, which included financial and cultural barriers. Initiatives included recruiting female teachers, providing incentives for their deployment to rural areas, giving teachers gender-sensitization training and building satellite schools. Financial incentives for families with limited resources helped increase girls’ enrolment, as did awareness-raising campaigns to convince parents of the importance of girls’ education. As early marriage or pregnancy could force girls to drop out of school, Government measures included education code revisions allowing teenage mothers to return to school. Concerns about girls’ safety, particularly their vulnerability to sexual violence on the way to or within school, were addressed by some Governments through investment in water, energy or transportation infrastructure. Non-formal training—a complement to formal education that could reach out-of-school women and girls—was of particular importance to emergency-affected countries, while non-formal education remained a critical tool for eradicating illiteracy among adult women.

Women’s labour force participation increased, but not on par with educational gains, and the quality of women’s employment had not much improved. Among the 20- to 24-year-old population, women continued to lag behind men in all regions. South Asia recorded the greatest gap, with 82 per cent of men employed or seeking employment compared with 27 per cent of women. Furthermore, progress towards full employment was not always connected to decent work. Women entered the labour market, but in jobs that paid less, and did not guarantee worker’s rights, extend social protection or promote social dialogue.

The Secretary-General highlighted the need to regularly evaluate the impact of initiatives at the national level to determine the most effective way of reducing gender gaps in education. More attention to the transition by young women from school to work was needed to ensure that gains in education translated into employment opportunities. He suggested that the Commission consider calling on Governments, the UN system and other relevant actors to systematically mainstream a gender perspective in all education and employment policies and programmes, and monitor and evaluate the impact on women and men; take measures to eliminate inequalities related to age, poverty, geographical location, language, ethnicity, religion and disability affecting women and girls in accessing and participating in education at all levels; remove economic barriers to girls’ education; ensure women’s and girls’ equal access to technical and vocational training; and ensure that secondary and tertiary institutions equip women and girls with job readiness skills and provide career guidance.

**Commission action.** On 22 February, as part of the priority theme for its fifty-fifth session [E/2011/27], the Commission on the Status of Women held a high-level round table on access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and
technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work. On 23 February, the Commission held two panel discussions on key policy initiatives and capacity-building on gender mainstreaming; one focused on science and technology and the other on education and training.

In its agreed conclusions on the priority theme, the Commission underlined that addressing the barriers to equal access of women and girls to education, training and science and technology required a systematic, comprehensive, integrated, sustainable, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach, including policy, legislative and programmatic interventions and gender-responsive budgeting. It urged Governments and other stakeholders to strengthen national legislation, policies and programmes; expand access and participation in education; strengthen gender-sensitive education and training, including in science and technology; support the transition from education to full employment and decent work; increase retention and progression of women in science and technology employment; and make science and technology responsive to women's needs.

**Extension of Gender Advisory Board.** On 26 July, the Economic and Social Council extended the mandate of the Gender Advisory Board of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development [YUN 1995, p. 830] for a further three years, beginning on 1 January 2012 (decision 2011/235).

**Women and health**

*Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS*

**Report of Secretary-General.** Pursuant to Commission on the Status of Women resolution 54/2 [YUN 2010, p. 1140], the Secretary-General submitted a report [E/2011/7] on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS, which provided information on the activities undertaken by Member States and within the UN system to implement that resolution. He reported that many Member States had integrated gender perspectives into their national HIV/AIDS response, or included measures on HIV and AIDS in gender equality strategies and action plans. Legislation, strategies, policies and programmes on HIV and AIDS needed to address the gender dimension of the epidemic and prioritize women's needs, with corresponding budget allocations. Efforts to improve access for women to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support should be scaled up, including through strengthening the accessibility of quality public health care, such as integrated HIV and sexual and reproductive health services. Although many Member States had taken measures to prevent mother-to-child transmission, including by providing antiretroviral treatment for pregnant women and offering /h.sc/i.sc/v.sc testing, women continued to lack access to those services. Furthermore, there should be continued efforts among Member States to increase antiretroviral treatment coverage among women and girls, including at-risk populations, and ensure the initiation of treatment at an early stage of the disease. The Secretary-General also recommended that awareness-raising efforts by Governments and other stakeholders on HIV and AIDS and sexual and reproductive health be continued and directed at the general public, students, and health and other professionals; and also be targeted at specific groups such as men and boys and high-risk groups of women, including female sex workers. Governments and other stakeholders should take measures to create enabling environments that empowered women and girls and reduced their vulnerability to HIV. While efforts had been made to better understand the gender dimensions of the epidemic, more information related to HIV and AIDS and its impact on women and girls was needed, and efforts had to be strengthened to collect and analyse such data.

**Commission action.** On 4 March, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution [E/2011/27] on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS, which stressed the need to increase and coordinate political and financial commitments to address gender equality and equity in national HIV and AIDS responses, and urged Governments to reflect in their national policies, strategies and budgets the gender dimension of the pandemic. It urged Governments and stakeholders to address the increased vulnerability to HIV faced by women and girls living with disabilities; the challenges faced by older women in accessing HIV treatment, care and support; and the situation faced by girls caring for people living with or affected by HIV and AIDS. It called upon Governments to develop and implement policies and programmes to eliminate HIV-related stigma and discrimination; create an environment for the empowerment of women and girls to enable them to protect themselves from HIV infection; integrate HIV prevention and voluntary counselling and testing into other health services; and promote the participation of people living with HIV, young people and civil society, particularly women's organizations, in addressing all aspects of HIV and AIDS.

**Eliminating maternal mortality**

On 1 March, the Commission on the Status of Women [E/2011/27], in response to its resolution 54/5 [YUN 2010, p. 1143], convened an expert panel on the elimination of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and the empowerment of women. The panel was an opportunity to gauge progress in addressing maternal mortality; identify good practices and successful interventions; and discuss ways and means for accelerating action on measurably
reducing and eliminating maternal mortality and achieving MDG 5 (a three-quarters reduction in maternal mortality and universal access to reproductive health). Participants noted that the average annual percentage decline in the global maternal mortality ratio was 2.3 per cent, well short of the 5.5 per cent annual decline needed to meet the MDG target. Large disparities between regions remained. In sub-Saharan Africa, a woman’s risk of dying from preventable or treatable complications of pregnancy and childbirth over the course of her lifetime was 1 in 31, compared with 1 in 4,300 in developed regions.

Participants addressed measures and initiatives such as investment in education; investment in the economic empowerment of women; effective leadership and strategic partnerships, including multi-stakeholder partnerships; and the Secretary-General’s Global Strategy for Women and Children’s Health [YUN 2010, p. 1140], whose Information and Accountability Commission issued a May report, Keeping Promises, Measuring Results, presenting an accountability framework to measure and track the Global Strategy’s results and resources. The panel agreed that greater focus should be placed on developing and strengthening national-level leadership and partnerships, and that—as financial resources remained inadequate—donor countries had to meet their pledges, and official development assistance needed to be invested in social services that benefited the health needs of women and girls.

**Violence against women**

On 1 August, pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/187 [YUN 2010, p. 1145], the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences submitted to the General Assembly her first written report [A/66/215], which reviewed the mandate’s work, main findings and challenges, and presented recommendations to address violence against women through a framework based on States’ obligations to respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of women and girls (see p. 737).

**Trust Fund activities.** In response to General Assembly resolution 50/166 [YUN 1995, p. 1188], the Secretary-General transmitted to the Human Rights Council and the Commission on the Status of Women a December report [A/HRC/19/30-E/CN.6/2012/13] of UN-Women (see p. 1093) on the 2011 activities of the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women. Guided by its 2010–2015 strategic plan, “Vision 2015” [YUN 2010, p. 1145], the Fund awarded $17.1 million in new grants to 22 initiatives in 34 countries. This included close to $4 million in support for five new projects in conflict and post-conflict settings, and, for the first time, the provision of grants to projects in Iraq and South Sudan. Most new grants (81 per cent) were awarded to civil society organizations, followed by governmental organizations (13 per cent) and UN country teams (6 per cent). Grants distributed during the fifteenth (2011) grant-making cycle were expected to reach over 6 million beneficiaries between 2011 and 2014.

By the end of the year, the Fund had a portfolio of 96 active grants covering 86 countries and territories with a total value of more than $61 million. Africa had the largest portfolio (32 per cent), followed by Asia and the Pacific (25 per cent), Latin America and the Caribbean (19 per cent), Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (12 per cent), and the Arab States region (5 per cent). Cross-regional programmes accounted for 7 per cent of the entire portfolio.

**Violence against women migrant workers**

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/139 [YUN 2009, p. 1134], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/66/212] on measures taken by 23 Member States, 5 UN entities and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to address and prevent violence and discrimination against women migrant workers. States also provided information on anti-trafficking policies and programmes.

The global number of international migrants was estimated at 214 million in 2010, with women accounting for 49 per cent. Many migrant women were at risk for gender-based violence, discrimination and exploitation, and those with irregular immigration status, limited access to information or language skills, restrictions on their freedom of movement by employers, lack of access to justice, or who were starting out in destination countries in a state of debt and dependency, were particularly vulnerable. Violence against women migrant workers had an adverse affect on social and economic development, to which they actively contributed in their countries of origin and destination.

The report noted that States, sometimes with the support of UN entities and IOM, continued to strengthen legal frameworks, policies, national action plans and strategies that contributed to preventing violence and discrimination against women migrant workers. Promising actions included extending labour laws to cover domestic workers; introducing standardized contractual arrangements for domestic workers; regulating and monitoring recruitment agencies to prevent abusive and illegal practices; disseminating information to potential migrant women to promote legal migration; training officials; raising public awareness about combating violence, racism and xenophobia against women migrant workers; and providing services to women migrant workers who were victims of violence. Bilateral and multilat-
eral agreements and cooperation provided a strong basis for addressing discrimination and violence against women migrant workers. At the same time, key gaps persisted in respect of implementing global normative and policy frameworks related to protecting women migrant workers against discrimination, violence and violations of their rights. The knowledge base remained inadequate, and gaps persisted in data collection and dissemination, and in the research and analysis needed to inform policy and programme interventions. There was also little reporting on the impact of measures taken and results achieved in regard to women migrant workers.

The Secretary-General concluded that national labour laws should protect women migrant workers—including domestic workers—and that immigration laws should incorporate gender perspectives to prevent discrimination against women. States should ensure policy coherence among gender-sensitive and rights-based policies and programmes on migration, labour and anti-trafficking; and facilitate effective action in law enforcement and prosecution, prevention, capacity-building, victim protection and the support and exchange of information and good practices. Education programmes, awareness-raising and other prevention efforts directed at migrant women, recruiting and employment agencies, employers, the media, public officials and the general population should continue in origin and destination countries. The Secretary-General recommended that States continue to ratify and implement international instruments, with a special focus on early ratification of the Convention No. 189 concerning Decent Work for Domestic Workers and the accompanying Recommendation No. 201, adopted by the General Conference of the International Labour Organization on 16 June. The new Convention, a major addition to the international human rights framework relevant to women migrant workers, proposed measures to protect domestic workers against violence, harassment and abuse; promote and protect their labour rights; and encouraged States to conclude bilateral, regional or multilateral agreements to further protect overseas domestic workers.

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 89], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/66/455 & Corr.1], adopted resolution 66/128 without vote [agenda item 28 (a)].

Violence against women migrant workers

The General Assembly,

Recalling all of its previous resolutions on violence against women migrant workers and those adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Human Rights and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, and the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women;

Reaffirming the provisions concerning women migrant workers contained in the outcome documents of the World Conference on Human Rights, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women and the World Summit for Social Development and their reviews,

Welcoming the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), and expressing the hope that it will robustly support national efforts to increase women's access to economic opportunities, especially for those who are most excluded, including women migrant workers, and to end violence against women migrant workers, in the light of the UN-Women strategic plan, 2011–2013, which has among its six goals increasing women's access to economic opportunities, and preventing violence against women and girls and expanding access to survivor services, and the policy and programmatic work of UN-Women on empowering women migrant workers,

Welcoming also the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women during its fifty-fifth session, and taking note, in particular, of the commitment, as appropriate, to implement gender-sensitive policies and programmes for women migrant workers, to ensure that all women, including care workers, are legally protected against violence and exploitation, to provide safe and legal channels that recognize women migrant workers' skills and education and fair labour conditions, and to facilitate their productive employment and decent work and integration into the labour force,

Recalling the discussions during the High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, held on 14 and 15 September 2006, which recognized, inter alia, the need for special protection for migrant women, and noting that another high-level dialogue on the same theme will be held in 2013,

Welcoming the adoption of Convention No. 189 and Recommendation No. 201 on decent work for domestic workers by the International Labour Conference on 16 June 2011, at its one-hundredth session, noting the importance of the early entry into force of Convention No. 189 and encouraging States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to take note of and consider general recommendation No. 26 on women migrant workers adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in November 2008, and encouraging States parties to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families to take note of and consider general comment No. 1 on migrant domestic workers adopted by the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families in December 2010, acknowledging that they are complementary and mutually reinforcing,

Recognizing the increasing participation of women in international migration, driven in large part by socioeconomic factors, and that this feminization of migration requires greater gender sensitivity in all policies and efforts related to the subject of international migration,
Chapter X: Women

Stressing the shared responsibility of all stakeholders, in particular countries of origin, transit and destination, relevant regional and international organizations, the private sector and civil society, in promoting an environment that prevents and addresses violence against women migrant workers, including in the context of discrimination, through targeted measures, and in this regard recognizing the importance of joint and collaborative approaches and strategies at the national, bilateral, regional and international levels.

Recognizing that women migrant workers are important contributors to social and economic development, through the economic and social impacts, as a result of their work, on countries of origin and destination, and underlining the value and dignity of their labour, including the labour of domestic workers.

Recognizing also the particular vulnerability of women and their children at all stages of the migration process, extending from the moment of deciding to migrate, and including transit, engagement in formal and informal employment, and integration into the host society, as well as during their return to and reintegration in their countries of origin.

Expressing deep concern at the continuing reports of grave abuses and violence committed against migrant women and girls, including gender-based violence, in particular sexual violence, domestic and family violence, racist and xenophobic acts, abusive labour practices, exploitative conditions of work, and contemporary forms of slavery, including all forms of forced labour, and trafficking in persons,

Recognizing that the intersection of, inter alia, gender, age, class and ethnic discrimination and stereotypes can compound the discrimination faced by women migrant workers, and that gender-based violence is a form of discrimination.

Reaffirming the commitment to protect and promote the human rights of all women, including, without discrimination, indigenous women who migrate for work, and in this regard noting the attention paid in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to the elimination of all forms of violence and discrimination against indigenous women, as appropriate.

Noting that the priority theme of the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be “The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges”, and in this regard recognizing the role and contribution of rural women migrant workers towards poverty eradication and development in their communities.

Concerned that many migrant women who are employed in the informal economy and in less skilled work are especially vulnerable to abuse and exploitation, underlining in this regard the obligation of States to protect the human rights of migrants so as to prevent and address abuse and exploitation, and observing with concern that many women migrant workers take on jobs for which they may be overqualified and in which, at the same time, they may be more vulnerable because of poor pay and inadequate social protection,

Emphasizing the need for objective, comprehensive and broad-based information, including sex- and age-disaggregated data and statistics, and gender-sensitive indicators for research and analysis, and a wide exchange of experience and lessons learned by individual Member States and civil society in the formulation of targeted policies and concrete strategies to specifically address violence against women migrant workers, including in the context of discrimination,

Realizing that the movement of a significant number of women migrant workers may be facilitated and made possible by means of fraudulent or irregular documentation and sham marriages with the object of migration, that this may be facilitated through, inter alia, the Internet and that those women migrant workers are more vulnerable to abuse and exploitation,

Recognizing the importance of exploring the link between migration and trafficking in persons in order to further efforts towards protecting women migrant workers from violence, discrimination, exploitation and abuse,

Encouraged by some measures adopted by some countries of destination to alleviate the plight of women migrant workers residing in their areas of jurisdiction and to promote access to justice, such as the establishment of gender-sensitive protection mechanisms for migrant workers, facilitating their access to mechanisms for reporting complaints or providing assistance during legal proceedings,

Underlining the important role of relevant United Nations treaty bodies in monitoring the implementation of human rights conventions, and the relevant special procedures, within their respective mandates, in addressing the problem of violence against women migrant workers in protecting and promoting their human rights and welfare,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General;
2. Encourages Member States to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to relevant International Labour Organization conventions and to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, as well as all other human rights treaties that contribute to the protection of the rights of women migrant workers, and also encourages Member States to implement the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons;
3. Takes note of the report of the Special Rapporteur of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences, entitled “Political economy of women’s human rights”, submitted to the Council at its eleventh session, in particular her elaboration in that report of the current issues of the exploitation and violence that women migrants face in the context of the current global economic trends and crises;
4. Encourages all United Nations special rapporteurs on human rights whose mandates touch on the issues of violence against women migrant workers to improve the collection of information on and analysis of those areas within their mandates relating to the current challenges
facing women migrant workers, and also encourages Governments to cooperate with the special rapporteurs in this regard;

5. Calls upon all Governments to incorporate a human rights, gender-sensitive and people-centred perspective in legislation, policies and programmes on international migration and on labour and employment, consistent with their human rights obligations and commitments under human rights instruments, for the prevention of and protection of migrant women against violence and discrimination, exploitation and abuse, to take effective measures to ensure that such migration and labour policies do not reinforce discrimination, and, where necessary, to conduct impact assessment studies of such legislation, policies and programmes in order to identify the impact of measures taken and the results achieved in regard to women migrant workers;

6. Calls upon Governments to adopt or strengthen measures to protect the human rights of women migrant workers, regardless of their immigration status, including in policies that regulate the recruitment and deployment of women migrant workers, and to consider expanding dialogue among States on devising innovative methods to promote legal channels of migration, inter alia, in order to deter illegal migration, to consider incorporating a gender perspective into immigration laws in order to prevent discrimination and violence against women, including in independent, circular and temporary migration, and to consider permitting, in accordance with national legislation, women migrant workers who are victims of violence to apply for residency permits independently of abusive employers or spouses;

7. Urges Governments to enhance bilateral, regional, interregional and international cooperation to address violence against women migrant workers, fully respecting international law, including international human rights law, as well as to strengthen efforts to reduce the vulnerability of women migrant workers by facilitating effective access to justice and effective action in the areas of law enforcement, prosecution, prevention, capacity-building, and victim protection and support, by exchanging information and good practices in combating violence and discrimination against women migrant workers and by fostering sustainable development alternatives to migration in countries of origin;

8. Also urges Governments to take into account the best interests of the child by adopting or strengthening measures to promote and protect the human rights of migrant girls, including unaccompanied girls, regardless of their immigration status, so as to prevent labour and economic exploitation, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and sexual abuse in the workplace, including in domestic work;

9. Further urges Governments to strongly encourage all stakeholders, especially the private sector, including employment agencies involved in recruiting women migrant workers, to strengthen the focus on and funding support for the prevention of violence against women migrant workers, in particular by promoting the access of women to meaningful and gender-sensitive information and education on, inter alia, the costs and benefits of migration, rights and benefits to which they are entitled in the countries of origin and employment, overall conditions in countries of employment and procedures for legal migration, as well as to ensure that

laws and policies governing recruiters, employers and intermediaries promote adherence to and respect for the human rights of migrant workers, particularly women;

10. Encourages all States to remove obstacles that may prevent the transparent, safe, unrestricted and expeditious transfer of remittances of migrants to their countries of origin or to any other countries, including, where appropriate, by reducing transaction costs and implementing woman-friendly remittance transfer, savings and investment schemes, including diaspora investment schemes, in conformity with applicable national legislation, and to consider, as appropriate, measures to solve other problems that may impede women migrant workers’ access to and management of their economic resources;

11. Calls upon Governments to recognize the right of women migrant workers, regardless of their immigration status, to have access to emergency health care, and in this regard to ensure that women migrant workers are not discriminated against on the grounds of pregnancy and childbirth and, in accordance with national legislation, to address the vulnerabilities to HIV experienced by migrant populations and support their access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support;

12. Urges States that have not yet done so to adopt and implement legislation and policies that protect all women migrant domestic workers and to include therein, and improve where necessary, relevant monitoring and inspection measures in line with applicable International Labour Organization conventions and other instruments to ensure compliance with international obligations, and to grant women migrant workers in domestic service access to gender-sensitive, transparent mechanisms for bringing complaints against employers, while stressing that such instruments should not punish women migrant workers, and calls upon States to promptly investigate and punish all violations of their rights;

13. Calls upon Governments, in cooperation with international organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and other stakeholders, to provide women migrant workers who are victims of violence, irrespective of their immigration status, in line with domestic legislation, with the full range of emergency assistance and protection and, to the extent possible, gender-sensitive services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate, in accordance with relevant international human rights instruments and applicable conventions;

14. Also calls upon Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin and destination, to put in place penal and criminal sanctions in order to punish perpetrators of violence against women migrant workers and intermediaries, and gender-sensitive redress and justice mechanisms that victims can access effectively and that allow their views and concerns to be presented and considered at appropriate stages of proceedings, including other measures that will allow victims to be present during the judicial process, when possible, and to protect women migrant workers who are victims of violence from revictimization, including by authorities;

15. Urges all States to adopt effective measures to put an end to the arbitrary arrest and detention of women migrant workers and to take action to prevent and punish any form of illegal deprivation of the liberty of women migrant workers by individuals or groups;
16. **Encourages** Governments to formulate and implement training programmes for their law enforcers, immigration officers and border officials, diplomatic and consular officials, prosecutors and service providers, with a view to sensitizing those public-sector workers to the issue of violence against women migrant workers and imparting to them the necessary skills and attitude to ensure the delivery of proper, professional and gender-sensitive interventions.

17. **Also encourages** Governments to promote coherence between migration, labour and anti-trafficking policies and programmes concerning women migrant workers, based on a human rights, gender-sensitive and people-centred perspective, to ensure that the human rights of women migrant workers are protected throughout the migration process, and to enhance efforts to prevent violence against women migrant workers, prosecute perpetrators and protect and support victims and their families.

18. **Calls upon** States, in accordance with the provisions of article 36 of the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, to ensure that, if a woman migrant worker is arrested or committed to prison or custody pending trial, or is detained in any other manner, the competent authorities respect her freedom to communicate with and have access to the consular officials of the country of her nationality, and in this regard to inform without delay, if that woman migrant worker so requests, the consular post of her State of nationality;

19. **Invites** the United Nations system and other concerned intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations to cooperate with Governments, within existing resources, towards a better understanding of the issues concerning women and international migration, and to improve the collection, dissemination and analysis of sex- and age-disaggregated data and information in order to assist in the formulation of migration and labour policies that are, inter alia, gender-sensitive and that protect human rights, as well as to aid in policy assessment and to continue to support national efforts to address violence against women migrant workers in a coordinated way that ensures effective implementation, enhances their impact and strengthens positive outcomes for women migrant workers;

20. **Encourages** Governments to formulate national policies concerning women migrant workers that are based on up-to-date, relevant sex-disaggregated data and analysis in close consultation with women migrant workers and relevant stakeholders throughout the policy process, and also encourages Governments to ensure that such process is adequately resourced and that the resulting policies have measurable targets and indicators, timetables and monitoring and accountability measures, in particular for employment agencies, employers and public officials, and provide for impact assessments and ensure multi-sector coordination within and between countries of origin, transit and destination through appropriate mechanisms;

21. **Encourages** concerned Governments, in particular those of the countries of origin, transit and destination, to avail themselves of the expertise of the United Nations, including the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, and UN-Women, to develop and enhance appropriate sex-disaggregated national data-collection, analysis and dissemination methodologies that will generate comparable data, and tracking and reporting systems on violence against women migrant workers and, wherever possible, violations of their rights at all stages of the migration process, and:

(a) To further study the costs of violence against women, including migrant workers, to the women themselves, their families and their communities;

(b) To analyse the opportunities available to women migrant workers and their impact on development;

(c) To support the improvement of macrodata on remittances, for appropriate policy formulation and implementation;

22. **Requests** the Secretary-General to provide a comprehensive, analytical and thematic report to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session on the problem of violence against women migrant workers and on the implementation of the present resolution, specifically with regard to access to justice for women migrant workers, highlighting the impact of legislation, policies and programmes on women migrant workers, taking into account updated information from the organizations of the United Nations system, in particular the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, UN-Women and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, as well as the reports of special rapporteurs that refer to the situation of women migrant workers and other relevant sources, such as the International Organization for Migration, including non-governmental organizations.

**Violence against indigenous women and girls**

At its tenth session (16–27 May, New York) [E/2011/43], the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (see p. 751) recommended to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of a draft decision on violence against indigenous women and girls.

On 28 July, by **decision 2011/266**, the Council decided to authorize a three-day international expert group meeting on the theme “Combating violence against indigenous women and girls: article 22 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples”, and requested that the results of the meeting be reported to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues at its eleventh (2012) session; the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh (2012) session; and the Commission on the Status of Women at its fifty-sixth (2012) session.

**Women and armed conflict**

**Women, peace and security**

Pursuant to presidential statement S/PRST/2010/22 [YUN 2010, p. 1161], made in connection with the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325(2000) [YUN 2000, p. 1113], the Secretary-General submitted a September report [S/2011/598] on women and peace and security. The report was based on contributions from 38 Member States, 4 regional organizations and 27 entities of the UN system and focused on four broad action areas: prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery.
The Secretary-General expressed concern about the uneven implementation of resolution 1325(2000) and called for proactive steps to accelerate implementation of key elements of the agenda, such as strengthening women’s engagement in conflict resolution and deterring widespread and systematic abuses of women’s rights during conflict. He welcomed the creation of the UN-Women and expected it to improve coherence and coordination, as well as galvanize innovation and ensure accountability in those areas of work. The report stated that gender equality and women’s empowerment issues must be addressed in all UN support for mediation efforts, peace agreement implementation and post-conflict elections. The Secretary-General also committed to ensuring that all UN commissions of inquiry and related investigative bodies and UN-supported truth commissions had gender expertise and access to sexual violence investigative capacity, drawing on UN-Women support. The Secretary-General called on UN entities and Member States to offer, in conflict and post-conflict situations, technical and financial support to women’s organizations, which were key to strengthening constituencies for peace and building the leverage of women engaged in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. Periodic review of the indicators on women and peace and security [YUN 2010, p. 1160] and progress in meeting the targets of the strategic results framework would provide information on the achievement of gender-related results in conflict and post-conflict situations. To address the low numbers of women in conflict resolution and the implementation of peace agreements, the Secretary-General recommended that Member States supporting peace processes offer negotiating parties incentives to ensure women’s inclusion on delegations. He urged Member States to increase the number of women in their foreign service and national security establishments, and in their security forces so as to increase the pool available for deployment as peacekeepers. He further recommended that Member States—particularly those in conflict and post-conflict situations—develop and implement national action plans on women and peace and security; and identify means for bringing justice, redress and assistance to women and girls for war crimes they have suffered, ending impunity for those atrocities.

Communication. In a letter [S/2011/654] dated 20 October, Nigeria informed the Secretary-General that the Security Council was scheduled to hold an open debate on women and peace and security on 25 October (see below).

SECURITY COUNCIL ACTION

On 28 October [meeting 6642], following consultations among Security Council members, the President made statement S/PRST/2011/20 on behalf of the Council:


The Council urges all parties to fully comply with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, of 1979 and the Optional Protocol thereto, of 1999 and strongly encourages States that have not ratified or acceded to the Convention and Optional Protocol to consider doing so.

The Council recalls the 2005 World Summit Outcome, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, and the declaration of the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Council welcomes the report of the Secretary-General of 29 September 2011 on women and peace and security, and takes note of the analysis and recommendations it contains on progress in implementing commitments on women and peace and security, including on the representation and participation of women in decision-making forums, institutions and mechanisms related to the prevention and resolution of armed conflict and to peacebuilding.

The Council welcomes the commitments and efforts of Member States, regional organizations and the Secretary-General to implement its resolutions on women and peace and security. The Council, however, remains concerned about the persistence of gaps and challenges that seriously hinder the implementation of resolution 1325(2000), including the continued low number of women in formal institutions of conflict prevention and resolution, particularly in preventive diplomacy and mediation efforts.

The Council stresses the importance of promoting and protecting the human rights of women and girls in the context of the implementation of resolution 1325(2000), fully implementing international humanitarian law and human rights law in armed conflict and post-conflict situations, increasing women’s participation in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding and incorporating a gender perspective into United Nations field missions.

The Council welcomes the contributions and role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in implementing resolutions on women and peace and security. The Council expresses its intention to welcome briefings by the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women. The Council notes with satisfaction the increased coordination and coherence in policy and programming for women and girls within the United Nations system since the creation of UN-Women. In this regard, the Council underlines the importance of the mandates of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, which contribute to the work on the women and peace and security agenda.
Chapter X: Women

The Council reiterates its strong condemnation of all violations of applicable international law committed against women and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and urges the complete cessation by all parties of such acts with immediate effect. The Council also urges Member States to bring to justice those responsible for crimes of this nature.

The Council notes that the fight against impunity for the most serious crimes of international concern committed against women and girls has been strengthened through the work of the International Criminal Court, ad hoc and mixed tribunals, as well as specialized chambers in national tribunals. The Council reiterates its intention to enhance its efforts to fight impunity and uphold accountability for serious crimes against women and girls with appropriate means and draws attention to the full range of justice and reconciliation mechanisms to be considered, including national, international and mixed criminal courts and tribunals, truth and reconciliation commissions as well as national reparation programmes for victims, institutional reforms and traditional dispute resolution mechanisms.

The Council welcomes the efforts of Member States to implement resolution 1325(2000) at the national level, including the increase in the number of States that have formulated or revised national action plans and strategies. The Council reiterates its call to Member States to continue to implement resolution 1325(2000), including through the development of national action plans or other national-level strategies.

The Council recalls the statement by its President of 22 September 2011 on preventive diplomacy, in which it, inter alia, recognized the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and reiterated its call to increase the equal participation, representation and full involvement of women in preventive diplomacy efforts. The Council recalls General Assembly resolution 65/283 on strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution and the encouragement it contains to promote equal, full and effective participation of women in all forums and at all levels of the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution, particularly at the decision-making level.

The Council encourages efforts by Member States, the United Nations Secretariat, United Nations field missions, United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, international financial institutions and regional and subregional organizations to, as appropriate, provide support and strengthen the capacities of relevant government institutions and women’s organizations engaged in issues related to armed conflict or post-conflict situations. The Council underlines the importance of the participation of women in conflict prevention and resolution efforts, including in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, as well as international dialogues, contact groups, engagement conferences and donor conferences in support of conflict resolution. In this regard, the Council reiterates the need to support, as appropriate, local women’s peace initiatives, processes for conflict resolution and initiatives that involve women in implementation mechanisms of the peace agreements, including through the local-level presence of United Nations field missions.

The Council acknowledges the significant contribution that women can have in conflict prevention and mediation efforts and encourages Member States and international and regional organizations to take measures to increase the number of women involved in mediation efforts and the number of women in representative roles in regional and international organizations. The Council therefore stresses the importance of creating enabling conditions for women’s participation during all stages of peace processes and for countering negative societal attitudes regarding full and equal participation of women in conflict resolution and mediation.

The Council continues to encourage Member States to deploy greater numbers of female military and police personnel to United Nations peacekeeping operations and reiterates that all military and police personnel should be provided with adequate training to carry out their responsibilities.

The Council encourages negotiating parties and mediation teams to adopt a gender perspective in negotiating and implementing peace agreements and to facilitate increased representation of women in peacebuilding forums. In this regard, the Council requests the Secretary-General and relevant United Nations entities to assist, as appropriate, in enabling regular consultations between women’s groups and relevant participants in conflict mediation and peacebuilding processes. The Council also requests the Secretary-General to ensure that regular briefings are provided to his mediators and their teams on gender issues relevant to peace agreement provisions and specific obstacles to full and equal political participation of women.

The Council recognizes the need for more systematic attention to and implementation of women and peace and security commitments in its own work and expresses its willingness to ensure that measures to enhance women’s engagement in conflict prevention and resolution and peacebuilding are advanced in its work, including on preventive diplomacy. The Council welcomes the intention of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa to incorporate a gender perspective in its work.

The Council reiterates its intention to convene a high-level review in 2015 to assess progress at the global, regional and national levels in implementing resolution 1325(2000), renew commitments and address obstacles and constraints that have emerged in the implementation of resolution 1325(2000).

The Council requests the Secretary-General in his next annual report on resolution 1325(2000) to include, inter alia, a comprehensive overview of specific actions, achievements and challenges to the implementation of the present statement, in particular those concerning the participation of women in mediation and preventive diplomacy.

Women in power and decision-making

Women and political participation

In 2011, the General Assembly considered the issue of women and political participation. By resolution 66/130 (see p. 1078), the Assembly called upon
all States to enhance the political participation of women; accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women; and, in all situations, promote and protect the human rights of women, including in situations of political transition. It requested the Secretary-General to report on the implementation of the resolution at its sixty-eighth (2013) session.

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 19 December [meeting 89], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/66/455 & Corr.1], adopted resolution 66/130 without vote [agenda item 28 (a)].

**Women and political participation**

The General Assembly,

*Reaffirming* the obligations of all States to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms as stated in the Charter of the United Nations, and guided by the purposes and principles of human rights instruments,

*Reaffirming also* the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that everyone has the right to take part in the Government of his or her country directly, or through freely chosen representatives, and the right of equal access to public service,

*Guided by* the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which affirms human rights and fundamental freedoms and equality for women around the world, and which states, inter alia, that States parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of the country,


*Recognizing* the central role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) in leading and coordinating action to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women within the United Nations system, as well as in supporting all countries’ efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women,

*Recognizing also* the important contributions that women have made towards the achievement of representative, transparent and accountable Governments in many countries,

*Stressing* the critical importance of women’s political participation in all contexts, including in times of peace and of conflict and at all stages of political transition, concerned that many obstacles still prevent women from participating in public life on equal terms with men, and noting in that regard that situations of political transition may provide a unique opportunity to address such obstacles,

*Recognizing* the essential contributions that women around the world continue to make to the achievement and maintenance of international peace and security and to the full realization of all human rights, to the promotion of sustainable development and economic growth, and to the eradication of poverty, hunger and disease,

*Reaffirming* that the active participation of women, on equal terms with men, at all levels of decision-making is essential to the achievement of equality, sustainable development, peace and democracy,

*Highly concerned* that women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere, often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women,

*Recognizing* the importance of empowering all women through education and training in government, public policy, economics, civics, information technology and science to ensure that they develop the knowledge and skills needed to make full contributions to society and the political process,

*Reaffirming* the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding and the need for Member States and the United Nations system to increase the role of women in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and the rebuilding of post-conflict societies, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325(2000) of 31 October 2000 and its subsequent follow-up resolutions, as well as other relevant United Nations resolutions,

*Noting with appreciation* the establishment by the Human Rights Council of the Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice,

1. *Reaffirms* its resolution 58/142 of 22 December 2003 on women and political participation, and calls upon all States to implement it fully;

2. *Calls upon* all States to eliminate laws, regulations and practices that, in a discriminatory manner, prevent or restrict women’s participation in the political process;

3. *Also calls upon* all States to enhance the political participation of women, to accelerate the achievement of equality between men and women and, in all situations, including in situations of political transition, to promote and protect the human rights of women with respect to:

   (a) Engaging in political activities;
   (b) Taking part in the conduct of public affairs;
   (c) Associating freely;
   (d) Assembling peacefully;
   (e) Expressing their opinions and seeking, receiving and imparting information and ideas freely;
   (f) Voting in elections and public referendums and being eligible for election to publicly elected bodies on equal terms with men;
   (g) Participating in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof, holding public office and performing public functions at all levels of government;

4. *Calls upon* States in situations of political transition to take effective steps to ensure the participation of women on equal terms with men in all phases of political reform, from decisions on whether to call for reforms in existing institutions to decisions regarding transitional governments, to the formulation of government policy, to the means of electing new democratic governments;

5. *Urges* all States to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, urges States that
have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention to do so, and urges States parties to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to the Optional Protocol thereto;

6. **Also urges** all States to take, inter alia, the following actions to ensure women’s equal participation, and encourages the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their existing mandates, to enhance their assistance to States in their national efforts:

(a) To review the differential impact of their electoral systems on the political participation of women and their representation in elected bodies and to adjust or reform those systems where appropriate;

(b) To take all appropriate measures to eliminate prejudices that are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women and that constitute a barrier to women’s access to and participation in the political sphere, and to adopt inclusive approaches to their political participation;

(c) To strongly encourage political parties to remove all barriers that directly or indirectly discriminate against the participation of women, to develop their capacity to analyse issues from a gender perspective, and to adopt policies, as appropriate, to promote the ability of women to participate fully at all levels of decision-making within those political parties;

(d) To promote awareness and recognition of the importance of women’s participation in the political process at the community, local, national and international levels;

(e) To develop mechanisms and training to encourage women to participate in the electoral process, political activities and other leadership activities, and empower women to assume public responsibilities by developing and providing appropriate tools and skills, in consultation with women;

(f) To implement appropriate measures within governmental bodies and public sector institutions to eliminate direct or indirect barriers to and enhance women’s participation in all levels of political decision-making;

(g) To accelerate the implementation of strategies, as appropriate, that promote gender balance in political decision-making, and take all appropriate measures to encourage political parties to ensure that women have a fair and equal opportunity to compete for all elective public positions;

(h) To improve and broaden women’s access to information and communications technologies, including e-government tools, in order to enable political participation and to promote engagement in broader democratic processes, while also improving the responsiveness of these technologies to women’s needs, including those of marginalized women;

(i) To investigate allegations of violence, assault or harassment of women elected officials and candidates for political office, create an environment of zero tolerance for such offences and, to ensure accountability, take all appropriate steps to prosecute those responsible;

(j) To encourage greater involvement of women who may be marginalized, including indigenous women, women with disabilities, women from rural areas and women of any ethnic, cultural or religious minority, in decision-making at all levels, and address and counter the barriers faced by marginalized women in accessing and participating in politics and decision-making at all levels;

(k) To encourage the promotion of programmes geared towards the sensitization and orientation of youth and children, in particular young women and girls, on the importance of the political process and women’s participation in politics;

(l) To ensure that measures to reconcile family and professional life apply equally to women and men, bearing in mind that equitable sharing of family responsibilities between women and men and reduction of the double burden of paid and unpaid work can help to create an enabling environment for women’s political participation;

(m) To promote the granting of appropriate maternity and paternity leave in order to facilitate women’s political participation;

(n) To take proactive measures to address factors preventing or hindering women from participating in politics, such as violence, poverty, lack of access to quality education and health care, and gender stereotypes;

(o) To monitor and evaluate progress in the representation of women in decision-making positions;

7. **Encourages** States to ensure an expanded role for women in the prevention, management and resolution of conflict and in mediation and peacebuilding efforts, as called for in Security Council resolution 1325(2000) and subsequent relevant resolutions;

8. **Also encourages** States to appoint women to posts within all levels of their Governments, including, where applicable, bodies responsible for designing constitutional, electoral, political or institutional reforms;

9. **Further encourages** States to commit themselves to establishing the goal of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administrative entities, and in the judiciary, including, inter alia and as appropriate, setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men, if necessary through positive action, in all governmental and public administration positions;

10. **Encourages** States and relevant civil society organizations to support programmes that facilitate women’s participation in political and other leadership activities, including peer support and capacity development for new office holders, and to promote public/private civil society partnerships for women’s empowerment;

11. **Invites** States to exchange experience and best practices on women’s political participation in all phases of the political process, including in times of political change and reform;

12. **Notes with interest** the focus, inter alia, on the political participation of women, including the issues raised in the present resolution, in the work of the Human Rights Council Working Group on Discrimination against Women in Law and in Practice;

13. **Encourages** States to disseminate the present resolution among all relevant institutions, in particular national, regional and local authorities, as well as among political parties;
14. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session a report on the implementation of the present resolution, and encourages Governments to provide precise data on the political participation of women at all levels, including, where appropriate, information on the political participation of women in times of political transition.

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women

Inter-Agency Network. The United Nations Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (IANWGE), at its tenth annual session (New York, 16–18 February) [IANWGE/2011/Report], discussed UN system coordination to accelerate gender equality and the empowerment of women, including the role of UN-Women; matters related to the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women; matters related to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women; progress on and remaining obstacles for women’s economic empowerment; current interagency work on women and peace and security in view of Security Council presidential statement S/PRST/2010/22 [YUN 2010, p. 1161]; addressing violence against women in a coordinated manner through the Secretary-General’s unite to End Violence against Women campaign; status and prospects in the UN system with regard to gender equality and empowerment of women in the workplace; new and emerging issues such as developments in the Middle East and their impact on women and girls; ensuring effective coordination of gender mainstreaming and capacity development to that end; capacity development for effective gender mainstreaming; and updates on and review of the work of IANWGE Task Forces.

Participants decided to establish an Inter-Agency Working Group on Policy Dialogue on Women’s Economic Empowerment; to replace the Task Force on Violence against Women by a Standing Committee; to abolish the Task Force on Gender, Water and Sanitation; to establish time-bound Task Forces on Rural Women and Women’s Access to Justice; and to maintain the Task Forces on Women and Peace and Security, Gender and Trade, and Gender and the MDGs.

Report of Secretary-General. In response to Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/29 [YUN 2010, p. 1169], the Secretary-General, in a May report [E/2011/114], assessed progress in implementing the gender mainstreaming strategy within the UN system, focusing on the areas of design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The report emphasized progress at the country level, particularly through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework process, and reflected on advances made in terms of UN staff capacity development and on the coordination strategy of UN-Women.

The report found that most UN entities included accountability for gender mainstreaming in overall institutional accountability frameworks; monitoring, evaluation and oversight mechanisms; and staff performance appraisals. They also continued to pay attention to gender dimensions in their design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes. With regard to capacity development and training, an increasing number of entities made specific commitments to ensure that all policies, strategies and action plans were gender-sensitive and gender-responsive. Nevertheless, gaps and challenges continued to impede full implementation of gender mainstreaming in UN system entities. These included a lack of consistent integration of gender perspectives in strategic plans; lack of staff with gender expertise and their strategic placement; limited application and/or access to data disaggregated by sex and gender-sensitive indicators; limited funding; and lack of accountability mechanisms. The Secretary-General underlined the need to pay more focused attention to the practical implementation of gender mainstreaming, as several important linkages continued to manifest weakness between the intergovernmental normative framework governing gender equality and the development and implementation of corresponding programmes at the country level; between the stated organizational priorities and institutional workplans; and between the decisions to strengthen accountability and the slow development of common tools for assessing progress and gaps both at the programme and the managerial and staff performance levels. He suggested that the Economic and Social Council call upon UN entities to increase human and financial resources to support gender-sensitive policies and programmes and improved tracking and monitoring; use the establishment of UN-Women to create new opportunities for engagement and action on gender mainstreaming, including through enhanced joint programming; draw on the expertise of UN-Women to assist in the preparation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other development frameworks to ensure gender dimensions are addressed; provide ongoing capacity development on gender mainstreaming for resident coordinators and UN country teams to ensure they are better able to assist national partners in integrating a gender perspective in their development frameworks; and focus more on deliverables in programming activities to ensure that attention was paid to the needs and priorities of women and girls at the country level.

Economic and Social Council action

On 14 July [meeting 29], the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2011/6 [draft: E/2011/ L.30] without vote [agenda item 7 (a)].
Mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Council, Reaffirming its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system, and recalling its resolutions 2001/41 of 26 July 2001, 2002/23 of 24 July 2002, 2003/49 of 24 July 2003, 2004/4 of 7 July 2004, 2005/31 of 26 July 2005, 2006/36 of 27 July 2006, 2007/33 of 27 July 2007, 2008/34 of 25 July 2008, 2009/12 of 28 July 2009 and 2010/29 of 23 July 2010, Reaffirming also the commitment made at the 2005 World Summit to actively promote the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and social spheres and to further undertake to strengthen the capabilities of the United Nations system in the area of gender, Reaffirming further that gender mainstreaming is a globally accepted strategy for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and constitutes a critical strategy in the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, Welcoming the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) which consolidates the mandates and functions of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Equality and Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, with the additional role of leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, as established under General Assembly resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010, Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General and the recommendations contained therein, and calls for further and continued efforts to mainstream a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations in accordance with all relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council, Stresses that the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality constitutes a key forum for achieving more effective coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system, the exchange and cross-fertilization of ideas and practical experience on gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, and looks forward to the continued implementation of the policy and strategy for gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, Requests the United Nations system, including its agencies, funds and programmes, within their respective mandates, to continue mainstreaming the issue of gender in accordance with previous Council resolutions, in particular resolution 2008/34, and General Assembly resolution 64/289, including mainstreaming a gender perspective into all operational mechanisms, inter alia the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and other development frameworks, ensuring that managers provide leadership and support, within the United Nations system, to advance gender mainstreaming, strengthening monitoring, reporting and evaluation so as to allow system-wide assessment of progress in gender mainstreaming, and using existing training resources, including institutions and infrastructure, to assist in the development and application of unified training modules and tools on gender mainstreaming and to promote the collection, analysis and use of accurate, reliable, comparable and relevant data, disaggregated by sex and age, during programme development and the evaluation of gender mainstreaming in order to assess progress towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women; 4. Requests the United Nations system to continue to support Member States, with their agreement and consent, in the implementation of national policies for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, inter alia, by providing support and capacity development to national machineries for the advancement of women; 5. Recognizes that large gaps remain between policy and practice and that building United Nations staff capacities alone is not sufficient for the entire United Nations system to meet its commitments and obligations with respect to gender mainstreaming; 6. Calls upon the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), in accordance with General Assembly resolution 64/289:
   (a) To ensure that its work leads to more effective coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system; (b) To fully assume its role in leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women; (c) To continue to support gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system as an integral part of its work; (d) To establish concrete results-based reporting mechanisms, as well as to ensure coherence, consistency and coordination between the normative and operational aspects of its work; (e) In the context of its work at the field level, to operate as part of the resident coordinator system, within the United Nations country team, leading and coordinating the work of the country team on gender equality and the empowerment of women, under the overall leadership of the resident coordinator; (f) Based on the principle of universality, to provide, through its normative support functions and operational activities, guidance and technical support to all Member States, across all levels of development and in all regions, at their request, on gender equality, the empowerment and rights of women and gender mainstreaming; 7. Requests the United Nations system, including its agencies, funds and programmes within their respective organizational mandates, to continue working collaboratively to enhance gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, including by:
   (a) Ensuring effective coordination on gender mainstreaming and gender equality and the empowerment of women, within existing coordination mechanisms, including the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, the High-Level Committee on Programmes, the High-Level Committee on Management, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, and the Inter-Agency Network on Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women;
Part Three: Economic and social questions

Nations Development Group and the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, led by UN-Women, with clear roles and responsibilities designated for all parts of the system;

(b) Ensuring strong leadership at the Headquarters level, and providing clear guidance and improved collaboration within the United Nations country teams;

(c) Enhancing resource mobilization capacity and increasing the predictability of both human and financial resources for gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(d) Enhancing and strengthening the various accountability frameworks of the United Nations system to ensure more coherent, accurate and effective management, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of each United Nations entity’s gender equality results, including tracking of gender-related resource allocation and expenditure, and results-based approaches within the United Nations system;

(e) Improving the application of a gender perspective in programming work and enhancing a broader approach to capacity development for all United Nations staff, including the Secretariat staff, including by working on guidelines which could provide specialized instructions on gender mainstreaming and serve as performance indicators against which staff could be assessed;

(f) Ensuring greater focus on deliverables and the development of clear gender equality outcomes and outputs in programming activities, including in the United Nations Development Assistance framework, such as the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, so as to ensure that attention is paid to the needs and priorities of women and girls at the country level;

(g) Ensuring support from United Nations country teams for national efforts to accelerate progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals and other commitments related to gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(h) Ensuring that all personnel, especially in the field, receive training and appropriate follow-up, including tools, guidance and support, for accelerated gender mainstreaming, including by providing ongoing capacity development for resident coordinators and the United Nations country teams to ensure that they are better able to assist national partners in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women through their development frameworks;

(i) Enhancing the use of data disaggregated by sex by the United Nations country teams in the preparation of indicators to measure progress, including, where used, the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

(j) Ensuring progress, including through managerial and departmental accountability, towards achieving the goal of a 50/50 gender balance at all levels in the Secretariat and throughout the United Nations system, with due regard to the representation of women from developing countries and keeping in mind the principle of equitable geographical representation, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 2012 a report on the implementation of the present resolution, with particular emphasis on progress in promoting system-wide accountability on gender equality and the empowerment of women at both the global and country levels.

Human rights of women
UN-Women and OHCHR activities

During the year, cooperation intensified between UN-Women and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) with the goal of achieving equality between women and men and promoting and protecting women’s human rights. In a December report (A/HRC/19/31-E/CN.6/2012/12), the Secretary-General reviewed cooperation in 2011 with respect to inter-agency mechanisms and initiatives; human rights treaty bodies; human rights special procedures; country-level cooperation; intergovernmental bodies; information dissemination; and the development of tools in support of national policies, laws and programmes designed to operationalize human rights standards. The report further presented the joint workplan for 2012 and recommendations for new and strengthened modalities for cooperation between UN-Women and OHCHR.

Palestinian women

In accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 2010/6 (YUN 2010, p. 482), a report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.6/2011/6) reviewed the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women from September 2009 to September 2010 (see p. 451).

On 4 March, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution on the subject and recommended the text to the Economic and Social Council for adoption.

On 26 July, the Council took action on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women in resolution 2011/18 (see p. 452).

Women and the environment
Gender equality and sustainable development

On 1 March, the Commission on the Status of Women (E/2011/27) held an expert panel discussion on the emerging issue of gender equality and sustainable development. Participants noted that women’s contributions to sustainable development were both undervalued and underutilized, and measures were needed to ensure that women fully participated in the discourse on economic development, social progress and environmental protection and management, including with regard to climate change adaptation and mitigation. Recommendations from the discussion included ensuring women’s effective participation in the processes leading up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in May 2012; promoting participatory dialogues among Governments, civil society and the private sector with respect to developing and imple-
menting gender-responsive policy and budget frameworks for sustainable development; ensuring that international conventions on environmental issues integrated the issues of gender equality and women’s empowerment and full participation; identifying opportunities for women to turn green practices into profitable business opportunities; and conducting an assessment of women’s opportunities and participation in a green economy within the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

**Women and climate change policies**

On 4 March, the Commission on the Status of Women adopted a resolution [E/2011/27 (res. 55/1)] on mainstreaming gender equality and promoting empowerment of women in climate change policies and strategies, which called upon Governments to integrate a gender perspective in environmental and climate change policies, and to strengthen mechanisms and provide adequate resources to ensure women’s full and equal participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies related to the impact of climate change on the lives of women and girls. The Commission also called upon Governments to support and empower rural women, who were engaged in agricultural production and played a vital role in providing food security threatened by climate change, by enhancing their access to and control of resources. It encouraged Governments to strengthen international cooperation in such areas as training, capacity-building and technology transfer in order to address the challenges faced by women and girls in the context of climate change; and called upon Governments to continue to incorporate a gender perspective and make efforts to ensure the effective participation of women in the ongoing climate change talks leading to the seventeenth Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (see p. 939).

**The girl child**

On 25 February, the Commission on the Status of Women [E/2011/27] held an expert panel discussion on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child to evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on the subject adopted by the Commission at its fifty-first (2007) session [YUN 2007, p. 1173]. Participants noted that despite some progress, discrimination and violation of the human rights of girls persisted and there was a need to reinforce, expand and replicate good practices, and to use them as the basis for designing and ensuring the implementation of better laws, policies and programmes. Recommended actions included strengthening girls’ knowledge of their rights and promoting their empowerment and participation in the development of public policy and decision-making; enhancing efforts to address discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes and to transform power relations through curriculum revision and teacher training in the education sector; and expanding interventions to engage boys and men in ending discrimination and violence against girls into systematic, large-scale and coordinated programmes, targeting young boys in particular.

**Report of Secretary-General.** Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/145 [YUN 2009, p. 1147], an August report of the Secretary-General [A/66/257] reviewed international obligations and commitments with respect to the girl child stemming from human rights treaties and international conferences, as well as legal and policy development. It assessed the negative impact on the girl child by poverty and the global economic crisis; violence, abuse and exploitation; gender disparities in education; inadequate water, sanitation and hygiene; inadequate nutrition and the prevalence of anemia; HIV/AIDS; gender-based health risks, particularly in adolescence; disabilities; humanitarian crises; and a lack of participation opportunities. It also highlighted actions taken to address child and forced marriage.

Despite the international legal and normative obligations of States regarding the human rights of the girl child, girls continued to suffer not only from the effects of poverty and disease, but also from social and cultural norms that reinforced gender inequality; discrimination on the basis of ethnicity; and social, geographical and income inequities; all of which made them extremely vulnerable to further deprivation and marginalization. In reviewing progress towards ending child marriage, the report noted that the practice had been decreasing, albeit slowly. Data indicated significant inequities, with child marriage strongly associated with girls who had little formal education and taking place in communities where the marrying of a girl child was part of a cluster of gender norms and attitudes reflecting the low value accorded to the human rights of girls. Several countries enacted legislation setting the minimum age of marriage at 18, while others increased the minimum age of marriage to 18 and eliminated differences in the legal age between boys and girls. More comprehensive policies and programmes addressed the needs of adolescents who were already married while supporting actions to end the practice, which required an approach that—in addition to legislation—included community discussions to collectively explore better alternatives.

The report cited progress in promoting the rights of girls in a number of areas. Numerous States adopted laws and policies addressing multiple forms of violence against girls, including human trafficking, sexual violence and exploitation, and female genital mu-
tion; and the humanitarian community continued to invest in tools and guidelines towards ensuring that inter-agency coordination mechanisms responded to the needs of girls affected by crisis situations. To build on those efforts, the Secretary-General requested action by Governments, supported by development agencies, non-governmental organizations and civil society, with the engagement of girls, boys, men and women. He called for the promotion of girls’ participation and empowerment, including by involving girls in the design and delivery of development programmes; supporting programmes to develop their leadership skills; and facilitating girls’ access to social networks and safe spaces where they could gain essential information and health and protective services. Where inequalities and discrimination against girls were entrenched, social change and transformation of power relations were essential to achieving gender equality. Governments, communities and households were accountable for shaping environments that did not tolerate discrimination or violence against girls. In the context of ensuring that girls start and stay in school, efforts were needed to identify and reach out to girls who were most excluded, including girls from the poorest households; rural, slum and remote areas; socially excluded groups, including children with disabilities; and indigenous and disadvantaged minority populations. He further recommended investing in the rights and protection of adolescent girls to ensure they were no longer neglected in development policies and programmes; and expanding and improving health, nutrition and other services to address the needs and rights of girls. On 19 December, the General Assembly took note of the report of the Secretary-General on the girl child (decision 66/534).

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December (meeting 89), the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/66/458], adopted resolution 66/140 without vote [agenda item 65 (a)].

The girl child

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming its resolution 64/145 of 18 December 2009 and all relevant resolutions, including the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in particular those relevant to the girl child,

Reaffirming also the equal rights of women and men as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling all human rights and other instruments relevant to the rights of the child, in particular the girl child, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the Optional Protocols thereto and the Convention on Consent to Marriage, Minimum Age for Marriage and Registration of Marriages,

Reaffirming the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the commitments relevant to the girl child made at the 2005 World Summit, and welcoming the outcome document of the High-level Plenary Meeting of the General Assembly on the Millennium Development Goals, entitled “Keeping the promise: united to achieve the Millennium Development Goals”,

Reaffirming also the outcome document of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly on children, entitled “A world fit for children”, the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted at the twenty-sixth special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, entitled “Global Crisis—Global Action”, and the Political Declaration on HIV/AIDS of 2006,

Reaffirming further all other relevant outcomes of major United Nations summits and conferences relevant to the girl child, as well as their five- and ten-year reviews, including the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development, as well as the agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status on Women at its fifty-fifth session, at which it considered “Access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work” as its priority theme,

Welcoming the adoption by the Commission on the Status of Women of the declaration on the occasion of the fifteenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, and reiterating that full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, in particular the strategic objectives relating to the girl child, is essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals,

Recalling the outcomes of the recent high-level meetings of the General Assembly relevant to the girl child,

Recalling also the Secretary-General’s 2008–2015 campaign “unite to End Violence against Women” and the call upon Governments, civil society, women’s organizations, young people, the private sector, the media and the entire United Nations system to join forces in addressing the global pandemic of violence against women and girls,

Reaffirming the importance of gender mainstreaming across the United Nations system, including in relation to the girl child,

Recognizing that chronic poverty remains the single biggest obstacle to meeting the needs of and promoting and protecting the rights of children and that urgent national and international action is therefore required to eliminate it, and noting that the burden of the global financial and economic crisis, the energy crisis, the food crisis and the continuing food insecurity as a result of various factors is felt directly by households, especially those depending on income from the informal sector, and particularly by women and girls,
Recognizing also that girl children are often at greater risk of being exposed to and encountering various forms of discrimination and violence, which continue to hinder efforts towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, and reaffirming the need to achieve gender equality to ensure a just and equitable world for girls, including through partnering with men and boys, as an important strategy for advancing the rights of the girl child,

Recognizing further that progress has been made in the adoption of national legislation that affirms the equality of girls and boys and that corresponding measures have not been taken to effectively implement such legislation, and recognizing the continuing existence of discrimination against women and girls throughout the world and that addressing this situation will require additional efforts to strengthen policy implementation, including through international cooperation,

Recognizing that the empowerment of and investment in girls, which is critical for economic growth, and the achievement of all Millennium Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty, as well as the meaningful participation of girls in decisions that affect them, are key in breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and in promoting and protecting the full and effective enjoyment of their human rights, and recognizing also that empowering girls requires their active participation in decision-making processes and the active support and engagement of their parents, legal guardians, families and care providers, boys and men, as well as the wider community,

Deeply concerned about all forms of violence against children, in particular the phenomena that disproportionately affect girls, such as commercial sexual exploitation and child pornography, child and forced marriages, rape, sexual abuse, domestic violence and trafficking in persons and, in addition, about the corresponding lack of accountability and impunity, which reflect discriminatory norms reinforcing the lower status of girls in society,

Deeply concerned also that violence against women and girls is underrecognized, particularly at the community level, and underreported or unrecorded because of stigma, fear, social tolerance and the often illegal and covert nature of such activities,

Deeply concerned further about discrimination against the girl child and the violation of the rights of the girl child, which often result in less access for girls to education, and to quality education, nutrition and physical and mental health care, in girls enjoying fewer of the rights, opportunities and benefits of childhood and adolescence than boys, and in leaving them more vulnerable than boys to the consequences of unprotected and premature sexual relations and often being subjected to various forms of cultural, social, sexual and economic exploitation and violence, abuse, rape, incest, honour-related crimes and harmful traditional practices, such as female infanticide, child and forced marriages, prenatal sex selection and female genital mutilation,

Deeply concerned that child and forced marriages expose young married girls to greater risk of HIV and sexually transmitted infections, often lead to early childbearing and increase the risk of disability, stillbirth and maternal death, and reduce their opportunities to complete their education, gain comprehensive knowledge, participate in the community or develop employable skills, and violate and impair the full enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls,

Deeply concerned also that early pregnancy and early childbearing and limited access to sexual and reproductive health care, including in the area of skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care, cause high prevalences of obstetric fistula and high levels of maternal mortality and morbidity and furthermore entail complications during pregnancy and childbirth which often lead to death, particularly for young women and girls,

Recognizing that progress towards ending child and forced marriages can have a positive impact on indicators related to girls’ education, maternal health and child health, thereby contributing to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals,

Deeply concerned that, despite their widespread practice, child and forced marriages are still underreported, and recognizing that this requires further attention,

Deeply concerned also that female genital mutilation violates and impairs the full enjoyment of the human rights of women and girls and that it is an irreparable and irreversible harmful practice, and that the goal of ending female genital mutilation by 2030, set out in the document entitled “A world fit for children”, remains unmet,

Deeply concerned further that, in situations of poverty, war and armed conflict, girl children are among those most affected and furthermore become the victims of sexual violence, abuse and exploitation and sexually transmitted infections and diseases, including HIV and AIDS, which have a serious impact on the quality of their lives and leave them open to further discrimination, violence and neglect, thus limiting their potential for full development,

Emphasizing that increased access to education for young people, especially girls, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, dramatically lowers their vulnerability to preventable diseases, in particular HIV infection and sexually transmitted diseases,

Recognizing that early childbearing continues to be an impediment to the improvement of the educational and social status of girls in all parts of the world and that, overall, child and forced marriages and early motherhood can severely curtail their educational opportunities and are likely to have a long-term, adverse impact on their employment opportunities and on their and their children’s quality of life,

Convinced that racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance reveal themselves in a differentiated manner for women and girls and can be among the factors leading to a deterioration in their living conditions, poverty, violence, multiple forms of discrimination and limitation or denial of their human rights,

Recognizing that women and girls with disabilities are subject to multiple forms of discrimination, including in respect of their access to education and employment, and the importance of the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in this regard,

Noting with concern that, in some parts of the world, men outnumber women as a result, in part, of harmful attitudes and practices, such as female genital mutilation, son preference, which results in female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, early marriage, including child marriage, violence against women, sexual exploitation, sexual abuse and
discrimination against girls in food allocation and in other practices related to health and well-being, with the result that fewer girls than boys survive into adulthood,

Deeply concerned that the phenomenon of child-headed households, in particular those headed by girls, is becoming a serious social problem,

Deeply concerned also that the impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic, including illness and mortality, erosion of the extended family, exacerbation of poverty, unemployment and underemployment, and migration, as well as urbanization, have contributed to the increase in the number of child-headed households,

Recognizing that women and girls bear the disproportionate burden of caring for and supporting those living with and affected by HIV and AIDS, and that this impacts negatively on girls by depriving them of their childhood and diminishing their opportunities to receive an education,

1. **Stresses** the need for full and urgent implementation of the rights of the girl child as provided to her under human rights instruments, and urges States to consider signing and ratifying or acceding to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocols thereto as a matter of priority;

2. **Urges** all States that have not yet signed and ratified or acceded to the Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138) and the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182), of the International Labour Organization to consider doing so;

3. **Urges** all Governments and the United Nations system to strengthen efforts bilaterally and with international organizations and private sector donors in order to achieve the goals of the World Education Forum, in particular that of eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005, which have not been fully met, and to implement the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative as a means of reaching this goal, and calls for the implementation of and reaffirms the commitments contained in the Education for All goals and the Millennium Development Goals, particularly those related to gender and education;

4. **Calls upon** all States to place enhanced emphasis on quality education for the girl child, including catch-up and literacy education for those who did not receive formal education, to promote access to skills and entrepreneurial training for young women and to tackle male and female stereotypes in order to ensure that young women entering the labour market have opportunities to obtain full and productive employment and decent work;

5. **Encourages** States to promote the development of gender-sensitive curricula for educational programmes at all levels and to take concrete measures to ensure that educational materials portray women and men, youth, girls and boys in positive and non-stereotypical roles, particularly in the teaching of scientific and technological subjects, in order to address the root causes of segregation in working life;

6. **Calls upon** States and the international community to recognize the right to education on the basis of equal opportunity and non-discrimination by making primary education compulsory and available free to all children, and ensuring that all children have access to education of good quality, as well as making secondary education generally available and accessible to all, in particular through the progressive introduction of free education, bearing in mind that special measures to ensure equal access, including affirmative action, contribute to achieving equal opportunity and combating exclusion, and ensuring school attendance, in particular for girls and children from low-income families;

7. **Calls upon** States, with the support of international organizations, civil society and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, to develop policies and programmes, giving priority to formal and informal education programmes, including age-appropriate sex education, with appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, that support girls and enable them to acquire knowledge, develop self-esteem and take responsibility for their own lives, and to place special focus on programmes to educate women and men, especially parents, about the importance of girls' physical and mental health and well-being, including the elimination of discrimination against girls in child and forced marriages;

8. **Calls upon** all States and international and non-governmental organizations, individually and collectively, to implement further the Beijing Platform for Action, in particular the strategic objectives relating to the girl child, and the further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and to mobilize all necessary resources and support in order to achieve the goals and strategic objectives and actions set out in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;

9. **Calls upon** all States to take measures to address the obstacles that continue to affect the achievement of the goals set forth in the Beijing Platform for Action, as contained in paragraph 33 of the further actions and initiatives, where appropriate, including the strengthening of national mechanisms to implement policies and programmes for the girl child and, in some cases, to enhance coordination among responsible institutions for the realization of the human rights of girls, as indicated in the further actions and initiatives;

10. **Urges** States to strengthen efforts to urgently eradicate all forms of discrimination against women and girls and, where applicable, to remain dedicated to the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto;

11. **Also urges** States to fulfill the pledges that they made at the Fourth World Conference on Women and at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly to modify or abolish remaining laws that discriminate against women and girls;

12. **Further urges** States to improve the situation of girl children living in poverty, deprived of nutrition, water and sanitation facilities, with limited or no access to basic physical and mental health-care services, shelter, education, participation and protection, taking into account that, while a severe lack of goods and services hurts every human being, it is most threatening and harmful to the girl child, leaving her unable to enjoy her rights, to reach her full potential and to participate as a full member of society;

13. **Urges** States to ensure that the applicable requirements of the International Labour Organization for the employment of girls and boys are respected and effectively
enforced and that girls who are employed have equal access to decent work, and equal payment and remuneration, are protected from economic exploitation, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and abuse in the workplace, are aware of their rights and have access to formal and non-formal education, skills development and vocational training, and also urges States to develop gender-sensitive measures, including national action plans, where appropriate, to eliminate the worst forms of child labour, including commercial sexual exploitation, slavery-like practices, forced and bonded labour, trafficking and hazardous forms of child labour;

14. Recognizes the importance of strengthening health systems, in particular primary health care and the need to integrate the HIV response into it, and notes that weak health systems, which already face many challenges, including a lack of trained health workers and insufficient retention of skilled health workers, are among the biggest barriers to accessing health care;

15. Calls upon States, with the support of relevant stakeholders including the private sector, civil society, non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations, as appropriate, to take all measures necessary to ensure the right of girls to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health, including sexual and reproductive health, and to develop sustainable health systems and social services;

16. Urges all States to promote gender equality and equal access to basic social services, such as education, nutrition, birth registration, health care, including sexual and reproductive health, vaccinations and protection from diseases representing the major causes of mortality, including non-communicable diseases, and to mainstream a gender perspective in all development policies and programmes, including those relating to children as well as those specific to the girl child;

17. Calls upon States, with the support of international organizations and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, and the media, to take appropriate measures to address the root factors of child and forced marriages, including by undertaking educational activities to raise awareness regarding the negative aspects of such practices;

18. Urges all States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses, and, in addition, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage and raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary, and to develop and implement comprehensive policies, plans of action and programmes for the survival, protection, development and advancement of the girl child in order to promote and protect the full enjoyment of her human rights and to ensure equal opportunities for girls, including by making such plans an integral part of her total development process;

19. Urges States to ensure that efforts to enact and implement legislation to end child and forced marriages engage all stakeholders and agents of change and ensure that the information on the legislation against the practice is well known and generates social support for the enforcement of such laws and legislation;

20. Calls upon States to support community workshops and discussion sessions to enable communities to collectively explore ways to prevent and address child and forced marriages, provide information through stakeholders who are credible to the community, such as medical personnel and local, community and religious leaders, regarding the harm associated with these marriages, give greater voice to girls and ensure consistency of message throughout the entire community, and encourage the much-needed strong engagement of men and boys;

21. Also calls upon States to support and implement, including with dedicated resources, multisectoral policies and programmes that end the practice of child and forced marriages and ensure the provision of viable alternatives and institutional support, especially educational opportunities for girls, with an emphasis on keeping girls in school through post-primary education, including those who are already married or pregnant, ensuring physical access to education, including by establishing safe residential facilities, increasing financial incentives to families, promoting the empowerment of girls, improving educational quality and ensuring safe and hygienic conditions in schools;

22. Further calls upon States to strengthen research, data collection and analysis on the child girl, disaggregated by sex, age and geographical location, in order to provide a better understanding of the situations of girls, especially of the multiple forms of discrimination that they face, and to develop necessary policies and programme responses, which should take a holistic approach to addressing the full range of the forms of discrimination that girls may face, in order to protect their rights effectively;

23. Urges States to take all measures necessary to ensure the full enjoyment by girls with disabilities of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children, and to adopt, implement and strengthen appropriate policies and programmes designed to address their needs;

24. Urges all States to enact and enforce legislation to protect girls from all forms of violence and exploitation, including female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, female genital mutilation, rape, domestic violence, incest, sexual abuse, sexual exploitation, child prostitution, child pornography, trafficking and forced migration, forced labour and forced marriage, as well as marriage under legal age, and to develop age-appropriate safe, confidential and disability-accessible programmes and medical, social and psychological support services to assist girls who are subjected to violence and discrimination;

25. Urges States to complement punitive measures with educational activities designed to promote a process of consensus towards the abandonment of harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and to provide appropriate services for those affected by the practices;

26. Calls upon all States to enact and enforce the necessary legislative or other measures, in cooperation with relevant stakeholders, to prevent the distribution over the Internet of child pornography, including depictions of child sexual abuse, ensuring that adequate mechanisms are in place to enable reporting and removal of such material and that its creators, distributors and collectors are prosecuted as appropriate;

27. Urges States to formulate comprehensive, multidisciplinary and coordinated national plans, programmes or strategies to eliminate all forms of discrimination and
violence against women and girls, which should be widely disseminated and should provide targets and timetables for implementation, as well as effective domestic enforcement procedures through the establishment of monitoring mechanisms involving all parties concerned, including consultations with women’s organizations, giving attention to the recommendations relating to the girl child of the Special Rapporteurs of the Human Rights Council on violence against women, its causes and consequences, and on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children;

28. Also urges States to ensure that the right of children to express themselves and to participate in all matters affecting them, in accordance with their age and maturity, is fully and equally enjoyed by girls;

29. Further urges States to involve girls, including girls with special needs, and their representative organizations, in decision-making processes, as appropriate, and to include them as full and active partners in identifying their own needs and in developing, planning, implementing and assessing policies and programmes to meet those needs;

30. Recognizes that a considerable number of girl children are particularly vulnerable, including orphans, children living on the street, internally displaced and refugee children, children affected by trafficking and sexual and economic exploitation, children living with or affected by HIV and AIDS, and children who are incarcerated who live without parental support, and therefore urges States, with the support of the international community, where relevant, to take appropriate measures to address the needs of such children by implementing national policies and strategies to build and strengthen governmental, community and family capacities to provide a supportive environment for such children, including by providing appropriate counselling and psychosocial support, and ensuring their enrolment in school and access to shelter, good nutrition and health and social services on an equal basis with other children;

31. Encourages States to promote actions, including through bilateral and multilateral technical cooperation and financial assistance, for the social reintegration of children in difficult situations, in particular girls, considering, inter alia, views, skills and capacities that those children have developed in the conditions in which they lived and, where appropriate, with their meaningful participation;

32. Urges all States and the international community to respect, promote and protect the rights of the girl child, taking into account the particular vulnerabilities of the girl child in pre-conflict, conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as in other humanitarian emergencies, and further urges States to take special measures for the protection of girls, in particular to protect them from sexually transmitted infections, including HIV infection, gender-based violence, including rape, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation, torture, abduction and forced labour, paying special attention to refugee and displaced girls, and to take into account their special needs in the delivery of humanitarian assistance and disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation assistance and reintegration processes;

33. Deplores all cases of sexual exploitation and abuse of women and children, especially girls, in humanitarian crises, including those cases involving humanitarian workers and peacekeepers, and urges States to take effective measures to address gender-based violence in humanitarian emergencies and to make all possible efforts to ensure that their laws and institutions are adequate to prevent, promptly investigate and prosecute acts of gender-based violence;

34. Also deplores all acts of sexual exploitation, abuse of and trafficking in women and children by military, police and civilian personnel involved in United Nations operations, welcomes the efforts undertaken by United Nations agencies and peacekeeping operations to implement a zero-tolerance policy in this regard, and requests the Secretary-General and personnel-contributing countries to continue to take all appropriate action necessary to combat these abuses by such personnel, including through the full implementation without delay of those measures adopted in the relevant General Assembly resolutions based on recommendations of the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations;

35. Urges Member States, the United Nations and other international, regional and subregional organizations, as well as civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector and the media, to fully and effectively implement the relevant provisions of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons and the activities outlined therein, and expresses its view that it will, inter alia, contribute to the promotion of the rights of the girls and enhance cooperation and a better coordination of efforts in fighting trafficking in persons and promote increased ratification and full implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime;

36. Calls upon Member States to devise, enforce and strengthen effective child- and youth-sensitive measures to combat, eliminate and prosecute all forms of trafficking in women and girls, including for sexual and economic exploitation, as part of a comprehensive anti-trafficking strategy within wider efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls, including by taking effective measures against the criminalization of girls who are victims of exploitation and ensuring that girls who have been exploited receive access to the necessary psychosocial support;

37. Calls upon Governments, civil society, including the media, and non-governmental organizations to promote human rights education and full respect for and the enjoyment of the human rights of the girl child, inter alia, through the translation, production and dissemination of age-appropriate and gender-sensitive information material on those rights to all sectors of society, in particular to children;

38. Requests the Secretary-General, as Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, to ensure that all organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, individually and collectively, in particular the United Nations Children’s Fund, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the World Food Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the World Health Organization, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High
Commissioner for Refugees and the International Labour Organization, take into account the rights and the particular needs of the girl child in country programmes of cooperation in accordance with national priorities, including through the United Nations Development Assistance Framework;

39. Requests all human rights treaty bodies and the human rights mechanisms of the Human Rights Council, including the special procedures, to adopt regularly and systematically a gender perspective in the implementation of their mandates and to include in their reports information on the qualitative analysis of violations of the human rights of women and girls, and encourages the strengthening of cooperation and coordination in that regard;

40. Requests States to ensure that, in all policies and programmes designed to provide comprehensive HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, particular attention and support are given to the girl child at risk, living with or affected by HIV, including pregnant girls and young and adolescent mothers and girls with disabilities, with a view to achieving Millennium Development Goal 6, in particular to halt and begin to reverse by 2015 the spread of HIV;

41. Invites States to promote initiatives aimed at reducing the prices of antiretroviral drugs, especially second-line drugs, available to the girl child, including bilateral and private sector initiatives as well as initiatives on a voluntary basis taken by groups of States, including those based on innovative financing mechanisms that contribute to the mobilization of resources for social development, including those that aim to provide further access to drugs at affordable prices to developing countries on a sustainable and predictable basis, and in this regard takes note of the International Drug Purchase Facility, UNITAID;

42. Calls upon all States to integrate food and nutritional support with the goal that children, especially girl children, have access at all times to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences, for an active and healthy life, as part of a comprehensive response to HIV and AIDS, other communicable diseases and non-communicable diseases;

43. Urges States and the international community to increase resources at all levels, particularly in the education and health sectors, so as to enable young people, especially girls, to gain the knowledge, attitudes and life skills that they need to overcome their challenges, including the prevention of HIV infection and early pregnancy, and to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health;

44. Stresses the need to strengthen the commitment of States and the United Nations system in their responsibility to mainstream the promotion and protection of the rights of the child, in particular the girl child, in the development agenda at the national, regional and international levels;

45. Urges States, the international community, the relevant United Nations entities, civil society and international financial institutions to continue to actively support, through the allocation of increased human and financial resources, targeted innovative programmes that address ending female genital mutilation and developing and providing education programmes, such as the United Nations Population Fund-United Nations Children’s Fund joint programme on accelerating the abandonment of female genital mutilation, and sensitization workshops on the dire consequences of this harmful practice for the health of the girl, and to provide training programmes for those who perform the harmful procedure so that they may adopt an alternative profession;

46. Stresses that a common coordinated approach that promotes positive social change at the community, national and international levels could lead to the abandonment of female genital mutilation within a generation, with some of the main achievements being obtained by 2015, in line with the Millennium Development Goals;

47. Urges States, the international community, the relevant United Nations entities, civil society and the international financial institutions to actively support, through the allocation of increased human and financial resources, efforts to end child and forced marriages;

48. Calls upon States to strengthen the capacity of national health systems, and in this regard calls upon the international community to assist national efforts, including by allocation of adequate resources in order to provide essential services needed to prevent obstetric fistula and to treat those cases that occur by providing the continuum of services, including family planning, perinatal and postnatal care, skilled birth attendance, emergency obstetric care and post-partum care, to adolescent girls, including those living in poverty and in underserved rural areas where obstetric fistula is most common;

49. Calls upon States and the international community to create an environment in which the well-being of the girl child is ensured, inter alia, by cooperating, supporting and participating in global efforts for poverty eradication at the global, regional and country levels, recognizing that strengthened availability and effective allocation of resources are required at all levels, in order to ensure that all the internationally agreed development and poverty eradication goals, including those set out in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, are realized within their time framework, and reaffirming that investment in children, particularly girls, and the realization of their rights are among the most effective ways to eradicate poverty;

50. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a report to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session on the implementation of the present resolution, including an emphasis on child-headed households: causes, effects and prospects, using information provided by Member States, the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and non-governmental organizations, with a view to assessing the impact of the present resolution on the well-being of the girl child.

International Day of the Girl Child

GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION

On 19 December [meeting 89], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/66/462/Add.2], adopted resolution 66/170 without vote [agenda item 69 (b)].
International Day of the Girl Child

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 64/145 of 18 December 2009 and all other relevant resolutions, including the agreed conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women, in particular those relevant to the girl child,

Recalling also all human rights and other instruments relevant to the rights of the child, in particular the girl child, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocols thereto,

Recognizing that empowerment of and investment in girls, which are critical for economic growth, the achievement of all Millennium Development Goals, including the eradication of poverty and extreme poverty, as well as the meaningful participation of girls in decisions that affect them, are key in breaking the cycle of discrimination and violence and in promoting and protecting the full and effective enjoyment of their human rights, and recognizing also that empowering girls requires their active participation in decision-making processes and the active support and engagement of their parents, legal guardians, families and care providers, as well as boys and men and the wider community;

1. Decides to designate 11 October as the International Day of the Girl Child, to be observed every year beginning in 2012;

2. Invites all Member States, relevant organizations of the United Nations system and other international organizations, as well as civil society, to observe the International Day of the Girl Child, and to raise awareness of the situation of girls around the world;

3. Requests the Secretary-General to bring the present resolution to the attention of all Member States and United Nations organizations.

UN machinery

Convention on the elimination of discrimination against women

As at 31 December, 187 States were parties to the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted by the General Assembly in resolution 34/180 [YUN 1979, p. 895]. Nauru acceded on 23 June. At year’s end, 65 States had accepted the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention in respect of the meeting time of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which was adopted by States parties in 1995 [YUN 1995, p. 1178]. In 2011, Albania, the Czech Republic, Ecuador, Kuwait and Nauru accepted the amendment, which would enter into force when accepted by a two-thirds majority of States parties.

The Optional Protocol to the Convention, adopted by the Assembly in resolution 54/4 [YUN 1999, p. 1100] and which entered into force in 2000 [YUN 2000, p. 1123], had 103 States parties as at 31 December. Cabo Verde acceded on 10 October, Ghana on 3 February and Seychelles on 1 March.

In accordance with General Assembly resolution 64/138 [YUN 2009, p. 1153], the Secretary-General submitted a June report [A/66/99] on the status of the Convention from 24 August 2009 to 1 July 2011. The report covered the working methods of CEDAW (see below); efforts to encourage universal ratification of the Convention and its Optional Protocol, and acceptance of the amendment to article 20, paragraph 1 of the Convention; technical assistance to States parties; and dissemination of the Convention, its Optional Protocol and information on CEDAW work.

CEDAW


At its forty-eighth session (Geneva, 17 January–4 February) [A/66/38], CEDAW considered and prepared concluding observations on the initial or periodic reports of Bangladesh, Belarus, Israel, Kenya, Liechtenstein, South Africa and Sri Lanka on measures taken to implement the Convention. CEDAW also considered a Secretary-General’s report on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/48/2]; a note by the Secretary-General on reports provided by specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities [CEDAW/C/48/3]; and a report of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) [CEDAW/C/48/3/Add.1]. The Committee elected its chair [A/66/38, (dec. 48/I)] and its remaining officers [dec. 48/II]; confirmed the members of the Working Group on Communications under the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women [dec. 48/III]; confirmed the members of the pre-session working group for the fifty-first session [dec. 48/IV]; expanded the working group on harmful practices [dec. 48/V]; confirmed the members of the working group on women in armed conflict and post-conflict situations [dec. 48/VI]; and decided to elaborate a general recommendation on access to justice and establish a working group in that regard [dec. 48/VII].

On 3 February [dec. 48/VIII], the Committee endorsed the revised draft outline of the general recommendation on harmful practices—developed jointly by CEDAW and the Committee on the Rights of the Child—and authorized the working group on harmful practices to start production of the draft. The Committee also
established a task force to study a working paper prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees on gender equality in the context of displacement and statelessness [dec. 48/IX].


At its forty-ninth session (New York, 11–29 July) [A/67/38], CEDAW considered and prepared concluding observations on the initial or periodic reports of Costa Rica, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Italy, Nepal, the Republic of Korea, Singapore and Zambia. The Committee also considered a report of the Secretary-General on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/48/2], and notes by the Secretary-General on reports provided by the specialized agencies on the implementation of the Convention in areas falling within the scope of their activities [CEDAW/C/49/3]; ways and means of expediting the work of the Committee [CEDAW/C/49/4]; and containing the reports of unesco [CEDAW/C/49/3/Add.2] and the International Labour Organization (ilo) [CEDAW/C/49/3/Add.4]. CEDAW decided to lift, on an indefinite basis, the simultaneous distribution policy with respect to its documentation [A/67/38 (dec. 49/I)]; to hold, on 18 July, a day of discussion on the draft general recommendation on women in armed conflict and post-conflict situations [dec. 49/II]; to send letters to Egypt and Tunisia on the rights of women in the democratization process [dec. 49/III]; and to confirm its practice of referring to comments received from States parties relating to concluding observations of the Committee without reproducing them in its report [dec. 49/IV]. The Committee decided to respond to the note verbale from Belarus dated 23 May, noting that the practice of the Committee in regard to recording comments from States parties was to refer to them in its reports to the General Assembly [dec. 49/V]. CEDAW confirmed the members of the pre-session working group for the fifty-second session [dec. 49/VI]; adopted a decision on the adoption procedure of general recommendations Nos. 27 and 28 [dec. 49/VII]; and adopted a statement with respect to the Working Group on Working Methods, in which it proposed that the task force on working methods be transformed into a standing working group [dec. 49/ VIII]. It also adopted a statement on the list of issues, which proposed measures for enhanced prioritization and keeping replies as concise as possible [dec. 49/IX].

At its fiftieth session (Geneva, 3–21 October) [A/67/38], CEDAW considered and prepared concluding observations on the initial or periodic reports of Chad, Côte d’Ivoire, Kuwait, Lesotho, Mauritius, Montenegro, Oman and Paraguay. The Committee also considered a report of the Secretary-General on the status of submission of reports by States parties under article 18 of the Convention [CEDAW/C/48/2], an ilo report [CEDAW/C/50/3], and a unesco report [CEDAW/C/50/4]. The Committee established task forces to enhance the constructive dialogue with States parties, as a pilot project, during the fifty-first and fifty-second sessions, and to evaluate the impact of the task force approach during its fifty-second session [A/67/38 (dec. 50/1)]. In a decision on strengthening the role of the country rapporteur [dec. 50/II], the Committee stated that rapporteurs should have a more prominent role in providing guidance to experts in the preparation of and during the constructive dialogues, and that they should conduct informal consultations with experts in order to ensure full coverage of main areas of concern in the country and to prevent overlap. CEDAW further established an opened-ended task force on inquiries [dec. 50/III], a joint working group with the Human Rights Committee [dec. 50/IV], and a working group on rural women [dec. 50/VII]. The task force on gender equality in the context of asylum, statelessness and natural disasters would be transformed into a working group [dec. 50/VIII]. The Committee appointed Dubravka Simunić as focal point for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women [dec. 50/IX] and Zohra Rasekh as focal point for HIV and gender equality [dec. 50/X]. It also adopted statements on rural women [dec. 50/VI] and the anniversaries of the adoptions of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees [YUN 1951, p. 520] and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness [YUN 1961, p. 533] [dec. 50/V].

**GENERAL ASSEMBLY ACTION**

On 19 December [meeting 89], the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the Third Committee [A/66/455 & Corr.1], adopted resolution 66/131 without vote [agenda item 28 (a)].

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

*The General Assembly,*

Recalling its resolution 64/138 of 18 December 2009,

1. **Welcomes** the report of the Secretary-General on the status of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

2. **Also welcomes** the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on its forty-fourth and forty-fifth and forty-sixth to eighty-eighth sessions;

3. **Invites** the Chair of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to address and engage in an interactive dialogue with the General Assembly at its sixty-seventh and sixty-eighth sessions under the item on the advancement of women;

4. **Requests** the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-eighth session a report on the status of the Convention.
Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women, at its fifty-fifth session (New York, 12 March 2010, 22 February–4 March and 14 March 2011) [E/2011/27], recommended to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of a draft resolution on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women (see p. 452) and a draft decision on the report of the Commission’s fifty-fifth session and provisional agenda and documentation for its fifty-sixth (2012) session. As part of its priority theme, “Access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”, the Commission held a high-level round table and several panel discussions on the topic. It decided to transmit to the Council the summaries of those discussions [E/2011/27 (dec. 55/101)], together with agreed conclusions related to the priority theme, as an input to the annual ministerial review of 2011 (see p. 1056). The Commission brought to the Council’s attention resolutions it had adopted on mainstreaming gender equality and promoting empowerment of women in climate change policies and strategies [res. 55/1] (see p. 1083), and on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS [res. 55/2] (see p. 1070). It also brought to the Council’s attention a decision by which it took note of the report of the Executive Director of UN-Women [E/CN.6/2011/2], a note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on its activities to eliminate violence against women [A/HRC/16/34-E/CN.6/2011/9], and reports of the Secretary-General on the priority theme [E/CN.6/2011/3] (see p. 1068); on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective into the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes [E/CN.6/2011/5] (see p. 1069); on women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS [E/CN.6/2011/7] (see p. 1070); and on the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women, now part of UN-Women, and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights [A/HRC/16/33-E/CN.6/2011/8].

By decision 2011/241 of 26 July, the Economic and Social Council took note of the Commission’s report on its fifty-fifth session and approved the provisional agenda for its fifty-sixth (2012) session.

Communication. In a 21 November letter [E/CN.6/2012/14] to the Commission Chairperson, the Economic and Social Council President summarized the outcome of the Council’s 2011 substantive session and annual ministerial review (see p. 1056) and attached a list of resolutions adopted by the Council calling for action by its functional commissions.

Other reports. Documents issued in 2011, to be addressed during the Commission’s 2012 session, included reports of the Secretary-General on the release of women and children taken hostage [E/CN.6/2012/7]; female genital mutilation [E/CN.6/2012/8]; maternal mortality and morbidity [E/CN.6/2012/9]; women’s economic empowerment [E/CN.6/2012/10]; women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS [E/CN.6/2012/11]; the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women [E/CN.6/2012/6]; the empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication [E/CN.6/2012/3]; the role of gender-responsive governance and institutions in the empowerment of rural women [E/CN.6/2012/4]; and a note by the Secretariat on promoting employment and decent work to eradicate poverty in the context of the MDGs [E/CN.6/2012/15].

Communications on the status of women

At a closed meeting on 2 March [E/2011/27], the Commission considered the report of the Working Group on Communications concerning the Status of Women [E/CN.6/2011//CRP.2]. The Working Group had considered 52 confidential communications received by UN-Women and noted that there were 36 replies from Governments, 34 of which concerned the 2011 list of communications while two concerned the list of the previous year [YUN 2010, p. 1177]. No non-confidential communications were received. The Group observed that the communications most frequently concerned sexual violence, including rape, gang rape, forced prostitution, threats of rape, sexual harassment, including in the workplace, and failure by States to prevent such violations, provide protection and support for victims, and punish the perpetrators; other forms of violence, including domestic violence, and harmful traditional practices, including forced early marriage, with a lack of due diligence by States to investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators, provide adequate protection and support for victims, and ensure access to justice; trafficking for the purposes of forced labour, in particular for domestic servitude, and commercial sexual exploitation, and failure by States to prevent such violations and investigate, prosecute and punish perpetrators, including those fuelling the demand for sexual exploitation; abuse of power by military, security and law enforcement personnel, humiliation, lack of due process and delays in proceedings, arbitrary arrest and detention, and failure to grant a fair trial and impunity; physical and psychological threats and pressure on victims of violence, their families and witnesses by private individuals and law enforcement officials; inhuman treatment in detention and inadequate conditions of imprisonment for women; serious violations of human rights, some of which targeted specific groups, such as girls with disabilities, widows, and asylum-seeking and refugee women; intimidation, harassment, detention
Chapter X: Women

of, and death threats against, women human rights defenders and their families; and violations of the right to health, including sexual and reproductive health.

During its consideration of communications, the Working Group expressed concern about violence against women and girls and the mistreatment and detention of women human rights defenders and their families; harmful traditional practices, such as forced and early marriage; violations of the right of women to health, including sexual and reproductive health; the increasing number of cases of trafficking in women and girls; the climate of impunity and abuse of power, including where violence against women was perpetrated by law enforcement; the failure by States to exercise due diligence to prevent and respond to violence against women and girls; the persistence of gender stereotypes, including through the media; and discrimination and violence against specific groups, such as widows, asylum-seeking, refugee and internally displaced women, and girls with disabilities.

The Working Group was encouraged that some Governments had investigated the allegations and taken measures, including enacting new legislation; conducting legal reform; introducing policies and services, such as health-related services, to better protect and assist women, including victims of violence; developing national plans of action; prosecuting and punishing perpetrators of violence; and introducing targeted measures for the promotion of women's rights, including through gender-sensitive budgeting and public awareness-raising activities to promote gender equality and the advancement of women.

UN-Women

On 1 January, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), established by General Assembly resolution 64/289 [YUN 2010, p. 1396], became fully operational. The entity combined the mandates and assets of the four existing gender equality entities—namely, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women the Division for the Advancement of Women (UN-Women), a number of gaps in the existing architecture had been identified, including weak coordination between intergovernmental decision- and policy-making and implementation at the country level; lack of a recognized driver with the authority and positioning to lead; lack of representation in high-level policy decision-making; and lack of accountability, political will and support for gender equality. Expectations were high that UN-Women would address these challenges in line with paragraph 52 of its founding resolution [YUN 2010, p. 1396].

The report noted that prior to the establishment of UN-Women, a number of gaps in the existing architecture had been identified, including weak coordination between intergovernmental decision- and policy-making and implementation at the country level; lack of a recognized driver with the authority and positioning to lead; lack of representation in high-level policy decision-making; and lack of accountability, political will and support for gender equality. Expectations were high that UN-Women would address these challenges in line with paragraph 52 of its founding resolution [YUN 2010, p. 1396].

The report also reviewed progress made by the UN system on the following cross-cutting issues identified in the ministerial declaration: discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes, including in the education sector; ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls across all sectors; full empowerment of women, including equal participation of women and men in decision-making; the critical role of men and boys for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment; full integration of women into the formal economy; measures to ensure that women and girls with disabilities were not subject to multiple or aggravated forms of discrimination; the crucial role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women; and the need to accelerate progress on women's health.
The Secretary-General concluded that it was important for all relevant actors to focus on lessons learned and good practices, and summarized some areas for further work by the relevant UN bodies, with the support of Governments and other stakeholders. These included requiring the full and equal participation of women in all political and economic decision-making processes; linking girls’ and women’s educational gains with employment opportunities; implementing a systematic and comprehensive approach aimed at eliminating all forms of violence against women, including in humanitarian settings; increasing proactive measures to put an end to discriminatory practices and gender stereotypes; mobilizing civil society towards stronger engagement of men and boys; promoting decent work for rural women; and increasing investment in well-functioning health systems and empowering women and communities to access them.

Institutional arrangements. In response to resolution 64/289 [YUN 2010, p. 1396], the Secretary-General submitted a July report [A/66/120] on strengthening the institutional arrangements for the support of gender equality and the empowerment of women, which covered progress with regard to the general principles of UN-Women; governance of the entity; administration and human resources; financing; and transitional arrangements. In January, as a first step in defining the UN-Women workplan, the Executive Director launched her “Vision and 100-day action plan”, which set out the core principles and priorities for the building of a strong organization. In addition, the first UN-Women strategic plan, 2011–2013 (see p. 1096)—based on consultations with approximately 5,000 partners from national Governments, civil society, academia, the UN system and international development organizations—set out the entity’s vision, mission and priorities. With regard to its coordination role, UN-Women made progress in developing a strategy that built on existing UN coordination mechanisms, such as the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination; the High-Level Committee on Programmes; the High-Level Committee on Management; and the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality (see p. 1080). The strategy also covered the entity’s approach to regional- and country-level coordination. In order to maintain and forge effective partnerships with civil society and coordinate and facilitate the participation of non-governmental organizations in the annual sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women, a Civil Society Section was created.

All transitional arrangements were successfully completed by the end of 2010, enabling UN-Women to become fully operational on 1 January without disrupting the activities of the four former entities. The Secretary-General concluded that the core elements for the effective functioning of the entity were in place, particularly its governance structure, with the establishment of the UN-Women Executive Board and the preparation of key planning and budgeting instruments and decisions thereon by the relevant intergovernmental bodies. While UN-Women had made excellent progress in putting in place the necessary administrative frameworks, consolidating its staff resources, and initiating the consolidation and strengthening of its field office structure, it had yet to fully establish its presence on the ground. Drawing attention to the need for further elaboration of the role of UN-Women in leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of United Nations work for gender equality, the Secretary-General noted that the mobilization of necessary resources for achieving the entity’s goals remained a challenge.

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION**

On 14 July [meeting 29], the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 2011/5 [draft: E/2011/L.29] without vote [agenda item 4].

The role of the United Nations system in implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women

**The Economic and Social Council, Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the 2005 World Summit Outcome, Recalling also the ministerial declaration adopted at the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2010 and its resolution 2008/29 of 24 July 2008, Reaffirming that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women by States parties, Member States’ commitments under the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the outcomes of other relevant United Nations summits and conferences, and relevant resolutions, is part of an interconnected framework that underpins the work undertaken to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women and produces essential contributions to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, Welcoming the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) by the General Assembly in resolution 64/289 of 2 July 2010, Reaffirming its agreed conclusions 1997/2 of 18 July 1997 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system and subsequent resolutions adopted on the same topic,**

1. **Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the theme of the coordination segment;**
2. **Recognizes efforts made by the United Nations system to promote more robust and better coordinated...
efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women, and encourages further efforts in that regard;

3. Stresses that the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) creates an opportunity and a responsibility for the whole United Nations system to scale up its efforts aimed at promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, and to increase the attention paid to gender issues throughout the work of the United Nations system, and urges UN-Women to leverage effectively on its unique role as a United Nations entity that supports both normative processes and operational activities;

4. Calls upon UN-Women to fully assume, in accordance with the principle of universality, its role of leading, coordinating and promoting the accountability of the United Nations system in its work on gender equality and the empowerment of women, and of ensuring more effective coordination, coherence and gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, and to continue to follow up on and support United Nations entities to advance effectively their work in that regard;

5. Urges all Member States and other stakeholders to enhance UN-Women and other United Nations system-wide efforts to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women through predictable, stable and sustainable financial support and encourages them to increase such financial support, and encourages UN-Women to seek to expand its financial support base;

6. Encourages UN-Women to use existing mechanisms, including the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality and the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination, in a proactive and effective way in order to ensure the mainstreaming of a gender perspective across all areas of the United Nations work and, especially, to promote system-wide accountability on gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and country levels;

7. Urges the United Nations system, including agencies, funds and programmes, to recognize gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as essential for achieving all the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and to support action to address the cross-cutting issues identified in the ministerial declaration adopted at the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2010, so as to close implementation gaps that still persist in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women in that respect;

8. Calls upon the United Nations system to give priority to the economic empowerment of women, with UN-Women to play a coordinating role in accordance with its mandate, including through promoting economic and social policies that uphold the rights of women and provide them with opportunities to fully participate in the formal labour force, to receive equal pay for equal work or work of equal value and to benefit from social protections on a non-discriminatory basis, and that promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men;

9. Also calls upon the United Nations system to give priority to programmes that support girls’ and women’s transition from school to work by, inter alia, promoting their equal access to education at all levels, including technical and vocational training, expanding employment opportu-
17. Urges UN-Women and all United Nations entities to promote the full and equal participation of women in decision-making processes at all levels, including in political and economic decision-making processes, and to ensure that programmes and activities carried out by the United Nations system take into account the needs of women and girls, and men and boys;

18. Calls upon the United Nations system, upon request by Member States to support their efforts, including through national machineries for the advancement of women, to eliminate gender stereotypes in all spheres of life, including in public and political life, to foster the positive portrayal of women and girls as leaders and decision makers at all levels and in all areas and to promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men;

19. Calls upon UN-Women and all other relevant United Nations entities, in their respective areas of competence and in accordance with their mandates, to strengthen efforts at all levels to end all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, including through an increased focus on prevention and the training of public officials, in particular those in law enforcement and judicial systems and health service providers, and effective support for victims and survivors, while addressing the linkages between violence against women and other issues;

20. Urges the United Nations system, including all its entities, to take further measures, in accordance with their agreed mandates, to improve women’s participation during all stages of peace processes, and to support the efforts of Member States in that regard, with their agreement and consent, in post-conflict planning and peacebuilding, including by enhancing women’s engagement in political and economic decision-making, including at early stages of recovery processes, and in that regard, to strengthen efforts to increase the number of women special representatives and special envoys;

21. Urges UN-Women and other United Nations entities to continue to promote the collection and analysis of relevant, accurate and reliable data, disaggregated by sex and age, to ensure that public policies are effectively grounded and targeted to reach all women, including women living in poverty, older women, migrant women, indigenous women, women with disabilities, women affected by HIV/AIDS, women living in rural or remote areas and women living in urban slums;

22. Requests the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women to include information on the implementation of the present resolution in future presentations to be made to the Economic and Social Council or in relevant documentation to be submitted to the Council, including at its substantive session of 2012.

Executive Board

At its first regular session of the year (New York, 24–26 January) [UNW/2011/8], the Executive Board approved the report [UNW/2011/1] and decisions [UNW/2011/2] of the 2010 organizational session [YUN 2010, p. 1182]; the tentative workplan for its 2011 annual session in June (see below); and the tentative annual workplan for 2011. The Board also approved a decision on the 2010–2011 biennial support budget for UN-Women (see p. 1098); adopted its draft rules of procedure [UNW/2011/6]; and postponed consideration of the proposed financial regulations and rules of UN-Women to its resumed first regular session in order to take into account the views of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions.

At its resumed first regular session (21 March and 8 April) [UNW/2011/8/Add.1], the Executive Board adopted a decision on proposed financial regulations and rules of UN-Women (see p. 1100), and postponed its second regular session of 2011 to 5–7 December, thereby allowing the consideration of the support budget for the biennium 2012–2013 to take into account the result of the Executive Board’s discussions on the strategic plan, 2011–2013, at its annual session.

At the annual session (New York, 27–30 June) [UNW/2011/10], the Executive Board adopted decisions on the UN-Women strategic plan, 2011–2013 (see below) and the Istanbul Programme of Action (see p. 828). With regard to financial, budgetary and administrative matters, three sub-items were introduced and addressed: the implementation of approved resource allocations; the harmonization of budget methodologies; and funding commitments to UN-Women. During the session, two side events were hosted by UN-Women: an interactive panel on best practices from the field, and a briefing on the use of social media by UN-Women.

At its second regular session of 2011 (New York, 5–7 December) [UNW/2012/2], the Executive Board adopted the report on its annual session in June; the tentative workplan for its first regular session of 2012, to be held in January; and the proposed annual workplan of the Executive Board for 2012. The Board also approved a decision on the UN-Women biennial institutional budget 2012–2013 (see p. 1099).

Functional areas

Operational activities

UN-Women strategic plan. In May, the Executive Director submitted to the Executive Board the UN-Women strategic plan, 2011–2013 [UNW/2011/9], which set out the vision, mission and priorities of the organization in supporting Member States and the UN system. The plan, which was driven by a long-term vision and goals and results to 2017, contained three interrelated components—a development results framework, a management results framework and an integrated resources framework. The development results framework comprised the following six main areas of work, each supported by defined outcomes, targets and indicators: increase women’s leadership and participation in all areas that affected their lives; increase women’s access to economic empowerment and opportunities, especially for those...
who were most excluded; prevent violence against women and girls and expand access to survivor services; increase women’s leadership in peace and security and humanitarian response; and strengthen the responsiveness of plans and budgets at all levels to gender equality. The sixth goal involved support for a comprehensive set of global norms, policies and standards on gender equality and women’s empowerment that responded to new and emerging issues, challenges and opportunities and provided a firm basis for action by Governments and other stakeholders. The management results framework presented four system-level output clusters that were essential to UN-Women support for development results. These were to drive more effective and efficient UN system coordination and strategic partnerships; to institutionalize a strong culture of results-based management, reporting, knowledge management and evaluation; to enhance organizational effectiveness; and to mobilize and leverage adequate resources. The integrated resources framework showed the planned projected total income of UN-Women for the strategic plan, 2011–2013, and indicated how these funds were apportioned. The report addressed the modalities for launching the strategic plan at country, regional and global levels and stressed the need to adapt the organizational structure of UN-Women to support efficient and effective implementation.

The Executive Director presented the strategic plan, 2011–2013, at the annual session of the Executive Board (New York, 27–30 June) [UNW/2011/10]. Overall, delegations were satisfied with the plan and many speakers noted that it was a step towards achieving gender equality and closing the gap between global norms and the daily realities faced by women worldwide. On 30 June, the Executive Board adopted a decision [UNW/2011/10 (dec. 2011/3)] endorsing the UN-Women strategic plan, 2011–2013, and requesting the Executive Director to emphasize the importance of education and training as an enabling instrument for women’s empowerment and leadership; mobilize relevant UN bodies and stakeholders to strengthen the provision of specialized education and training, in particular by using existing modalities and mechanisms; and submit to the Board, beginning at its annual session in 2012, an annual progress report on the strategic plan, 2011–2013, and provide updates at its regular sessions in 2012 and 2013. Recognizing the strategic plan’s results-based approach, the Board requested that UN-Women further develop the results frameworks and present a timetable for consultations with Member States on the matter, in order to improve the linkages between outputs and outcomes, and also requested the Executive Director to present the revised results frameworks to the Executive Board prior to its 2013 annual session.

**Least developed countries.** On 30 June [UNW/2011/10 (dec. 2011/4)], the Executive Board adopted a decision welcoming the General Assembly’s endorsement of the Istanbul Declaration and Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries for the Decade 2011–2020 (see p. 828), adopted at the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries (Istanbul, 9–13 May). The Board stressed the need for UN-Women to give special attention to the implementation of the Istanbul Programme of Action in its support of the least developed countries, and invited the Executive Director to integrate the implementation of the Programme of Action into the activities of UN-Women in accordance with its mandate.

**Report of Executive Director.** In December, the UN-Women Executive Director submitted to the Executive Board her first annual report [UNW/2012/1] on the entity’s operational activities, in response to resolution 64/289 [YUN 2010, p. 1396]. The Executive Director noted that in 2011—a year of transition for UN-Women—a vision for the entity was articulated, a field capacity assessment was carried out and the strategic plan was endorsed and being implemented. A strong staffing base was established at Headquarters and the process was being extended to the field. In addition, a resource mobilization strategy had been outlined to ensure that UN-Women could deliver on the high expectations of stakeholders.

In order to secure more robust and predictable funding for its operational activities, three approaches would be used: (a) widen the donor base by sustaining and enlarging core contributions from current Government donors providing the largest contributions, targeting Government donors who may be able to make greater contributions and strengthening efforts to solicit contributions from emerging donors; (b) identify new opportunities for cost-sharing resources to complement the core resource base, including for the two trust funds managed by UN-Women—the United Nations Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women (see p. 1071) and the Fund for Gender Equality, which completed its first grant-making cycle at the end of 2010; and (c) expand the non-traditional partnerships of UN-Women, especially with the private sector, foundations and the national committees. On the entity’s contribution to national capacity development—discussed in the context of each of the main areas of work identified in the UN-Women strategic plan, 2011–2013 (see p. 1096)—a multitude of approaches were adopted, including training, the dissemination of knowledge resources, the posting of experts or advisers on gender equality in key institutions, South-South exchange and cooperation, convening or mobilizing networks and providing financial or technical support. UN-Women promoted new initiatives and strengthened UN-system-wide accountability
mechanisms for gender equality, including the adoption of a gender marker to track resources for gender equality and performance indicators to assess the gender responsiveness of common country programming. Towards ensuring the programming capacity of UN country teams, UN-Women monitored the coverage of gender issues in the annual reports of Resident Coordinators, which showed an overall trend towards stronger support for gender equality and the empowerment of women. As joint programming had become a preferred UN-country-team programming modality, the number of joint programmes in which UN-Women participated had steadily increased to a total of 104. UN-Women was present in all “Delivering as one” pilot countries, and such pilots had contributed important lessons on how the United Nations could provide coordinated support to Member States on achieving national priorities on gender equality. The Executive Director noted that while the entity could not support a physical presence in all countries seeking its technical and advisory support, it would continue to extend its reach through investment in online portals addressing the needs of specific practitioner communities, and offer access to knowledge products informed by evaluations, research and training conducted by UN-Women and its partners.

**Normative support**

In response to resolution 64/289 [YUN 2010, p. 1396], the Executive Director of UN-Women reported [E/CN.6/2012/2] to the Commission on the Status of Women on the normative aspects of the entity’s work, in particular its support for gender-specific intergovernmental processes and efforts to increase attention to gender equality aspects in sectoral intergovernmental processes. In 2011, key objectives of the work of UN-Women included the delivery of critical support and forward-looking recommendations to intergovernmental discussions, as well as the leveraging of such discussions to help shape a results-oriented and actionable agenda for gender equality and the empowerment of women. Those efforts resulted in greater coherence between the support UN-Women provided to normative processes and the operational support it provided to partners at the national level.

UN-Women supported the Commission’s fifty-fifth session, which resulted in a set of agreed conclusions (see p. 1092) that expanded the global normative framework in a number of key areas, including national legislation and programmes; access to and participation in education; gender-sensitive education and training; the transition from education to full employment and decent work; and women in science and technology employment. UN-Women’s engagement with the work of the Economic and Social Council (see p. 1093) focused on the Council’s role with regard to gender mainstreaming and operational activities. In the reports prepared to support the Third Committee’s deliberations on a number of thematic questions to advance the gender equality agenda, UN-Women flagged areas where further progress was needed and proposed recommendations that proved useful in negotiation processes and outcomes on issues including gender-responsive budgeting and support for women migrant workers. In the field of security, UN-Women sought to support Member States in the implementation of policy commitments pertaining to women’s needs during and after conflict, and ensure that women were empowered to participate as key actors in conflict prevention and resolution and long-term peacebuilding. To promote attention to gender equality issues that could be leveraged for results on the ground, UN-Women strategically targeted three major UN intergovernmental processes and a global event—the high-level meeting on AIDS in June (see p. 1135), the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in December, the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in 2012, and the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in November (see p. 939). In its engagements, UN-Women linked its normative support function with its operational experience and expertise, and moved to implement the normative guidance of intergovernmental bodies. Priority emphasis was placed on supporting the work of Member States, intergovernmental bodies, to further refine and expand the normative framework, as well as on helping to close the implementation gap between the policy commitments of Member States and women’s daily realities.

**Administrative and budgetary matters**

**UN-Women governance**

**Bureau of the Executive Board.** At its 2010 organizational session [YUN 2010, p. 1182], the UN-Women Executive Board decided that its Bureau should be elected from among representatives of all its members, taking into consideration equitable geographical representation, and should consist of a President and four Vice-Presidents. It further decided that the presidency should rotate each year to a different regional group in alphabetical order beginning with Africa, and elected the members of the Bureau for 2011 [UNW/2011/1 (dec. 2010/1)].

**Biennial budget 2010–2011**

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/289 [YUN 2010, p. 1396], the UN-Women Executive Director submitted to the Executive Board a January report [UNW/2011/3] on proposals for the use of voluntary
Management response. In her response [UNW/2011/4/Add.1] to the ACABQ report, the Executive Director, concerning field capacity, did not agree that no action should be taken pending completion of the strategic plan and field capacity assessment. She set out elements of the support budget that she considered to require immediate approval.

Executive Board action. On 26 January [UNW/2011/8 (dec. 2011/1)], the Executive Board approved gross voluntary resources in the amount of $51.5 million; the additional amount of $2.5 million from voluntary core resources to cover UN-mandated security costs and $0.3 million for costs related to the adoption of the International Public Sector Accounting Standards and enhancement of the Atlas system; and the additional amounts of $5 million to support change management and $3 million for the move of premises and related technology installation.

Biennial budget 2012–2013

In an October report [UNW/2011/11], the Executive Director presented the institutional budget estimates for UN-Women for the biennium 2012–2013. The budget had been prepared in accordance with the harmonized results-based-budgeting and cost classification methodology applied by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children’s Fund, and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and was estimated at $140.8 million gross ($132.3 million net). In accordance with General Assembly resolution 64/289 [YUN 2010, p. 1396], the resources required to support the intergovernmental normative processes were being proposed by the Secretary-General in the context of the proposed UN programme budget (see p. 1375).

The budget provided for the institutional resources needed to implement the strategic plan (see p. 1096), and reflected the principal priority of strengthening the capacity of UN-Women to support countries in their pursuit of nationally owned priorities in gender equality and the empowerment of women. To that end, it provided for the phased development of 21 new country presences in 2012–2013, as well as the strengthening of UN-Women capacity in the 17 country presences for which the Executive Board had approved institutional budget resources for 2011. The budget represented 19.1 per cent of envisaged resource utilization. Over 86.3 per cent of resources would be devoted to development activities, while the share devoted to management activities would be 10.8 per cent.

ACABQ report. In its consideration [UNW/2011/12] of the proposed institutional budget for UN-Women, ACABQ recognized that the 2012–2013 institutional budget, being the first proposed biennial budget, served as a foundation for successive UN-Women budgets. While the Advisory Committee
had no objection to the use of a “net” appropriation, it nonetheless noted that the majority of anticipated income had not been applied to offset the budget. Further explanation should be provided directly to the Executive Board as to why a larger contribution from extrabudgetary income should not be made towards the cost of the institutional budget. Should the balance of income be received, the Committee requested that clarification also be provided to the Board on how that income would be utilized and what role, if any, the Board would have in that process. ACABQ considered that the full support costs should have been clearly set out in the proposed budget and recommended that they be presented in future budgets with greater clarity and transparency. The Committee also noted that proposals for posts in the UN-Women institutional budget were not sufficiently based on workload indicators and requested that future budgetary submissions contain full justification for the posts requested. Concluding, ACABQ recognized that the proposal for the first UN-Women biennial institutional budget was more realistic than previous projections, taking into account the difficult economic circumstances and their potential impact on the level of voluntary contributions, and recommended its approval.

Management response. On 20 December, UN-Women provided a management response [UNW/2011/12/Add.1] to selected comments and recommendations of the Advisory Committee.

Executive Board action. On 7 December [UNW/2012/2 (dec. 2011/5)], the Executive Board approved a gross appropriation of $140.8 million for the institutional budget for 2012–2013; noted that funding from core voluntary resources was estimated at $132.3 million and funding from other resources and trust funds at $8.5 million; and recognized that additional extrabudgetary income earned should be used for the institutional budget.

Proposed financial regulations

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 64/289 [YUN 2010, p. 1396], the Executive Director submitted for consideration by the Executive Board the proposed financial regulations and rules for UN-Women [UNW/2011/5 & Rev.1], taking into account the views expressed by the Office of the Controller and the Office of Legal Affairs, and incorporating the changes recommended by ACABQ (see below). The proposed financial regulations and rules were drawn primarily from the UNFPA financial regulations and rules; some were drawn from those of UNDP. The addendum to the report contained a comparison between the proposed financial regulations and rules and those of UNDP and UNFPA [UNW/2011/5/Add.1], providing explanations for deviations from those documents.

ACABQ report. In its consideration of the proposed financial regulations and rules [UNW/2011/7], the Advisory Committee was of the view that they provided an appropriate framework for governing the financial management of UN-Women but that adjustments to a number of the proposed regulations and rules were necessary to provide greater clarity, particularly in the sections relating to the preparation and submission of requests for funding under the biennial programme budget (the regular budget). ACABQ also recommended deleting certain proposed regulations and rules and including a provision that addressed the area of programme budget implications.

Executive Board action. On 8 April, the Executive Board took note of the report on the proposed financial regulations and rules for UN-Women and the related ACABQ report, and adopted the UN-Women financial rules and regulations [UNW/2011/8/Add.1 (dec. 2011/2)].