Women and in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the UN system. The report focused on the activities of the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the Secretariat and the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Inter-Agency Committee on Women and Gender Equality, and included information on the joint work plan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Centre for Human Rights, which aimed at facilitating the mainstreaming of women’s human rights. It also discussed national action plans of Governments and activities of NGOs to implement the outcome of the Conference. In accordance with Council resolution 1996/5 [YUN 1996, p. 393], the Secretary-General presented information on social and economic developments that had a gender impact, in particular the situation of Palestinian women and the release of women and children taken hostage in armed conflicts and subsequently imprisoned.

In accordance with Council decision 1996/310 [YUN 1996, p. 1331], the Secretary-General submitted a June report on mainstreaming the gender perspective into all UN policies and programmes as well as mainstreaming by intergovernmental bodies [E/1997/66]. The report stressed the need to bring a gender perspective not only into socio-economic areas and activities within the responsibility of the Council and its subsidiary bodies, but also into areas where gender issues had not or had only infrequently been considered. It described mainstreaming efforts by the Secretariat and the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the UN system. A series of recommendations were made to the Assembly, the Council and its functional commissions, the regional commissions, UN planning and budgeting programmes and policies, the Division for the Advancement of Women, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and gender units and focal points. Proposals were presented regarding capacity-building for mainstreaming, information in support of mainstreaming, gender balance, lessons learned, integrated follow-up to global UN conferences and accountability.

**Commission action.** In March [E/1997/27 (res. 41/6)], the Commission on the Status of Women, reaffirming that mainstreaming a gender perspective was integral to the empowerment of women and to achieving gender equality, asked the Secretary-General to give due attention to the implementation of the Platform for Action, including mainstreaming. It called on all UN bodies and agencies, in implementing their programmes and assistance, to respect fully the human rights of women and the girl child. UNIFEM was asked to bring its experience in programme countries to the attention of other UN organizations with a view to strengthening the gender perspective of development programmes in developing countries and increasing synergy with other UN organizations. The Secretary-General was asked, in his thematic report to the Commission in 1998 on violence against women, women and armed conflict, the human rights of women and the girl child, to draw special attention to the full participation of women in all aspects of humanitarian assistance programmes. Stressing the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the individual programmes of the 1998-2001 medium-term plan [YUN 1996, p. 1299], the Commission encouraged the Committee for Programme and Coordination to examine the issue when reviewing the medium-term plan. The Commission encouraged the Economic and Social Council to develop specific recommendations for mainstreaming a gender perspective into all UN system activities. The Secretary-General was asked to report on the implementation of the Commission’s resolution.

Also in March [res. 41/2], the Commission decided to ensure that the contributions and needs of women of all ages, including those of older women, were taken into account when monitoring the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into all UN system policies and programmes.

In other March action [dec. 41/101], the Commission supported the increased efforts by the Division for the Advancement of Women to contribute actively to mainstreaming a gender perspective in all UN activities, programmes and policies and supported the increased cooperation between the Division, the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council and UN bodies and agencies, including the Centre for Human Rights. The intensified activities in coordination and outreach by the Division, including its recurrent publications, were appreciated, in particular the proposal to continue the publication Women 2000 in its new streamlined format, as well as the Women Watch Web site being developed jointly by the Division, UNIFEM and INSTRAW.

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION**

At its July session, the Economic and Social Council [A/52/3/Rev.1] devoted part of the coordination segment to mainstreaming the gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the UN system.

It adopted agreed conclusions 1997/2 on the subject, which defined the concept of gender