

**Commission on the Status of Women  
Forty-ninth session  
New York, 28 February – 11 March 2005**

**PANEL I**

**Synergies between national-level implementation of the Beijing Declaration and  
Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of  
Discrimination against Women**

**Written statement\* submitted by**

**Louise Arbour  
United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**

\* The paper has been reproduced as submitted.







Women's sexual and reproductive rights are at the heart of ensuring protection against this pandemic. Guaranteeing these rights enhances women's capacity to insist on safe sex practices and to make informed choices about prevention and treatment options. Comprehensive sex education has been proven to reduce vulnerability to the virus, yet it is often denied to girls because of gendered assumptions about sexuality—the view being that girls do not need to know about sex because they should not be having sex. Reproductive health clinics are a key entry point for providing information and testing services to women who may have contracted the virus.

## Conclusion

HIV/AIDS is only one example of the gap between the international legal and