

ions Unies

of Women

March 2005

**Madame Chair, Distinguished Delegates, Panelists, members of the NGO community,
Ladies and gentlemen, good afternoon.**

**I am indeed honored to have been invited to participate in today's panel
discussion and to share the experiences of the Government and people of The Bahamas
regarding the synergies between our implementation of the B**

Training:

One of the actions undertaken to address violence against women was to provide training to key segments of the community, particularly the Police.

The Police have now introduced a mandatory component on domestic violence in

Constitutional Reform

Under the Platform for Action, paragraph 218 notes the concerns of having governments register reservations to human rights instruments. In paragraph 232 (b) and in Article 2 (a) of CEDAW, governments are encouraged to provide constitutional guarantees to prohibit discrimination against women. Additionally, Article 9 (2) requires state parties to grant women equal rights with men with respect to the nationality of their children.

Regrettably, Articles 2 (a) and 9 (2) are also sources of concern to The Bahamas and have been registered as reservations to the Convention. Under paragraph 230 (c) of the Beijing Platform for Action, governments are encouraged to limit their reservations and also review them periodically with a view to removing them.

The existing Constitution of The Bahamas continues to favor men in the granting of citizenship to their foreign born spouses. The current laws also discriminate against women regarding their ability to confer citizenship to their minor children born to foreign spouses.

Action was taken to remove this discrimination against women in the

To date, most programmes like the initiative by the “Action Team” and the legal literacy workshops were limited to the capital. Major financial resources are required to ensure that every community receives equal attention and hence limited resources have impeded the progress that could be made in implementing these documents.

I note that governments are encouraged to make adequate financial allocation for implementation, but the reality is that this is not always possible to the extent that we would like it to be. The impact of natural disasters, and particularly in the case of the Bahamas, hurricanes, further derail the limited resources and force governments to make a greater shift in priorities. Funding from donor agencies is a precious commodity that can no longer be

Unfortunately, The Bahamas has not yet fulfilled its reporting obligation under CEDAW. The assistance provided by the Division for the Advancement of Women to aid countries in meeting their reporting obligations has served to further inform our national process in this area. We do intend to submit our overdue reports in the very near future.

We have learnt from the preparation for reporting to CEDAW that a national blue print is imperative to ensure a more cohesive and comprehensive approach to implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and CEDAW. We will be working diligently towards this and we would encourage all States to formulate and implement such a plan.

As noted, synergies do exist between the two documents and countries cannot truly advance women without taking them and all other relevant international instruments into consideration.

Once again, I thank you for this opportunity to participate in this forum.