



**Commission on the Status of Women**  
Forty-ninth session

New York, 28 February - 11 March 2005

Excellencies,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

UNICEF

economies.

... **Women's poverty is still a**

Good practices also included efforts to promote women's self-employment and support to women's entrepreneurship, focused on

development of micro-credit schemes, women's business centres and meeting the needs of groups of women who face particular disadvantages in the labour market, including indigenous women. These initiatives play a role in empowering women to support themselves economically as well as contributing to their participation in the political and social spheres. Strengthening these types of initiatives, was considered particularly important for some sub-regions, such as South Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the South Caucasus.

To better recognize the importance of care giving and to support the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities, member States initiated innovative pilot studies, experiments and policies in areas such as flexible working hours, new forms of child care, small-scale

In several countries, new types of mechanisms were developed, such as equal opportunities commissions, ombudspersons, parliamentary committees, independent audit committees to assess progress in gender equality policies in all ministries and centres for gender studies, in order to strengthen the institutional capacity to advance equality. Gender budgeting initiatives led by women's movements and NGOs are other tools for accountability.

Many of these initiatives are still in the pilot phase and should be further developed.

More countries could now or enhance forms of cooperation among stakeholders, such as

These challenges have to be seen in a broader context, both at the economic and the political levels. In the economic sphere, globalization and regional integration create an  
[REDACTED]

competitiveness while maintaining social cohesion and reducing poverty, countries and groups of  
[REDACTED]

However, promoting gender mainstreaming into ECE activities is facing resources' constraints which constitutes a limiting factor to our continued efforts in this direction. It has also to be noted that mainstreaming gender into ECE activities is a long-term process as it involves cultural changes which have to take place in all the sectoral areas covered by the UNECE.

*Importance of regional and inter-regional cooperation*

In concluding let me stress **the importance of regional cooperation** in efficiently assisting member countries in the implementation of the Beijing commitments. Such cooperation has been proven in our regional Beijing process and should be strengthened. It is also crucial for