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**Note by the Secretariat as an input to the high-level segment of the substantive session of 2005 of the Economic and Social Council\***

*Summary*

In its resolution 2004/44, the Economic and Social Council requested its functional commissions, regional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies to contribute to the preparation of the input of the Economic and Social Council to the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly to be held in 2005. The

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## I. Introduction

1. In accordance with its decision 2004/294, the Economic and Social Council will consider the theme “Achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration, as well as implementing the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits: progress made, challenges and opportunities” at the high-level segment of its substantive session of 2005.

2. In its resolution 2004/44, the Council welcomed General Assembly resolution 58/291 and requested its functional commissions, the regional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies to contribute to the preparation of the input of the Council to the high-level plenary meeting of the Assembly to be held in 2005.

3. In accordance with its multi-year programme of work, at its forty-ninth session the Commission on the Status of Women will undertake a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly at the national level. In its resolution 48/5, the Commission decided to focus on the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the Assembly through the expanded use of interactive dialogue, with broad-based participation of governmental delegations at the highest level of responsibility and expertise and of civil society and organizations within the United Nations system, bearing in mind the need to integrate a gender perspective in the implementation and review of the Millennium Declaration. The Chairperson of the forty-ninth session of the Commission was also requested to transmit its outcome, through the Council, to the sixtieth session of the Assembly, including to the high-level meeting of the Assembly on the review of the Millennium Declaration, to be held from 14 to 16 September 2005.

4. The present note highlights resolutions of the Assembly, the Council and the Commission, as well as agreed conclusions of the Commission on several critical areas of concern and other emerging issues concerning the linkages between gender equality and the internationally agreed development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration. The note also covers the relevant outcomes of major global conferences and summits held following the Millennium Summit in 2000, inter alia, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society.

consensus around a rights-based framework for sustainable development. The conferences and summits focused on a more participatory and inclusive approach to development and emphasized the need for cooperation between Member States, the United Nations and all areas of society, including civil society and non-governmental organizations, the private sector, academia and the media, and major groups of stakeholders, in particular women, to ensure the effective implementation of outcomes.

7. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action were adopted by consensus in 1995 at the Fourth World Conference on Women. The Declaration embodies the commitment of the international community to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Platform for Action sets out measures for national, regional and international action in 12 critical areas of concern: poverty; education and training; health; violence against women; armed conflict; economy; power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights; media; environment; and the girl child. The rights of women and girl children were recognized as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. There was clear commitment to the promotion of international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Member States and the United Nations were called upon to mainstream gender perspectives into policies and programmes at the national, regional and international levels as a strategy to complement action for the empowerment of women.

8. The outcome document adopted by the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly reaffirmed the commitment of Member States to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It also identified further actions and initiatives required at the local, national, regional and international levels to accelerate the implementation of the Platform for Action and to ensure that commitments for gender equality, development and peace are fully realized.

9. The Millennium Declaration, adopted by United Nations Member States in September 2000, represented a global political commitment to peace, security and disarmament; development and poverty eradication; protecting our common environment; human rights, democracy and good governance; protecting the vulnerable; meeting the special needs of Africa; and strengthening the United Nations. In paragraph 6 of the Declaration, Member States identified equality as a fundamental value and principle and stated that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured. The Declaration recognized the centrality of gender equality for development. In paragraph 20 of the Declaration, Member States resolved to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable. Gender equality and the empowerment of women were considered both as objectives in themselves and as means to achieve overall development goals. In paragraph 25 of the Declaration, Member States also committed themselves to the elimination of violence against women and the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

10. The objectives in the Millennium Declaration were derived from the outcomes of the major summits and conferences of the 1990s. Eight of the commitments were subsequently consolidated as the Millennium Development Goals, to be achieved by 2015, and in order to measure and monitor progress, mobilize political commitment

and initiate concrete action, 16 global targets and 48 global indicators were established for the Millennium Development

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

### **III. Gender mainstreaming in relation to the Millennium Declaration and the internationally agreed development goals**

15. Intergovernmental processes, including those of the Commission, the Council and the Assembly, have affirmed the integration of gender perspectives as an important principle guiding the work of all entities of the United Nations system in relation to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the development goals contained therein, including the Millennium Development Goals.

16. The Commission has adopted annual resolutions on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system. Since 2003, these resolutions (see Commission resolutions 47/2 and 48/4) have welcomed the Millennium Declaration and its call for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

17. In its resolution 2004/4, the Council encouraged the governing bodies of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to ensure that gender perspectives are integrated into all aspects of their monitoring functions in relation to policies and strategies, medium-term plans, multi-year funding frameworks and operational activities, including those relating to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic and social fields. It also requested all entities of the United Nations system, including funds and programmes, to fully incorporate gender perspectives in their programmes and operational activities and to ensure, within their mandates, systematic integration of reporting on their efforts in mainstreaming gender into existing evaluation and monitoring processes within the United Nations system, including those relating to the development goals contained in the Declaration. In the same resolution, the Council also recommended that the Assembly encourage its Committees and other intergovernmental bodies to take further measures to systematically integrate gender perspectives into all areas of their work, including the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of major United Nations summits and conferences, in particular the high-level event planned for 2005.

18. In its resolution 56/132, the Assembly welcomed the integration of a gender perspective in the Millennium Declaration, and emphasized the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the implementation of and follow-up to the Millennium Declaration and in future reports on this subject.

19. In its resolution 57/182, the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include in his annual and quinquennial reports on the follow-up to the Millennium Declaration an assessment of the progress made in promoting the goal of gender equality, in particular in relation to the development goals set forth in the Declaration, as well as recommendations to improve the measurement and coverage of indicators so that progress towards gender equality can be evaluated over time.

20. A similar request was made in Assembly resolution 58/148, in which the Assembly also emphasized that the promotion of gender equality and of women's

empowerment and participation, together with the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, are among the essential elements for advancing the implementation of the Millennium Declaration, with a view, in particular, to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Declaration and the outcomes of United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions.

21. In its resolution 59/168, the Assembly welcomed Council decision 2004/309, in which the Council requested the Chairperson of the Commission to submit the outcome of the forty-ninth session of the Commission, through the Council, to the Assembly at its sixtieth session, including to the high-level event of the Assembly on the review of the Millennium Declaration.

critical factors in the eradication of poverty. The agreed conclusions recalled the Millennium Declaration and the development goals contained therein, as well as the resolve to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women as effective ways to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate development that is truly sustainable.

25. The agreed conclusions also recognized that, while it is the primary responsibility of States to attain economic and social development and to achieve the development and poverty eradication goals as set out in the Millennium Declaration, the international community should support the efforts of developing countries to eradicate poverty, ensure basic social protection and to promote an enabling international environment. The Commission urged Governments and, as appropriate, the relevant funds and programmes, organizations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations, and other stakeholders, to ensure that all actions to achieve the poverty eradication goals established in the Millennium Declaration include the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle.

26. In its resolution 2004/48, the Council reiterated that the eradication of rural poverty and hunger was crucial for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that rural development should be pursued through an integrated approach which encompasses the economic, social and environmental dimensions; takes into account the gender perspective and consists of mutually reinforcing policies and programmes; and should be balanced, targeted, situation specific, locally owned, include local synergies and initiatives and be responsive to the needs of rural populations. The Council also recognized that rural development was the responsibility of each country and predicated on an enabling national environment, and reaffirmed that an enabling international economic environment was important for the support of effective national development efforts, including rural development efforts. This environment should combine effective and coherent policies, good governance and accountable institutions at the national and international levels, as well as the promotion of gender equality and the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development.

27. The General Assembly, in its resolutions 56/188 and 58/206, reaffirmed the Millennium Declaration, in which it had been affirmed that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and called for, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as being effective and essential in the combat against poverty, hunger and disease and in stimulating





Education For All programmes as a tool to achieve the goal of achieving universal primary education by 2015.

34. In section VIII, paragraph 116, of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Governments committed to, inter alia, (a) meeting the goal of achieving universal primary education, ensuring that, by 2015, children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling; and (b) providing all children, particularly those living in rural areas and those living in poverty, especially girls, with the access and opportunity to complete a full course of primary education. Governments also agreed, in paragraph 120 of the Plan of Implementation, inter alia, to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, as provided in the Dakar Framework for Action on Education for All, and at all levels of education no later than 2015, to meet the development goals contained in the Millennium Declaration, with action to ensure, inter alia, equal access to all levels and forms of education, training and capacity-building by gender mainstreaming, and by creating a gender-sensitive educational system. In paragraph 62, the Plan of Implementation also referred to the linkages between poverty eradication and gender equality in education.

### **C. HIV/AIDS**

35. Building on the commitments contained in paragraph 19 of the Millennium Declaration to halt and reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS, the scourge of malaria and other major diseases that afflict humanity, goal 6 of the Millennium Development Goals aims to combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases. In its 2001 agreed conclusions on women, the girl child and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) (see E/2001/5), the Commission took into account the recommendations on women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS contained in the Beijing Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Copenhagen Programme of Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-first, twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly, the Millennium Declaration, its agreed conclusions on women and health and Commission resolution 44/2.

36. The 2001 agreed conclusions of the Commission recommended actions aimed at the empowerment of women, prevention, treatment, care and support and creating an enabling environment for regional and international cooperation. Governments were urged to take all necessary measures to empower women and strengthen women's economic independence and protect and promote full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to allow women and girls to better protect themselves from sexually transmitted infections/HIV. Governments were also called upon to intensify efforts to determine the best policies and programmes to prevent women and young girls from becoming infected with HIV/AIDS, taking into account that women, in particular young girls, are socially, physiologically and biologically more vulnerable than men to sexually transmitted infections. It was recommended that support for people living with HIV/AIDS, particularly women and girls, should take a comprehensive approach that took account of medical, social, psychological, spiritual and economic needs, targeting the community and national levels. Relevant United Nations entities were urged to incorporate a gender

perspective into their follow-up and evaluation of the progress made on the control of sexually transmitted infections and HIV/AIDS.

37. In its resolutions 47/1 and 48/2, the Commission recalled the goals and targets set forth in the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS adopted by the Assembly at its twenty-sixth special session, in 2001, and the HIV/AIDS-related goals contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular the aim to have halted and begun to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015.

38. In its resolution 2004/48, the Council recognized the devastating impact of HIV/AIDS and other infectious diseases on societies and called for measures by United Nations bodies, especially the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS co-sponsoring agencies and development partners to further mainstream HIV/AIDS concerns into rural development planning, including poverty eradication and food security strategies and multisectoral development activities covering economic and social aspects, including the gender perspective.

39. In the Declaration of Commitment on HIV/AIDS, the Assembly called for the need to integrate gender perspectives into HIV/AIDS care, support and treatment. In

41. In its resolution 58/217, the Assembly decided that the goals of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Life”, 2005-2015, should be a greater focus on water-related issues at all levels and on the implementation of water-related programmes and projects, while striving to ensure the participation and involvement of women in water-related development efforts, and the furtherance of cooperation at all levels, in order to help to achieve the internationally agreed water-related goals contained in Agenda 21, the Programme for the Further Implementation of Agenda 21, the Millennium Declaration and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, and, as appropriate, those identified during the twelfth and thirteenth sessions of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

42. In paragraph 20 of the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, Member States stated their commitment to ensuring that women’s empowerment, emancipation and gender equality are integrated in all the activities encompassed within Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Plan of Implementation of the Summit. In the Plan of Implementation of the Summit, reference was made to the linkages between sustainable development and women’s participation in and access to decision-making and economic resources. In paragraph 7 of the Plan, Member States noted that although each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication and the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized, concerted and concrete measures are required at all levels to enable developing countries to achieve their sustainable development goals as related to the internationally agreed poverty-related targets and goals, including those contained in Agenda 21, the relevant outcomes of other United Nations conferences and the United Nations Millennium Declaration. This would include actions at all levels to, inter alia, promote women’s equal access to and full participation in, on the basis of equality with men, decision-making at all levels, mainstreaming gender perspectives in all policies and strategies, eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against women and improving the status, health and economic welfare of women and girls through full and equal access to economic opportunity, land, credit, education and health-care services.

43. In paragraph 25 of the Plan of Implementation, Governments also agreed to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water, as outlined in the Millennium Declaration, and the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation, which would include actions at all levels to, inter alia, mobilize international and domestic financial resources at all levels, transfer technology, promote best practice and support capacity-building for water and sanitation infrastructure and services development, ensuring that such infrastructure and services meet the needs of the poor and are gender-sensitive; and facilitate access to public information and participation, including by women, at all levels in support of policy and decision-making related to water resources management and project implementation.

## **E. Financing for development**

44. Building on the values and principles of the Millennium Declaration, goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals provides for the establishment of a global partnership for development. In its 2002 agreed conclusions on eradicating poverty, including through the empowerment of women throughout their life cycle, in a

globalizing world, the Commission urged Governments and, as appropriate, the relevant funds and programmes, organizations and the specialized agencies of the United Nations system, the international financial institutions, civil society, including the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and other stakeholders, to take action to accelerate implementation of these strategic objectives to address the needs of all women, including to provide additional international financing and assistance to developing countries in support of their efforts to empower women and eradicate poverty and mainstream gender perspectives in the official development assistance process, including specific provisions for meeting the needs of women living in poverty in such areas as education, training, employment and health, as well as in social and economic policies, including macroeconomic policies, with a view to achieving sustainable development, and to urge developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries, and encourage developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help achieve development goals and targets.

45. The Monterrey Consensus called for mainstreaming a gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the global economic system's support for development; recognized that gender equality is one of the essential elements of good governance and that empowerment of women is a priority in economic development; called for gender-sensitive investments in basic economic and social infrastructure in recognition of the importance of social and economic aspects in combating poverty and ensuring sustainable development; and stressed the importance of microfinance and credit schemes and advocated gender budget policies (see paragraphs 8, 11, 16, 19, 23 and 64 of the Consensus).

## **F. Media and information and communication technology**

46. One of the targets of goal 8 of the Millennium Development Goals concerning a global partnership for development, target 18, is focused on making available, in cooperation with the private sector, the benefits of new technologies, especially information and communications. In its 2003 agreed conclusions (see E/2003/44) on participation in and access of women to the media, and information and communication technologies and their impact on and use as an instrument for the advancement and empowerment of women, the Commission recalled and reiterated the strategic objectives and actions of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome document adopted at the twenty-third special session of the Assembly concerning the potential of the media and of information and communications technologies to contribute to the advancement and empowerment

47. The Declaration of Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society

Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance noted the intersection of discrimination on grounds of race and gender. In the same year, at its

<sup>3</sup> Message for International Women's Day 2003, United Nations press release dated 8 March 2003.

<sup>4</sup> The treaty bodies established under human rights instruments are the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Human Rights Committee, the Committee on the Rights of the