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Agenda item 3 (b)

1. On 1 March 2011, the Commission on the Status of Women convened an interactive expert panel to examine the emerging issue “Gender equality and sustainable development”. The present moderator’s summary serves as an input to the preparatory process for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro in May 2012. The Conference focuses on two main themes: (a) a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication; and (b) the institutional framework for sustainable development.

2. The discussion was moderated by Ms. Leysa Sow, Vice-Chair of the Commission. The panellists were: Ms. Henrietta Elizabeth Thompson, Executive Coordinator, United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development; Ms. Monique Essed-Fernandes, Interim Director, Women’s Environment and Development Organization; Mr. Robert Freling, Executive Director, Solar Electric Light Fund;

Governments, in collaboration with academia and civil society, also need to take steps to redesign educational curricula and teaching materials so as to address current environmental challenges and the threats posed by climate change and their differentiated impact on women and men. Vocational training can help ensure women's and girls' enhanced knowledge, skills and capacity in the installation, use and repair of green technologies and systems. Such skills would not only contribute towards enhancing women's opportunities to find decent work and full employment but also open up new entrepreneurial opportunities for them. Microfinance is an

solutions. Similarly, increasing investments in sustainable infrastructure, for example, in clean energy, water and sanitation, could contribute to strengthening women's economic empowerment and limiting their engagement in unpaid work.

- Ensure women's effective participation in the preparatory processes leading up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development
- Promote participatory dialogues among Governments, civil society and the private sector with respect to developing and implementing gender-responsive policy and budget frameworks for sustainable development
- Ensure that international conventions on environmental issues integrate the issues of gender equality and women's empowerment and full participation
- Appoint a special rapporteur on the right to energy
- Identify opportunities for women to turn green practices into profitable business opportunities, and compile good practices that can be replicated and scaled up globally
- Conduct an assessment of women's opportunities and participation in a green economy within the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication
- Reinforce international cooperation and increase the participation of women scientists in the protection and documentation of biodiversity, and in respect of global awareness of the role of responsible consumption in the attainment of sustainable development.