United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW)
Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Flofore
Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)

Equal Participation of Women and Men in Decision-Making Processes, with Particular Emphasis on Political Participation and Leadership

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I.   INTRODUCTION

1.   In accordance with its multi-year programme of work for 2001-2006, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will consider "Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels" as one of two thematic issues during its fiftieth session in 2006. In order to contribute to a further understanding of this issue and to assist the Commission in its deliberations, the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) in the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, in collaboration with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), organized an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on "Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on political participation and leadership". The EGM was hosted by the Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, from 24 to 27 October 2005.

2.   The findings and recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting will be presented at the panel discussion on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes during the fiftieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

3.   The expert group meeting analyzed the current situation of women in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on women's political participation and leadership at the international, national, regional and local levels. It discussed the conditions that facilitate women's representation in decision-making processes within the context of current socio-economic and political transformations, and examined the linkages between women's presence in decision-making and their impact on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into policies and programmes. The expert group meeting adopted policy recommendations to advance women's participation and leadership through, *inter alia*, capacity-building, coalition-building and gender-sensitive institutional policies, programmes and mechanisms, based on the identification of the most promising practices and lessons learned to date. The report that follows is the outcome of deliberations of the independent experts.

II. ORGANIZATION OF WORK

A. Participation

4.   The Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on "Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on polit

- a background paper prepared by a consultant on behalf of the Division for the Advancement of Women
- an overview paper prepared by IPU
- twelve papers prepared by experts
- two papers prepared by observers

6.   This report and all documentation relating to the meeting are available online at the website of the Division for the Advancement of Women: http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw.

C. Programme of work

7.   At its opening session on 24 October 2005, the meeting adopted the following programme of work (see Annex III):

-       Opening of the meeting
-       Election of officers and adoption of the programme of work
-       Presentation and discussion of the Division for the Advancement of Women's background paper and papers prepared by experts and observers
-       Working groups on issues and recommendations
-       Introduction of draft report
-       Adoption of final report
-       Closing session

D. Election of officers

8.   The experts elected the following officers:

Chair: Ms.Leslye Amede Obiora (Nigeria)   Rapporteur: Amy Mazur (USA)

E. Working groups

9.   Two working groups were established:

- Working group I – "Increasing numbers", rapporteur Teresa Sacchet (Brazil)
- Working group II - "Women making a difference", rapporteur Fiona Macaulay (UK)

F. Opening statements

10.   The meeting was opened by Ms. Thokozile Ruzvidzo, Officer in Charge, African Centre for Gender and Development, (ACGD), a division of the ECA. In her welcoming statement, Ms. Ruzvidzo noted the importance of the meeting on equal participation of women and men in decision-making. She emphasized that the issue of women's participation in decision-making in Africa continued to be of serious concern. However, due recognition needed to be given to the progress that has been made on the continent. The Africa Union Constitutive Act is a leading example, as it requires the African Union to have a 50 percent representation of women commissioners. Such an approach needs to be emulated in other institutions, including in the UN. She indicated the full

support of the African Centre for Gender and Development for the meeting and wished the experts a successful outcome.

11.   Ms. Roselyn Odera, Chief of Gender Analysis Section at the Division for the Advancement of Women, presented a statement on behalf of Ms. Carolyn Hannan, Director of the Division. She thanked IPU and ECA for collaboration in the preparation of the meeting, and the ECA, in particular, for hosting the meeting. She welcomed the international experts, members of Parliament, United Nations system representatives and observers from governmental and non-governmental organizations. In her statement, Ms. Hannan identified major achievements and challenges in promoting women's equal participation in decision-making processes at all levels. She indicated that the expert group meeting had a special significance for the fiftieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and noted that the conclusions and recommendations of the meeting would assist the Commission in its deliberations on the thematic issue.

III.   BACKGROUND

A. Plan of the report

12.   This report maps out various facets of the complex issue of the equal participation of men and women in decision-making identified by the experts. The report begins with a section which presents the international policy framework, followed by the conceptual framework for the report. Experts' views in support of increasing numbers of women in decision-making, the status of women in positions of power, and the importance of going beyond numbers to assess the impact of women in top positions are then discussed. The issues of increasing the number of women and the quality of participation and representation are examined in sections IV and V of the report. The report concludes with the presentation of recommendations made by the experts in these two key areas.

B. International policy framework
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to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making;

to increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.

of awareness raising campaigns. The resolution requested the Secretary-General to include information on the political participation of women in his report to the fiftieth session of the Commission in 2006, when the Commission will consider the theme on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.

22.   The ten-year review and appraisal of the

25.   The experts agreed that women's participation and representation in decision-making bodies involves their enhanced presence as well as their empowerment through such participation. They emphasized that women's political leadership and accountability are key cross-cutting issues. On the one hand, women's political leadership allows them to set agendas and, on the other hand, it is in such roles that they are made responsive to constituencies and publics. This accountability becomes the cornerstone for not only numerical enhancement of women's presence but also their ability to transform outcomes, the content and the ways in which policy actors make public policy.

26.   The expert group also emphasized the importance of studying these four concepts systematically at *all* levels of governance: local, sub-national, national, regional, sub-regional, transnational and international. In order to achieve women's full participation and representation at all levels, the establishment of mechanisms to promote women's presence in public office is of crucial importance. In addition, to fully achieve women's representation in political life, there must be gender equality across a full range of decision-making levels:

> the three branches of government – the legislature, executive and judiciary—at all territorial levels including women's policy machineries;
>
> non-state contexts such as trade unions, political parties, interest groups, professional associations, and businesses/private sector;
>
> Beyond national governance, women need to have a decision-making presence in regional, sub-regional and international organizations;
>
> trans-national social movements;
>
> fora for the prevention and resolution of conflict and peace building.

27.   The meeting considered the importance of gender equality not only in decision-making arenas, but also the interplay between the political and economic empowerment of women. That is, how more women in positions of power can influence policies and strategies for enhancing women's economic opportunities and how, in turn, the related enhancement of women's economic status can provide better conditions for accessing and ensuring effect9-1.15 TD0.0 Tcasecph

The interest argument – the interests of men and women are different and even conflicting and therefore women are needed in representative institutions to articulate the interests of women.

The critical mass argument – women are able to achieve solidarity of purpose to represent women's interests when they achieve certain levels of representation.

The symbolic argument - women are attracted to political life if they have role models in the arena.

The democracy argument – the equal representation of women and men enhances democratization of governance in both transitional and consolidated democracies.

29.   The experts' analyses revealed that both the experience and the critical mass arguments were problematic. The experience argument tends to treat women as a homogenous group without acknowledging the economic, social and cultural diversity among them. The critical mass argument often views the 30 percent representation of women as a panacea and denies the evidence of contexts where women do achieve effective representation in smaller numbers. In practice, experts concurred that the critical mass of 30 percent is often used as a ceiling rather than a minimum.

30.   *Numbers* – The experts noted that in the last ten years there has been progress towards the equal representation of men and women in decision-making. As of September 2005, the global average for women in parliaments stands at 16.0 percent. Additionally, women have achieved 30 percent representation or more in national parliaments in 19 countries. However, progress has been uneven and slow and in some cases there have been significant setbacks. Twenty-two countries out of 167 had reversals in women's representation in parliaments, while ten remained static. Experts also discussed issues of longevity and sustainability of representation. They noted that in order for women and men to make effective interventions in policy, they should be in office for more than one term. Table 1 shows that the number of women heads of state also regressed.

Table 1: Women in Decision-making Bodies, 1995 and 2005

31.   A more detailed breakdown of women's representation in some key decision-making areas, presented below in Tables 2, 3, and 4 further illustrates this mixed record.

Table 2: Women in Parliament, 1945-2005

Table 3: Women in Parliament by Region, 1995-2005

Source: IPU, 2005. *Women in Politics: 1945-2005.* Information kit.
http://www.ipu.org/english/surveys.htm#45-05

Table 4: Women in the Executive, 1995-2005

	1995	**2005**
Women Heads of State or Government (elected)	6.4 % (12 of 187)	4.2% (8 of 191)
Women Presiding Officers of a House of Parliament	10% (24 of 228)	8.3% (21 of 254)
Ministerial Portfolios held by Women	No data available	858 in 183 countries Sweden: 52.4% women ministers Spain: 50.0% women ministers

32.   *Beyond Numbers* -- The experts agreed that the equal presence of women and men in decision-making institutions is important, but they noted that there is a need to assess the contexts and conditions in which their equal presence can become effective in empowering women and men, and thereby sustain democracy. In the words of International IDEA, it is important to look 'Beyond

Numbers'. Reflecting a consensus in the scientific community, the experts at the meeting agreed that this issue can be discussed by distinguishing between descriptive or numerical representation on the one hand, and substantive representation on the other hand. This can be defined as:

> *Descriptive (Numerical) Representation* – Where the individual represents a group by the virtue of sharing similar characteristics with the group such as race, sex, age, ethnicity or geographical area. Women representing women can be seen as a form of direct participation in decision-making bodies. Descriptive representation is based on the idea that the representative possesses a particular ascribed characteristic, for example sex, age or ethnicity, and by virtue

of Women's Empowerment (TOWE), in which women in political positions, both elected and appointed, work with national machineries for the advancement of women and the women's movement to ensure the formulation and implementation of meaningful policies on gender equality. This collaboration has the potential to contribute to the democratization process in struggling democracies and in making stable democracies even more democratic. The figure below shows how the TOWE operates within national contexts.

Diagram 1: Women's policy agencies (WPAs) and democratization: The triangle of women's empowerment (TOWE)

Source: Vargas and Wieringa (1998)

35.   Experts pointed out the importance of noting that effective gender mainstreaming and gender equality policy depends in large part on national machineries having the ability to represent women and women's interests. These offices have the potential to be major conduits for women's descriptive and substantive representation and participation in three ways:

> They may represent women substantively by bringing the consideration of women's interests and gender equality issues into public policy discussion, formulation and implementation, often through gender mainstreaming;

> They can represent women descriptively and procedurally by helping the actual actors who speak for gender equality and for women to enter government policy-making arenas;

Because women tend to work in and lead these agencies, although not in all cases, national machineries for the advancement of women may increase the participation of women at the national level.

The experts also pointed out that women's movements should also be seen as having a representational role to play; both in terms of substantive and descriptive representation.

36.   More generally, therefore, mobilization of women in all parts of government and outside of the state in interest groups, social movements, political parties and other participatory processes allows for women's interests to be articulated. Broad-based women's mobilization can be oriented toward challenging and refashioning conventional approaches to policy problems that may close out considerations of gender equality, and toward making claims against the state and governance institutions that may threaten gender equality. The experts reviewed three basic ways in which women engage in public life:

Participation in political *institutions* - women engage in political institutions by

39.   Having reviewed the arguments and evidence at different levels and regions, the experts noted that equal participation of women and men in decision-making institutions was a key element in the democratization of governance. By effectively increasing the descriptive and substantive representation of women in political life at all levels, the potential for change in political practices—and therefore in outcomes--towards the empowerment of women can be better

party policies. In addition, rather than seeing women as decision makers and leaders, party leaders tend to treat their female members instrumentally, to secure women's votes and to involve them in the party's lobbying and organizational activities.

44. Political parties are the major 'gatekeepers' in determining who will be candidates in elected office. They play a critical role in advancing or impeding women's participation in decision-making bodies. Through the process of candidate selection (where candidates are taken on by the party for election), women face a number of obstacles. Men are often viewed as more viable and better candidates and are given preference to female candidates. Additionally, the pool from which political parties search for candidates tend to be dominated by men, such as trade union officials and local councilors. In PR systems, the position of women on the party list is crucial: if they are not placed in winnable positions they will not be elected.

45. Even when women possess the characteristics that make for good candidates, they often are not encouraged to step forward to become candidates. Women are also less likely to present themselves as candidates, often seeing themselves as lacking the skills necessary to perform well in politics. Sometimes women hesitate to become involved in party politics and show preference for participating in social movements which are less structured and more goal-oriented.

46. Even after selection as candidates, women seeking decision-making positions can be constrained by different factors. This can include a lack of financial support and time for campaigning because of difficulties in balancing family and public life, of confidence about relevant skills, of fewer connections to politically relevant networks. Additionally, the environment of political institutions is not 'gender-friendly' and deters some women from considering entering political life, for example, sitting times in parliaments, meeting schedules of political parties and lack of childcare facilities.

47. The group discussed in detail the application of *quotas* and the conditions under which they lead to the increased representation of women as a key factor in increasing women's representation in decision-making. It was noted that quotas have been an effective tool to increase women's access to decision-making. Sixteen of the twenty countries that have reached the target of 30 percent women in national legislatures use some type of quota. It was also noted that political parties in more than 80 countries around the world have currently implemented either reserved seats, legislated candidate quotas or have adopted voluntary quotas. Marked progress was noted in countries undergoing political transitions such as South Africa and Latin American states, and in post-conflict countries, such as Rwanda, Iraq and Afghanistan. Quotas were also considered in detail as an important mechanism to increase the number of women in national legislatures. They are examined in this context in the next section.

48. Women's movements were also seen by the experts as being important in the process of increasing the numbers of women in legislatures. Women's movements and groups lobby for equal representation, support women's candidacies and special measures for recruitment and selection. Inside the party, activists with links with women's movements place pressure on party leadership to pursue all possible measures toward women's equality in political representation.

49.   The socio-economic position of women in societies negatively affects their participation. Typically, women earn less than men, and the sexual division of labor in society also imposes burdens on women that are not normally faced by men. Women often face a triple burden when participating in politics. They have a responsibility to their work or profession, to their family, and if they become involved in politics they are effectively taking on a third full-time job. Most societies fail to organize in a manner that enables both men and women with families to share these responsibilities, particularly considering that child-rearing responsibilities tend to fall disproportionately on women.

B. Mechanisms for increasing women's participation, representation and leadership

50.   Experts considered the various mechanisms to increase women's presence in legislatures, and discussed the impact of electoral quotas. They noted that in general, *political parties* may develop incentives to attract women to the party such as providing funding to run an election campaign, providing access to networks, training and skills development for women candidates to stand for election, or setting targets within the party for a certain number of executive positions to

quota law, the Electoral Tribunal ruled that any party that failed to uphold the requirements of the law would have their party removed from ballots. This was a very effective sanction that quickly led all parties to comply with the law. Quotas are also likely to be more effective with closed list proportional systems than open list proportional systems.

54.   *Quotas in majoritarian systems*. The most common type of quotas in electoral systems based on single member constituencies, where a party presents one candidate, are reserved seats, where a certain number of seats are reserved for women. Among reserved seat systems, those in which the representative is directly elected rather than appointed provide the individual MP with greater legitimacy and with greater independence.

55.   *Timing* is an important consideration: there are certain times in the political process when opportunities to introduce quotas are increased. In countries undergoing transition and constitutional and legal reform, such windows of opportunity often exist.

56.   *A post-conflict norm?* It is now common for quotas to be considered as a means for securing women's representation in post-conflict states. These quotas have taken varying forms, ranging from voluntary party quotas adopted by the ruling (liberation) parties in Mozambique, to reserved seats and constitutional quotas, most recently introduced in Rwanda, Afghanistan, Iraq and Burundi.

57.   *A positive effect, not a panacea*. In the short term, quotas may dramatically increase the representation of women, but they allow parties to make concessions to women without necessarily addressing critical gender equality issues. The attainment of gender justice in post-conflict states and in the consolidation of democracy in the long term depends on a host of factors, including the development of a democratic political culture, the level of mobilization of women in civil society, and the transparency and accountability of democratic institutions. Most importantly, the attainment of gender justice depends on the political will of party leadership.

58.   *Training and skills development*. In order for quotas to be effective, both women and men need access to training and skills development. Given that many women have had little experience with running for political office, it is of utmost importance that training be made readily available to allow women to develop and fine-tune their political skills. Once in office, women may also benefit from leadership training and mentoring to increase efficiency and ensure sustainability. Training programs should also target men, to expose them to the complexities of gender discrimination and the necessity of and mechanisms for promoting women in public office.

V.   Beyond numbers: The impact of women's political participation and representation

59.   Examination of methods and conditions for enhancing women's presence in elected office is not enough. The experts emphasized that it is necessary to go "beyond numbers" and assess to what degree and under what conditions elected women actually do represent women and contribute to democracy and gender equality. In other words, how are women making a difference?

A. Conditions that enable women to be effective in decision-making processes

60. The experts identified three important conditions that contribute to the ability of women to effectively promote gender equality, including through gender mainstreaming efforts:

the presence of individual women, and in some cases men, who as **critical actors** play key roles in the political process;

the way in which certain political processes and institutions enhance women's political influence – **critical structures**;

the unfolding of certain periods or moments when forces combine to provide unprecedented opportunities for women to have influence in the policy-making process – **critical junctures**.

The sections below present the experts' views on how these conditions operate to contribute to enhancing the impact of women's representation and participation in political processes in a wide variety of contexts.

1. Critical actors

61. Although many advocates of women's empowerment have identified a critical mass of women in elected office as being a crucial factor in their ability to influence policy processes and outcomes, the experts observed that this is not always the case. Recent research suggests that a simple rise in numbers does not necessarily add up to a more effective female presence in parliament. For example, the increase in the number of women in parliaments can lead to more bills on women's issues, but does not necessarily strengthen the political alliances necessary to get the bills passed. Women elected due to the introduction of quotas will not automatically become strategic allies in promoting policies that favour gender equality and gender mainstreaming.

62. The way in which women enter positions of power can determine whether they will be politically marginalized or become key players in their political organizations and in the decision-making positions in public office that they assume. Some women work their way up from the grassroots and through the party structures, which gives them both experience and legitimacy. Others enter politics as proxies for male relatives who are unable to run for office due to prohibitions on re-election or – ironically – the presence of gender quotas. While many of these 'proxy women representatives' remain politically marginalized with little impact on gender equality issues, others become

64.   Studies have shown that the ability of women elected to parliament to act as catalysts of change both among their peers and within their parties depends on other personal characteristics, such as their political career paths (through party and grassroots activism or

governance and of the political mainstream. The degree of *accountability* varies among countries. In patronage-oriented systems, accountability will tend to be defined by narrower personal, family or clan interests as well as those of political groups and patrons. More democratic governance is accompanied by more developed mechanisms for pub

the implementation of the laws promoted by female legislators, and the policies devised by national women's/gender equality mechanisms.

B. The impact of women's equal participation in decision-making processes

76.   The experts emphasized the importance of two normative premises for women to make a difference in all areas of policy: that women should be brought in on an equal footing with men in decision-making and that citizens need to be educated about good governance in order to make their governments accountable.

77.   With these premises in mind, the experts assessed the impact of women's participation in decision-making in gender equality policy, peace-building, and socio-economic development.

78.   *Impact* on *Gender Equality Polic*y. Experts agreed that women's participation in decision-making has implications for promoting gender equality:

> Women have played an important role in writing and amending constitutions that address the issues of gender equality. Two notable examples include the French parity constitutional amendment on equal representation of men and women, and the post-apartheid constitutional drafting process in South Africa;

> Most countries have established national machineries for the advancement of women aimed, *inter alia* at promoting, supporting and monitoring gender mainstreaming, that is, a cross-sectoral approach to integrating gender equality concerns into all areas of public policy. These national machineries, in alliance with women legislators and local and regional women's movements have made important gains in terms of removing anachronistic and discriminatory provisions from legal codes and promoting women's rights.

> Thanks in part to some women leaders taking up this issue, the eradication of violence against women in both the domestic and the public sphere has gained momentum as a

81.   Experts noted that women are typically excluded from formal peace processes and that too often the claims of warlords and a cohort of men with guns become the focus of demobilization efforts to the detriment of women's claims for resources for their functional roles as the principal agents of peace-building. Women's role in post-conflict reconstruction has been increasingly recognized. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 offers a comprehensive set of recommendations in this regard. For example, through the vigorous advocacy of the United Nations and some donor countries, women representatives were given training and an opportunity to participate in peace-building and nation-building in Timor-Leste. Women's participation also provided a critical opportunity for a powerful advocacy on the detrimental effects of violent conflicts, and contributed towards building a culture of peace.

82.   *Impact on socio-economic development*. Study of the impact of globalization on societies has been paying increasing attention to differences among women and men at the supra-state level. Despite skeptical voices, the globalization of participation through social movements is regarded by many as a dynamic, creative response to the forces of economic convergence that create both possibilities and constraints. Three areas are important in this respect: social movements, state institutions and international organizations.

83.   The experts acknowledged some progress in the equal participation of women and men in political processes and institutions, but noted that the inequalities between women and men, among women and between North and South, have an impact on how far women can be effective in changing policies and policy frameworks. Political participation in women's movements, political representation in decision-making bodies, and political leadership in both these arenas of politics are required to ensure that women and men have equal access to both the processes of decision-making and benefits from the outcomes of those processes. In the context of globalization, these inequalities can only be addressed at multiple levels, which require coordination of the efforts of the United Nations and other international organizations, of social movements and political institutions at the state level.

84.   The experts agreed that despite some important areas of progress in women's impact on policy and decision-making at multiple levels and across multiple arenas, there is still much progress to be made. Profound obstacles remain that impede women's effective representation and participation. The following factors were identified as some of the prevalent road blocks:

> women's exclusion from male-dominated policy domains, such as the military, macroeconomic policy and foreign affairs;
>
> the absence of women-friendly environments in political institutions such as parliaments and legislatures;
>
> regime instability and political violence;
>
> poverty and social marginalization.

VI. Recommendations

A. Recommendations for increasing the number of women in decision-making

The EGM recommends that <u>government actors</u> should:

1. Ensure that in addition to national laws, relevant international instruments relating to full political rights for women, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, are ratified, integrated into national law and implemented, especially in those countries where women are still denied the right to vote and stand for election.

2. Review the existing constitutional, political, legislative, and regulatory frameworks, particularly in countries in transition and post-conflict states, for provisions that may hinder women's equal participation, such as rules requiring high numbers of signatures to register as a candidate or high monetary deposits that can be discriminatory against women candidates.

3. Seek to achieve gender parity in all decision-making bodies, by establishing incremental time-bound targets for increasing women's representation.

4. Include women in discussions on electoral system reform, such as the impact of proposed electoral systems, proportional representation or majoritarian, district magnitude and expected party magnitude, electoral thresholds, boundary delimitation, and closed versus open lists, and analyze the impact of the proposed changes on gender equality.

5. Enact special measures to guarantee women access to the legislature and decision-making positions, including through legislated quotas within a proportional representation system or reserved seats within majoritarian systems with specific and effective sanctions for non-compliance. In majoritarian or plurality systems, the reserved seats should be directly elected.

6. Ensure that women and men have equal opportunities during election campaigns, such as providing public funding, access to the state media, setting campaign spending limits, and ensuring that campaign finances and expenditures are disclosed.

7. Develop and promote gender-sensitive curriculum and teacher training on civic education for men and women.

8. Use ICT training as a tool in education and training efforts, in particular to overcome the digital divide between men and women in the use of new technologies and to provide women with equal access to information.

2. Collect and provide sex-disaggregated data on: levels of registration, voter turnout, the number of male and female candidates and those elected, by party and by constituency (where applicable).

3. Ensure that public service information and voter education campaigns use gender-sensitive language and avoid negative portrayals of women.

The EGM recommends that <u>international</u> actors should:

1. Provide resources for training of potential women candidates across party lines in the skills necessary to engage in political campaigning and interact effectively with the media.

2. Support and promote public awareness-raising campaigns to combat negative stereotypes, emphasize the legitimate role of women in decision-making processes at all levels, and encourage women's participation in decision-making.

3. Facilitate research about the conditions under which women's participation and representation is increased and enhanced in political parties, government and parliaments, including through the adoption of different political reforms, and disseminate the examples of "good practices".

The EGM recommends that <u>civil society</u> actors should:

1. Hold government, legislatures and political parties accountable for progress in increasing women's participation and representation.

2. Facilitate linkages between women in decision-making positions and those working for the empowerment of women at the grassroots, in the academic community and in civil society organizations.

3. Monitor the media's coverage of women and gender equality issues, and identify and report on gender bias particularly with respect to women in decision-making.

4. Strengthen civic and citizenship training in schools and continuing adult education and ensure its gender responsiveness.

5. Strengthen advocacy on the issues of gender equality and empowerment of women among the general public with special emphasis on parents and teachers.

B. Recommendations for enhancing the impact of increased presence of women in decision-making

The EGM recommends that <u>government actors at all levels</u> (national, provincial and municipal/district) should:

1. Support the work of national mechanisms on gender equality and empowerment of women on gender mainstreaming, including through establishing and properly supporting inter-ministerial committees.

2. Ensure that women are equally represented in all government policy making bodies covering all areas, especially those that have remained the domains of men, for example the areas of macroeconomic policy, budgets and defense.

3. Generate and disseminate sex-disaggregated statistics and indicators on all aspects of government activity, including policy development and budget allocations and expenditure.

4. Develop and implement training programmes on gender mainstreaming in governmental bodies in order to undertake gender analysis in all legislative and policy areas, including budget allocations.

5. Ensure that national and subnational mechanisms on gender equality and empowerment of women are provided with all the necessary resources for implementing their mandates.

6. Ensure efficient collaboration and consultation among national mechanisms NGOs and women's groups in the process of the formulation and implementation of policies.

7. Disseminate national periodic CEDAW reports to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination for discussion by parliament and civil society prior to their official submission to the Committee.

8. Promote decentralization that is conducive to women's equal participation in decision-making processes at the local level and empower local bodies to implement effective gender mainstreaming and gender-sensitive budgeting.

9. Promote additional spaces for civil society participation in effective governance and policy formulation, for example participatory budgeting.

10. Encourage men in decision-making positions to support women to enter arenas of power, and encourage and support alliances between women and men to pursue a gender equality agenda.

11. Promote gender mainstreaming as the main strategy recommended by the Beijing Platform of Action for achieving the goal of gender equality and empowerment of women and consistently link this with the implementation of CEDAW, focusing, in particular, on monitoring of the impact of gender mainstreaming.

The EGM recommends that <u>parliaments</u> should

1. Establish standing or ad hoc committees and other statutory bodies on gender equality and empowerment of women, with cross-party representation, to monitor the review and the implementation of existing laws and constitutional provisions, budgets and policies from a gender perspective, as well as recommendations from CEDAW, the Beijing Platform for Action and other relevant documents.

2. Ensure that parliamentary bodies provide institutional support to the established or existing women's cross-party alliances and caucuses, including infrastructure, budget and institutional recognition.

3. Ensure efficient collaboration between parliamentary bodies on gender equality, including standing committees and women'

especially in the process of formulation and implementation of gender equality agenda

The EGM recommends that <u>United Nations/ Department for Economic and Social Affairs/ Division for Advancement of Women</u> should

1. Broadly disseminate this EGM report to all national mechanism on gender equality and empowerment of women, including to United Nations/ Department for Economic and Social Affairs/ Division for Advancement of Women, and publish a book based on the report.

2. Establish and sustain a knowledge network that serves as a clearing house of information and expertise for scholars, practitioners and activists on women's political empowerment, with a particular focus on gender equality policy formulation.

The EGM recommends that <u>civil society actors</u> should

Collaborate with women parliamentarians, statutory bodies on gender equality and national mechanisms in the process of articulation and implementation of common gender equality agendas.

The EGM ***recommends that <u>all actors</u>***

ANNEX I

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ANNEX II

LIST OF DOCUMENTS

A. PAPERS BY EXPERTS

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP.2

"Conditions determining the level of representation of women: The experience of quota system in Latin America", prepared by Ana Isabel Garcia Quesada (Costa Rica)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP. 3

"From Representation to Participation: Women in Local Government", prepared by Niraja Gopal Jayal (India)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP.4

"Explaining Women's Representation: The Role of Legislative Recruitment & Electoral Systems", prepared by Richard Matland (USA)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP.5

"The impact of Women's Participation and Leadership on Policy Outcomes: A focus on Women's Policy machineries", prepared by Amy Mazur (USA)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP. 6

"Women's participation in democratic transition", prepared by Ala Mindicanu (Republic of Moldova)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP.7

"Impact of women's participation and leadership on outcomes", prepared by Rosa Linda T. Miranda (Philippines)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP.8

"Indian Experience of Women's Quota in Local Government: Implications for future strategies", prepared by Medha Nanivadekar (India)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP.9

"Nigeria: Political Transition and the Complexities of Gender Empowerment", prepared by Leslye Amede Obiora (Nigeria)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP.10

"Political Parties: When do they work for Women?",

Women in the Game of 'Terrorism' War: The Unrest Southern Thailand Crisis", prepared by Cholthira Satyawadhna (Thailand)

EGM/EPWD/2005/EP.12   *"Cross-party alliances around gender agendas: critical mass, critical actors, critical structures, or critical junctures"*, prepared by Fiona J. Macaulay (United Kingdom)

B. PAPERS BY OBSERVERS

EGM/EPWD/2005/OP.1   *"Women in Decision-Making in the Arab Regio"n"*, prepared by The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)

EGM/EPWD/2005/OP.2   *"Creating an Outer Circle in the Digital World: participation of women in the e-government"*, prepared by Baharul Islam, ECA

C. BACKGROUND PAPER

EGM/EPWD/2005/BP.1   *"Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on political participation and leadership"*, prepared by Shirin Rai (India)

EGM/EPWD/2005/BP.2   *"The Participation of Women and Men in Decision-Making: The Parliamentary Dimension"*, prepared by Julie Ballington, IPU

ANNEX III

PROGRAMME OF WORK

Monday, 24 October 2005

8.30 a.m. – 10.00 a.m.	Registration
10.00 a.m. - 10.30 a.m.	Official opening of the meeting Welcome by host ***Ms. Thokozile Ruzvidzo, Director, African Centre for*** ***Gender and Development, Economic Commission for Africa*** Opening statement ***Message from Ms. Carolyn Hannan, Director*** ***UN Division for the Advancement of Women***
10.30 a.m. - 11.00 a.m.	Election of Officers: Adoption of programme of work
11.00 a.m. - 11.30 a.m.	Coffee break
11.30 p.m. - 1.00 p.m.	Overviews of the situation of women in decision-making (30 min.) ***Ms. Julie Ballington, IPU*** ***Ms. Shirin Rai, Consultant*** General Debate:
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Presentations on "Conditions determining level of representation of women" (each presentation 7-10 min) ***Mr. Richard Matland (US)*** Debate
4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Coffee break
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Presentations on: "Women's participation in democratic transitions" (each presentation 7-10 min)

Ms. Ala Mindicanu (Moldova)
Ms. Leslye Obiora   (Nigeria)

Debate

7:30 p.m.   Reception organized by ECA

Tuesday, 25 October 2005

9:00 a.m. -11:00 a.m.   Presentations on: "Conditions under which political bodies
                                  commit to gender balance and gender mainstreaming in
                                  processes and outcome**"** (each presentation 7-10 min).

                                  Ms.Teresa Sacchet (Brazil)
                                  Ms.Cholthira Satyawadhna (Thailand)

                                  Debate

                                  Presentation on: "Conditions under which women work across party
                                  lines, including with male allies"

                                  Ms. Fiona Macaulay (UK)

                                  Debate

11:00a.m. – 11:30 a.m.   Coffee break

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 a.m.   Presentation on: "Women's participation in local government**"** (each
                                  presentation 7-10 min).

                                  Ms. Medha Nanivadekar (IN)

                                  Debate

                                  Presentation on: "Creating an outer circle in the digital worlds
                                  :participation of women in e-government system"

                                  Mr. Baharul Islam (ECA)

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.   Lunch

2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.   Presentations on "Impact of women's participation on outcomes"
                                  (each presentation 7-10 min)

                                  Ms. Amy Mazur (US)

Ms. Rosa Linda Miranda (Philippines)

Debate

4:00 p.m. – 4:.30 p.m.	Coffee break
4.30 p.m. - 6.00 p.m.	General Discussion

Wednesday, 26 October 2005

9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	Working groups: discussion and drafting
11:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.	Coffee break
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Working groups: discussion and drafting
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Working groups: drafting
4:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	Coffee break
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Reports from working groups: general discussion

Thursday, 27 October 2005

9:00 a.m. -11:00 p.m.	Drafting group
11:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.	Coffee break
11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Final discussion of the report
1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.	Lunch
2:30 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.	Discussion of the final draft report and policy recommendations
4:00 p.m. – 4:30p.m.	Coffee break
4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.	Adoption of the report Closing statements Closing the meeting