

1996/6. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women

The Economic and Social Council,

Welcoming the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the adoption of the Platform for Action of the Conference,¹⁴

Bearing in mind Economic and Social Council resolutions II (II) of 21 June 1946 and 48 (IV) of 29 March 1947, by which the Council established the Commission on the Status of Women and defined its terms of reference, and 1987/22 of 26 May 1987, by which the Council expanded the mandate of the Commission,

Taking into account agreed conclusions 1995/1, approved by the Council on 28 July 1995,²⁰ as well as General Assembly resolution 50/203 of 22 December 1995 on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and full implementation of the Beijing Declaration²¹ and the Platform for Action of the Conference, in which the Assembly invited the Economic and Social Council to review and strengthen the mandate of the Commission,

Acknowledging the decision of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to add to its reporting guidelines an invitation to States parties to include in their report to the Committee information on measures taken to implement the Platform for Action, in order to monitor effectively, within its mandate, the rights guaranteed under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,²²

I

FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUNCTIONING OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

Recalling that the General Assembly, in resolution 50/203, decided that the Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on the Status of Women, in accordance with their respective mandates and in accordance with Assembly resolution 48/162 of 20 December 1993 and other relevant resolutions, should constitute a three-tiered intergovernmental mechanism that would play the primary role in the overall policy-making and follow-up and in coordinating

²⁰ *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth session, Supplement No. 3 (A/50/3/Rev.1)*, chap. III, para. 22.

²¹ *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution I, annex I.

²² General Assembly resolution 34/180, annex.

the implementation and monitoring of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, reaffirming the need for a coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the results of major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields,

Convinced that the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women should be undertaken on the basis of an integrated approach to the advancement of women within the framework of a coordinated follow-up to and implementation of the results of major international conferences in the economic, social and related fields, as well as the overall responsibilities of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council,

1. *Decides* that the Commission on the Status of Women shall have a catalytic role in mainstreaming a gender perspective in policies and programmes;

2. *Decides also* that the inter-agency committee on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women, established by the Administrative Committee on Coordination, shall inform the Commission and the Economic and Social Council of the progress of its work, for the purpose of system-wide coordination, and that a gender perspective shall also be fully integrated in the work of all thematic task forces established by the Administrative Committee on Coordination;

3. *Decides further* that the Platform for Action of the Conference should be implemented through the work of all the bodies and organizations of the United Nations system during the period 1995-2000, and notes that the institutions of the United Nations especially devoted to the advancement of women, including the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, are in the process of reviewing their programmes of work in the light of the Platform for Action and its implementation;

4. *Decides*, in view of the traditional importance of non-governmental organizations in the advancement of women, that such organizations should be encouraged to participate in the work of the Commission and in the monitoring and implementation process related to the Conference to the maximum extent possible, and requests the Secretary-General to make appropriate arrangements to ensure full utilization of existing channels of communication with non-governmental organizations in order to facilitate broad-based participation and dissemination of information;

5. *Decides also*, in recognition of the valuable contribution of non-governmental organizations to the Fourth World Conference on Women, that the Council and its Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations will review the applications of those non-governmental organizations under Council resolution 1296 (XLIV) of 23 May 1968 as expeditiously as possible, and decides further that, prior to the forty-first session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Council will take a decision on the participation of the non-

governmental organizations that were accredited to the Conference and that have applied for consultative status, in Conference follow-up and in the work of the Commission, without prejudice to the work of the Open-ended Working Group on the Review of Arrangements for Consultation with Non-Governmental Organizations;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General urgently to draw the attention of non-governmental organizations accredited to the Fourth World Conference on Women to the provisions of the present resolution and to the process established under Council resolution 1296 (XLIV);

II

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. *Confirms* the existing mandate of the Commission on the Status of Women as set out in Economic and Social Council resolutions 11 (II), 48 (IV) and 1987/22, bearing in mind that the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women builds upon the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women;¹³

2. *Decides* that the Commission shall:

(a) Assist the Council in monitoring, reviewing and appraising progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action of the Conference at all levels and shall advise the Council thereon;

(b) Continue to ensure support for mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations activities and develop further its catalytic role in this regard in other areas;

(c) Identify issues where United Nations system-wide coordination needs to be improved in order to assist the Council in its coordination function;

(d) Identify emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that require urgent consideration and make substantive recommendations thereon;

(e) Maintain and enhance public awareness and support for the implementation of the Platform for Action;

III

DOCUMENTATION

1. *Requests* that all United Nations documentation be kept concise, clear, analytical and timely with a focus on relevant issues and in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/24 of 26 May 1987 and agreed conclusions 1995/1, approved by the Council on 28 July 1995, that reports contain recommendations for action, indicate the actors and be issued in all official languages, in accordance

with the rules of the United Nations, and that other methods of reporting, such as oral reports, also be explored;

2. *Requests also* that the relevant reports of the meetings of inter-agency mechanisms established by the Secretary-General be transmitted for information to the Commission on the Status of Women to ensure coordination, collaboration and coherence in the implementation of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women;

3. *Decides* that requests for reports of the Secretary-General should be limited to the minimum strictly necessary and that the Secretariat should use information and data already provided by Governments to the maximum extent possible, avoiding duplication of requests to Governments for such information;

4. *Decides also* that voluntary submission of national information, for example national action plans or national reports by Governments, should be encouraged;

5. *Requests* that the following reports be prepared under item 3, entitled "Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women", of the agenda set out in section IV, paragraph 3, of the present resolution, bearing in mind the need to promote integrated reporting:

(a) Report of the Secretary-General on the measures taken and the progress achieved in mainstreaming a gender perspective within the United Nations system (annually);

(b) Analytical report of the Secretary-General on the thematic issues before the Commission in accordance with the multi-year work programme, including, as far as possible, progress made in national implementation, based on available data and statistics (annually);

(c) Report on emerging issues under item 3 (b) of the agenda set out in section IV, paragraph 3, of the present resolution, as appropriate, at the request of the Commission or its Bureau;

(d) Synthesized report on implementation plans of Governments and the United Nations system, based, *inter alia*, on national action plans and any other sources of information already available in the United Nations system (in 1998);

(e) Mid-term review of the system-wide medium-term plan for the advancement of women, 1996-2001 (in 1998);

(f) Report on the implementation of the Platform for Action of the Conference, on the basis of national reports, taking into account the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women (in 2000);

IV

WORK PROGRAMME

1. *Adopts* a multi-year work programme for a focused and thematic approach, culminating in a quinquennial review and appraisal of the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women: the work programme, *inter alia*, will provide a framework to assess the progress achieved in the implementation of the Platform for Action and will be in line with the coordinated follow-up to conferences;

2. *Decides* that the work of the Commission in relation to the work programme shall be closely related to the relevant provisions of the Platform for Action of the Conference, with a view to ensuring the effective implementation of the Platform for Action;

3. *Decides* that the agenda for the Commission shall consist of the following items:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women:
 - (a) Review of mainstreaming in organizations of the United Nations system;
 - (b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;
 - (c) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in the critical areas of concern.
4. Communications concerning the status of women.
5. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, including the elaboration of a draft optional protocol to the Convention.
6. Provisional agenda for the next session of the Commission.
7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its present session.

4. *Decides*, in the light of the need for a focused and thematic multi-year work programme on the critical areas of concern, and bearing in mind that the critical areas of concern are interrelated and interdependent, on the following timetable:

- 1997 Education and training of women (Platform for action, chap. IV. B)
- Women and the economy (Platform for Action, chap. IV. F)
- Women in power and decision-making (Platform for Action, chap. IV. G)

Women and the environment (Platform for Action, chap. IV. K)

1998 Violence against women (Platform for Action, chap. IV. D)

Women and armed conflict (Platform for Action, chap. IV. E)

Human rights of women (Platform for Action, chap. IV. I)

The girl child (Platform for Action, chap. IV. L)

1999 Women and health (Platform for Action, chap. IV. C)

Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women (Platform for Action, chap. IV. H)

Initiation of the comprehensive review and appraisal of the implementation of the Platform for Action

2000 Comprehensive quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Platform for Action

Emerging issues

V

REGIONAL DIMENSION

Recalling the important role played by regional preparatory conferences in the preparations for the Fourth World Conference on Women and that plans and programmes of action were adopted that served as essential inputs to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Conference,

1. *Recommends* that the regional follow-up and monitoring of the regional platforms and programmes of action should be utilized as inputs for the review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action of the Conference;

2. *Recommends also* that the Council consider how best to integrate the inputs of regional commissions into the overall monitoring and follow-up to the Platform for Action of the Conference.

*43rd plenary meeting
22 July 1996*