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HIGH-LEVEL REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING
FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN
Vienna, 17-21 October 1994
Item 8 of the provisional agenda

DRAFT REGIONAL PLATFORM FOR ACTION - WOMEN IN A CHANGING WORLD - CALL FOR ACTION FROM AN ECE PERSPECTIVE

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1/ Paragraphs have not been renumbered following consideration of this document at the Intergovernmental Meeting of 26-27 September 1994 so as to facilitate comparison between the two texts.

**ECE HIGH-LEVEL REGIONAL PREPARATORY MEETING
FOR THE FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN**

**REGIONAL PLATFORM FOR ACTION - WOMEN IN A
CHANGING WORLD - CALL FOR ACTION FROM AN ECE PERSPECTIVE**

PREAMBULAR DECLARATION 2/

We, Ministers, representatives and heads of delegations participating in the ECE Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women held at Vienna from 17 to 21 October 1994,

Considering that the promotion of equality between women and men is a matter of priority for the international community,

Determined to contribute meaningfully to the promotion of a better world, based on the dignity and worth of the human person, the equal rights of women and men and of nations large and small, as stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations,

Emphasizing the responsibilities of all States to develop and encourage respect for all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all,

Reaffirming our commitment to the provisions contained in the international human rights instruments, in particular the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

Convinced that the future of our societies and the progress of the region calls for increased joint efforts promoting equality and partnership between women and men, based on the observance of and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, cessation of all forms of violence against women, sustainable development, non-violent conflict resolution and peace with full and equal participation of women,

Conscious that the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000 requires further and accelerated action in order to achieve effectively the commitment of our Governments and peoples to equality, development and peace,

Conscious also that that commitment must be inspired by the major outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, the World Conference on Human Rights and the International Conference on Population and Development and can make a significant contribution to the World Summit on Social Development,

Aware of different historical circumstances and situations facing women within the ECE region, particularly in the countries in transition, as well as of the burden resulting from those countries' transformation to democracy,

2/ The proposed amendments made with regard to the Preambular Declaration and paragraphs 1-78(d) in the course of the first reading at the Intergovernmental Meeting of 26-27 September 1994 have been incorporated into this text.

Conscious that economic and social disparities exist also between the different regions of the world, and determined to reduce those disparities by self-reliant efforts as well as by solidarity and cooperation, in particular by integrating a gender perspective into the mainstream of development assistance, both within the ECE region and in the rest of the world,

Believing that the challenges and opportunities created by the changing global political and economic environment must be met through equitable, effective, gender-sensitive economic and social policies at the national, regional and international levels,

Recognizing that economic and social policies, both macro and micro, will have a gender-differentiated impact and that action must be taken to eliminate or adjust this impact,

1. Declare that the first intergovernmental ECE Regional Preparatory Meeting ever organized for a United Nations World Conference on Women constitutes a unique opportunity for forging closer links among countries of the region in their policies and activities aimed at ensuring the advancement and empowerment of all women living in the region;

2. Commit our Governments to achieving, by the year 2000, a more equitable and sustainable society where women's knowledge, potential and contributions are recognized and taken fully into account in all policy and decision-making. Action to achieve such a society will be based on the following basic principles:

(a) The human rights of women are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights and must therefore be promoted, protected and realized at all stages of the life cycle - childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age - and must further reflect the full diversity of women, recognizing that many women face additional barriers because of such factors as their race, language, ethnicity, culture, religion, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic class or status as indigenous people;

(b) The promotion of equality and partnership between women and men requires a more equitable sharing of authorities and responsibilities in family life, in work and in society, as well as a better share of economic and political power. Equal opportunities for women and men are needed for the release of the full human potential and thus the achievement of sustainable human development, democracy and peace;

(c) Partnership between women and men is the basis for a new gender contract based on equality and which would entail a redistribution of the domestic and family care, secure economic independence for women, reducing their double workload and breaking down existing stereotypes of the roles of women and men;

(d) An active policy of visible mainstreaming of women's interests and concerns is essential for the formulation and implementation of all relevant policies and action programmes at the local, national, regional and global levels. Such mainstreaming is crucial, not only as a matter of justice for women but also to introduce new forms of economic and

social efficiency in the region, including the pursuit of human development in an environment that promotes sustainability;

(e) Fostering democracy and promoting equality between women and men are mutually reinforcing. Based on the respect for fundamental political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights, it enables the strengthening of women's conditions and status and participation at all levels of decision-making, which is a prerequisite for the advancement of women;

(f) Solidarity for the empowerment of women within the region and with other societies is crucial to ensure women's advancement and to enhance their participation in the political, economic and social structures and institutions in all countries;

(g) Maintenance of peace and security at the global, regional and local levels, together with prevention and resolution of armed conflict, is crucial for the protection of the universal human rights of women and the girl child, as well as for the elimination of all forms of violence against them and of their use as a weapon of war.

3. Adopt the regional platform for action emanating from the High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting by which, based on our statement of mission and major trends identified within the region, seven strategic objectives have been identified, derived from seven critical areas of concern;

4. Decide to establish, maintain and strengthen monitoring mechanisms at all levels in order to implement those strategic objectives;

5. Call on all other actors, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, the public and the private sector and research and academic circles, to join forces in securing the implementation and subsequent evaluation of the strategic objectives contained in the regional platform for action;

6. Call for maximum cooperation in mobilizing resources for the implementation of the strategic objectives;

7. Express our willingness and commitment to spare no efforts in implementing the priority actions as set forth herein at the national, regional and international levels, in cooperation with the United Nations, other regional and international organizations, as well as non-governmental organizations and the private sector;

8. Trust that the regional platform for action will contribute meaningfully to the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace.

I. STATEMENT OF MISSION

1. The basic objectives of the ECE High-level Regional Preparatory Meeting for the Fourth World Conference on Women will be as follows:

(a) To review and appraise the evolving status of women and gender relations in the ECE region, in the light of the major changes that have occurred at the regional and global levels;

(b) To assess in particular the impact of the political, economic, social and institutional changes on women and on their role both as beneficiaries of, and contributors to, the development of their societies and economies;

(c) To highlight both the major problems faced by women and the new opportunities for realizing their potential, particularly in the economies in transition, and to identify the remaining constraints to realizing that potential;

(d) To define a set of action-oriented guidelines and concrete measures aimed at improving the situation of women in all countries, particularly in countries in transition, and at overcoming the problems encountered and taking full advantage of emerging opportunities, thereby facilitating women's empowerment at all levels of society;

(e) To define a strategy for development based on a partnership in support of equality between women and men in other parts of the world.

2. In order to meet these objectives effectively, the specific features of the ECE region need to be taken fully into consideration and properly addressed. Stretching over three continents, the region comprises 54 countries, including 24 economies in transition, characterized by disparities in size, population, cultural and historical background and levels of economic and social development. Account was taken of these disparities in defining the statement of mission and examining the regional framework. At the same time, the areas of concern and the strategic objectives highlighted below are common to all ECE member States. These areas and objectives are deliberately selective in order to focus on those which are most relevant to the region and to allow for a more in-depth treatment. They form the basis for the priority actions that need to be undertaken during the coming years and which are governed by the basic principles embodied in the preambular Declaration.

II. REGIONAL FRAMEWORK

3. The draft platform for action of the Fourth World Conference on Women notes that, "since the adoption of the Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women, in 1985, the world has been experiencing a global process of restructuring of economic, social and cultural relationships. This restructuring process has had a profound impact, both positive and negative, on women". The major trends in the ECE region are briefly outlined below.

4. During the last 20 years, women participated to a greater extent in the labour market in a large majority of countries in the region. This "feminization" of the labour force contributed to economic growth and brought to many women a measure of economic and social independence. Globalization,

privatization, technological change and the development of new activities in dynamic sectors, such as the service industries, provided opportunities for fostering this contribution. Nevertheless, the same factors also contributed to the economic exclusion of women.

5. Even though this trend may ultimately increase, the present situation indicates that lingering effects of the recent recession in western Europe and North America, as well as the "transformation stress" in countries of eastern and central Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries, have had serious effects on women's equal access to employment, working and environmental conditions, social welfare and health care.

6. Persistent unemployment and cuts in social expenditure are affecting incomes and living standards throughout the region. The degree of hardship varies considerably, but countries of eastern and central Europe and the CIS are the hardest hit because of the compounded effects of the transition and the global economic crisis. That crisis has also gravely affected the most disadvantaged groups in countries of western Europe and North America.

7. An increasing number of women are experiencing labour-related poverty. They are either excluded from the labour market altogether or employed in low-waged and low-skilled jobs with atypical contracts which place them in a situation of permanent economic insecurity. Women workers also face sexual harassment which further circumscribes their employment opportunities. On top of this they often have the double burden of two jobs, one in the workplace and one in the home, exposing them to specific health problems. Such general degradation in the employment situation, together with the decreased provision of social services in a number of countries of the region and their continuing scarcity in others, has contributed to the feminization of poverty and had a negative impact on women's physical and mental well-being, affecting in particular disadvantaged groups of women such as those suffering from disease, women with disabilities, indigenous women, single mothers, ethnic and racial minorities, migrant workers and refugee and displaced women and older women.

8. It thus appears that the opportunities opened by new technologies, more flexible production systems and the development of services are not being sufficiently tapped. In all of the region's economies, women's jobs are clustered at the lower end of the labour market spectrum. Upward mobility and career prospects are limited, and increasingly women's skills and education do not adequately meet the requirements of a changing economy, with many women left outside the full-time employment market. In most parts of the region, the need to reconcile family responsibilities and work outside the home is inadequately reflected in social infrastructure and the sharing between parents of parental and domestic tasks. Women have a double workload which hampers their full economic contribution to the economy. Women have taken on responsibilities in the labour market to a greater degree and at a faster pace than men have taken on responsibilities in the household, although in many parts of the region, among women and men alike, attitudes and values relating to gender roles have started to change.

9. In terms of decision-making and high-level positions in the public and private sectors, the capacity of women to hold such positions is increasingly recognized by society at large. However, the ability of highly trained women in the region and, in particular, their entrepreneurial and political potential, is not increasing rapidly enough. The presence of women at senior

levels in spheres that have real power to make or influence policy - politics, public bodies, business and finance, trade unions, media, academic and scientific institutions - is at best growing too slowly. In a number of countries it is actually regressing significantly.

9 bis. Finally, the labour market in the region has not yet been organized in such a way that people can fulfil their obligations in the family, be it for children or the elderly, the disabled or the ill.

10. The World Conference on Human Rights recognized that the human rights of women are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are therefore priority objectives of the international community. In the ECE region, progress has been made further to develop national legislation and plans by subregional groupings to promote and safeguard the human rights of women and to provide an underpinning of equality between women and men in economic and public life.

11. Not all ECE countries, however, have ratified the existing conventions and other international instruments relating to equality and human rights of women, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It appears also that some countries removed the equality legislation previously adopted. The application of existing legislation remains insufficient in most countries of the region, and there is a gap between de jure and de facto equality, due in particular to lack of awareness by women and men alike, as well as to a lack of enforcement of constitutional law, civil, penal and commercial codes, administrative rules and regulations and a lack of commitment by political authorities. Also hindering the effective application of existing legislation are, for instance, discriminatory practices, underrepresentation of women in the justice system, gender bias in the justice system, insufficient information on existing rights and a deliberate intent to maintain the attitudes which perpetrate women's inequality.

11bis. The absence of a right of individual petition, and the large number of reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention or which are otherwise incompatible with international treaty law, prevent the Convention from functioning effectively and hamper the actual achievement of equality between women and men.

12. Awareness and enforcement of legislation for the equal treatment of women and men call for an appropriate institutional framework. In many countries of the region, the national machineries established to ensure the advancement of women through formulation and monitoring of public policies, advocacy and the mobilization of support are still weak or are being cut back. Often, these national machineries are understaffed and marginalized in national government bodies, and their profile and power eroded as a result of a policy shift from equity principles to deficit reduction. In some countries such national machineries have not yet been established. Statistical systems in a number of countries do not provide adequate data and indicators disaggregated by sex. Such data are necessary for a complete analysis of gender aspects of the economic and social situation, to fix benchmarks and targets, to inform policies and legislation and to monitor the evolving situation accordingly.

13. The end of the Cold War has brought about new international political relationships, which have greatly reduced the threat of global war and promoted the peaceful resolution of many regional conflicts. At the same time, peace in many parts of the world, including in our region, is being threatened by the resurgence of nationalism, racism and xenophobia, as well as by ethnic and other types of conflict. The grave violations of the human rights of women, particularly in times of armed conflict and including murder, torture, systematic rape, forced pregnancy and forced abortion, and especially policies of so-called "ethnic cleansing", are unacceptable. These practices have created inter alia a mass of refugees and displaced persons, among whom women, adolescent girls and children constitute the majority.

14. The end of the Cold War and the growing interdependence among nations have determined the political, economic and social background of the region. The international community is moving towards a dynamic new approach to development - one which integrates the individual human dimension into the notion of security by identifying the well-being of people, rather than the current level of per capita national income, as the essence of development. Economic policies which increase the gross domestic product cannot be considered successful if they benefit a few while causing environmental degradation, poverty and financial insecurity for many. Concepts and values such as sustainability, human development, social development, gender-responsive development and women's rights as human rights, equality and social justice, are becoming increasingly central to the development debate. Development thinking has also shifted from viewing discrimination against women as a women's issue only to seeing it as affecting the whole of society and as forming an obstacle to development.

15. Valuing women's own contribution to the economy and increasing their participation in decision-making bodies in all spheres of public life enables them to play a decisive role in the promotion and implementation of a renewed vision of development, in particular in the areas discussed below.

16. Women's participation in decision-making. Women's participation in decision-making has risen markedly since the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies were adopted, as evidenced in such phenomena as the establishment or strengthening of national machineries; increased participation in political decision-making; increased awareness of human rights; and increased paid employment, which results in such structural changes as measures to combine women's work with their parental responsibilities.

17. Development. Development, in the broadest sense, involves securing peace, protecting the environment, securing social integration, achieving democracy and the empowerment of women and ensuring respect for human rights as well as a healthy and well-educated population. Economic growth should be accompanied by full employment, reduction of poverty and improved income distribution through equal opportunity for both women and men. Environmental concerns have a serious and growing twofold impact on the economies within the ECE region. The degradation of the natural environment entails serious costs in terms of direct economic losses as a result of pollution, damage to crops, damage to buildings from acid deposits or a drop in revenue from tourism, as well as indirect losses by lowering the quality of life in many regions in Europe and North America. One central question continues to be the costs of environmental degradation in terms of human health, as it has been directly

related in some countries to the increase in mortality rates and decrease in life expectancy.

[18 deleted]

19. Women's role in new development prospects. The distinction between national and international policies is fading, creating a need for a global approach to future development. Society should make greater and more creative use of women's skills and entrepreneurship as a major contribution to growth and general prosperity. That women have this potential is clearly demonstrated by the increasing number of enterprises being set up by women in the ECE region.

19 bis. Similarly, there has been some improvement within the region in women's role in the economy, although this trend varies greatly from country to country. Particularly in the market economies of western Europe and North America, the liberalization of trade and greater freedom of movement both of labour and capital which resulted from the globalization of the economy and the development of new computer-based technologies caused a boom in the service sector, of which women workers have been major beneficiaries.

20. Gender impact. The impact of national and international economic and social policies on women and men must be taken into account from the earliest stages of formulation and throughout the implementation and evaluation process. The lessons drawn from a gender and development approach, as well as from countries which pursue gender-sensitive policy implementation strategies, could be used for further developing methodologies and mechanisms and for mainstreaming gender concerns into economic and social policy.

21. Environmental equilibrium. The ECE region plays a critical role in relation to other regions of the world because of its history and its political and economic importance in international financial institutions, debt holdings, trade patterns, number of transnational corporations and development of and access to advanced technology. Because of the responsibilities that derive from this role, the ECE region must concern itself with issues larger than the region and incorporate critical issues that affect the well-being of women everywhere. These issues include trade, structural adjustment policies, debt reduction, aid flows and their human cost. As noted in principle 7 of "Agenda 21", adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, "the developed countries acknowledge the responsibility that they bear in the international pursuit of sustainable development in view of the pressures their societies place on the global environment and of the technologies and financial resources they command". Global sustainable development will require changes in consumption and production patterns of many countries in the ECE region.

III. CRITICAL AREAS OF CONCERN

22. Based on decision K (48) of the Economic Commission for Europe and the subsequent outline of the draft agenda, the main headings of which have been endorsed in decision J (49), seven critical areas of concern, of particular relevance to the ECE region, have been identified.

A. Insufficient promotion and protection of
the human rights of women

23. Despite the fact that the human rights of women are now recognized as an integral and inalienable part of human rights, the international conventions and standards, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, have not yet been ratified by, or are not complied with, in all countries of the region. Equally serious is the fact that the human rights instruments are being undermined by those reservations which conflict with the object and purpose of the Convention. [In addition, the Convention does not accord women the right to individual petition.]

24. Although it is a duty of States, regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems, to promote all human rights and fundamental freedoms, in some countries national laws still fail to conform to these conventions and standards and there is too often a lack of appropriate recourse, enforcement and protection mechanisms.

24bis. Human sexuality and gender relations are closely interrelated and together affect the ability of women and men to achieve and maintain sexual health and manage their reproductive lives. Equal relationships between women and men in matters of sexual relations and reproduction, including full respect for the physical integrity of the human body, require mutual respect and willingness to accept responsibility for the consequences of sexual behaviour. In this respect, women's reproductive rights ^{3/} and sexual rights are often not respected and sometimes not yet recognized.

25. All forms of violence against women, in public as well as private life, though they have entered public debate and are condemned both as crimes in national legislation and as a violation of the human rights of women, still affect too many women in all countries of the ECE region.

26. The serious situation of women in war-torn and occupied areas, where they often are victims of torture, systematic rape, other forms of violence and violations of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, requires special attention and concrete action.

27. Refugee women are in urgent need of [gender-specific] protection in terms of their right to seek asylum, family reunification requests and integration into the country of asylum. Aid and assistance are needed in finding durable solutions to their plight and in responding to the specific problems faced by them. Displaced women who do not qualify for refugee status and who are in some cases outside their country are also vulnerable and need international protection.

27bis. Documented migrant women are also in need of gender-specific protection in responding to the specific problems faced by them and their legal integration in the country of migration. Undocumented migrant women are vulnerable to abuses of their basic human rights and to forms of exploitation such as prostitution and are therefore also in need of gender-specific protection.

^{3/} Based on the Programme of Action adopted by the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo, September 1994).

B. Feminization of poverty

28. Women face an increased risk of poverty as a result of the current labour market trends and the changes in the composition of the family. They are more and more likely than men to be the "working poor" or living in absolute poverty, occupying the bulk of low-level and low-paid jobs or working in atypical employment. Women are also more likely than men to be lone parents bringing up children or to be elderly persons living alone. The causes of poverty go hand in hand with the rise in female-headed households, which are often among the poorest of the poor in a cycle of poverty that continues from grandmother to granddaughter. Poverty eradication strategies, which are primarily concerned with the monetized economy and tend to target men directly as breadwinners, have often failed to take into account the differential impact on women and men of economic policies and have therefore had a limited impact on improving women's situation in important areas such as housing. Household resources are often not equally shared within the family, which partially explains why poverty affects women in a different way than men.

29. A certain number of factors specifically affect women and should be taken into account in the treatment of poverty. The most disadvantaged groups of women tend to be rural women in isolated areas and poor urban women - in particular female-headed households, elderly women, girls and adolescents, teenage mothers, unemployed women, migrants and immigrants, refugees and displaced women, indigenous women, ethnic and racial minorities, prostitutes and victims of sexual exploitation, who are often adolescents and street youth, disabled women, those affected by the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or women addicted to drugs or alcohol. In too many countries of the region, the social welfare systems do not take sufficient account of the specific consequences of those phenomena for women, and there is a tendency to scale back these services. These disadvantaged groups usually have limited, if any, access to resources such as education, training, child care, capital, technology or land, which would enable them to obtain employment or income.

C. Insufficient awareness of women's contribution to the economy in the context of sustainable development and insufficient promotion of their potential

30. In some countries of the region, the recession has resulted in a slowdown or even a decline in women's participation in the economy. In a large number of countries, however, women's share of the labour force and their contribution to the economy continue to increase, although more and more women cannot find full-time work or are under pressure to stay at home. A clear shift from "one-breadwinner" to "two-breadwinner" societies can also be discerned in many countries.

30bis. In the region as a whole, however, women and men continue to have unequal access to economic resources. The fact that women's income, which derives mostly from wages, is on average lower than men's is due to the horizontally and vertically segregated labour market. More women than men work part-time, which also affects their wages.

31. Women and men are also found in different sectors and levels of working life; women often work in professions and positions where the pay is lower. Furthermore, pay differentials prevail when educational background, experience

in working life, etc., are taken into account. Equal pay for equal work and work of equal value is not yet a reality in most parts of the region.

31bis. In addition, working conditions in most countries are not adapted to the fact that in a large number of families, both partners are working, even when the children are small. Working life must be adapted to the needs of families with children. Another, related, obstacle to women's full participation in the economy is the fact that many men do not take their share of the responsibility for housework and child care. Furthermore, since women's unpaid work has not been sufficiently recognized as a major contribution to the economy, it is often ignored in the analysis and formulation of economic and social policies.

31c. There are also considerable differences in women's and men's access and opportunities to exert power over economic structures in their societies. In most parts of the region, women are virtually absent from, or poorly represented in, economic decision-making, including the formulation of policies dealing with the distribution of economic resources, tax systems and rules governing pay, among others. Since it is often within the framework of such policies that individual men and women make their decisions, inter alia, on how to divide their time between paid and unpaid work, the actual development of these economic structures and policies has a direct impact on women's and men's access to economic resources, their economic power and consequently the degree of equality between them, at the individual and family level as well as in society as a whole.

31d. There is growing recognition that economic and political reforms can have different effects on women and men. Much, however, remains to be done in order to achieve increased awareness and recognition in this field.

32. 4/ Women have an essential role to play in sustainable development - the long-term economic and social growth of countries that also preserves their resources and improves the quality of life - as equal participants in key decision-making at all levels and in the management of sustainable and ecologically sound life-styles. Their potential, both within the family and in their economic and civic responsibilities, to contribute to the management, protection and conservation of the environment is generally underutilized.

33. The impact of environmental hazards and degradation appears to differ between women and men based on their physical differences and working conditions. However, the environmental standards in most countries of the region are based on risks to men. There is mounting evidence of the link between environmental contaminants, such as pesticides and radiation, and cancer, particularly the incidence of breast cancer. As such an example indicates, there is an urgent need for research to fill the knowledge gap on gender differences in the various health effects of these environmental factors.

34. Women have made contributions in the region by promoting social awareness of ecologically sound lifestyles, consumption patterns and waste and natural

4/ This version of paragraphs 32-34 was submitted by the United States at the request of the Intergovernmental Meeting of 26-27 September 1994 in order to reflect the discussion thereon. Due to lack of time, the version was not reviewed.

resources management. However, they are not equal partners in environmental planning and policy making in most countries of the region.

[deleted: para 35]

D. Insufficient de facto gender equality in employment and economic opportunity and insufficient policies and measures to reconcile employment and family responsibilities

36. While generally decreasing on a global level, horizontal gender segregation in employment is still the predominant pattern in most sectors of the economy. Because of women's lack of access to senior and managerial positions, vertical segregation persists in most sectors of activity, leading to a concentration of women in repetitive, low-skilled and low-paid work.

37. Such segregation is due in part, in some countries, to unequal access to opportunities for women to education and training in science and technology, as well as to gender-stereotyped socialization and stereotyped behaviour in education and vocational training.

38. Women in many ECE countries are disproportionately affected by unemployment, as job losses are concentrated in "traditional" sectors, in labour-intensive activities in the whole region, and also in heavy industry in some countries of eastern and central Europe. Women are also affected by the restructuring of the economy and the absence of job creation in the public service due to budgetary constraints.

39. Economic restructuring, particularly efforts to increase labour market flexibility, has led to an increase in non-standard work arrangements in a large number of ECE countries, mainly affecting women, their working conditions and their employment security, including their fringe benefits, total earnings and retirement income.

39bis. The recession and other economic problems have led in many countries to a rise in prostitution and jobs entailing sexual exploitation. Because this phenomenon, which affects the human rights of women, is often international, more international efforts and cooperation are needed to prevent its expansion.

40. Gaps between male and female wages for work of equal value are still frequent in the region, both in the private and the public sectors, and are increasing in some sectors and areas, partly because the employment traditionally undertaken by women is not yet properly recognized and properly valued.

41. Measures to ensure adequate working conditions for women, e.g., providing occupational safety and health, are still insufficient in a number of sectors in some countries. [2nd sentence replaced by 41bis]

41bis. Sexual harassment and other forms of violence at the workplace constitute a problem faced by women in the labour force in the region and are a major issue of concern.

42. Owing to a stereotyped perception of women's role primarily as wives and mothers, a life-cycle approach to employment is still missing in almost all

countries of the region. The reality is that due to their role as wives and mothers, women tend to enter, leave and re-enter the labour force periodically more often than men. Yet, education, training and retraining schemes designed to increase women's access to jobs remain insufficiently developed. These schemes often direct women to a limited number of fields where career opportunities are poor.

43. In some cases, the education of girls frequently does not prepare them for employment. Education and training policies have not been sufficiently adapted to the changing pattern of demand in the labour market and do not sufficiently benefit women. There may be increased discrimination against women in view of the new deregulation policies.

44. Since the recent recession in most ECE countries, there has been a tendency not to further develop policies and facilities for working parents that would enable women and men to reconcile career and family both through equal access to employment and through equal sharing of domestic, parental and family responsibilities.

44bis. The once prevalent stereotype that kept women in the home and men in the professional world no longer corresponds to the reality and life plans of most people. Hence, men must be encouraged to participate more actively in family tasks and women given more opportunities to pursue a fulfilling career and to take a full and equal role in public life.

45. Specific measures such as maternity leave, parental leave [for both parents], reintegration of women workers in the workforce after childbearing, retraining where necessary, improvement in child care and care for the elderly and other dependent adults are inexistent or still remain insufficient in many countries of the region.

46. In some countries, family policies do not sufficiently take into account the equal legal status of women within the family and women's need for economic independence. Income tax systems, especially where they are not based on individuals, and social security systems, do not yet meet such requirements in most countries of the region.

47. Women around the world share the common problem of inadequate attention to their health needs, throughout all phases of their life cycle. The high incidence of induced abortions in many areas of the ECE region testifies to an inadequate access to high-quality family planning services, and even in cases where abortions are not against the law, they are not always safe.

48. A life-cycle approach to issues of women's health (physical and emotional well-being) is needed, one that adopts principles through which health security can be ensured for children, adolescents, adult women and older women alike.

[deleted: para 49]

E. Insufficient participation of women in public life

55. There is generally a gap between the de jure and de facto situation of women in terms of political rights, especially concerning their opportunities

for standing for election and having access to higher positions in political decision-making bodies.

56. Women continue to be underrepresented in parliamentary, legislative and regulatory bodies, as well as in the judiciary.

57. Women are also gravely underrepresented in most government and ministerial functions, as well as in executive bodies at provincial, local and municipal levels, being, however, often overrepresented in low to mid-level government jobs, frequently in part-time positions. In most ECE countries, women remain a minority at the senior and top managerial levels of public administration, the productive and financial sectors (both public and private), trade unions and employers' associations.

[57bis. The poverty gap between women and men makes it even harder to promote equal access to public life by impoverished women, who are at an inherent disadvantage because of their cultural backgrounds and lack of education and professional experience. As a result, they have insufficient access to the power bases of society and cannot adequately influence the process of change and development under way in their societies.]

58. Negative media portrayal of women reinforces outdated perceptions, which contributes to gender inequality. Women do not have sufficient access to positions where they can exert influence on media policies and programming. The most disadvantaged groups of women, especially those socially marginalized and belonging to minorities, have little access to power structures in the public sphere. [last sentence deleted]

58bis. Whilst women's organizations have demonstrated success in increasing the effective mobilization and empowerment of women, the validity of their positive contribution is not always sufficiently recognized by Governments and political authorities, and they are not always well enough represented in consultative bodies.

F. Insufficient statistical systems, databases and methodologies to inform policies and legislation and to secure equal treatment of women and men

50. Most national statistical systems do not yet reflect the increasing concern for collecting, analysing, disseminating and updating data disaggregated by sex. This leads inter alia to an underestimation of women's participation in the labour force and in other spheres of society, to a lack of visibility of their domestic, household, informal and related activities as well as to a lack of measurement of the disparities between their input and the outcome they can benefit from, as full beneficiaries. Statistics should be compiled in such a way as to help in the evaluation of the present economic situation of women.

51. National, regional and international statistical institutions still have insufficient knowledge of how to present the issues related to equal treatment of women and men in the economic and social spheres. In particular, there is insufficient use of the existing databases and methodologies in the important sphere of decision-making. This constitutes an obstacle to the development and fostering of innovative policies for the advancement of women and does not allow for a consistent and continuous monitoring process of existing policies.

G. Insufficient intra- and interregional networking
and cooperation on the advancement of women

52. In an increasingly global economy, partnership and exchange of experience demand global solidarity and commitment to improving women's position in all regions.

53. Regional cooperation and assistance have not yet sufficiently integrated gender concerns into the planning and implementation stages of development programmes. Gender-specific programmes directed at the most affected groups of women in countries with economies in transition, for instance, have not yet been developed.

53 bis. [In development cooperation programmes, women should be treated equally with men.] International trade and aid policies have still sometimes a negative impact on the rights and position of women.

54. Support for local activities initiated by and for women in countries in transition has not been sufficiently forthcoming, either from governmental or non-governmental sources.

**IV. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES DERIVED FROM THE CRITICAL AREAS
OF CONCERN, AND ACTION TO BE TAKEN**

A. Promote, achieve and protect the full realization
of all human rights of women

59. 5/ *Governments should give priority to promoting and protecting the full and equal enjoyment by women of all human rights and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on the basis of sex. Governments should make information widely available about women's human rights and about national, regional and international mechanisms for seeking redress when these rights are violated.

60. Governments are called upon, if they have not yet done so, to ratify and preferably before the Fourth World Conference on Women, all international and regional human rights treaties which affect the lives of women and the girl child. Governments should limit the extent of reservations they have lodged, formulate any reservations as precisely and narrowly as possible, ensure that none is incompatible with the object and purpose of the relevant treaty and review any reservations with a view to withdrawing them. The treaty-monitoring bodies should continue their work of examining and find more effective means to address the question of reservations of that kind. The Commission on the Status of Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women should quickly examine the possibility of introducing the right to petition through the preparation of an optional protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

61. Governments are urged to implement fully all international human rights standards and ensure women's equality before the law through taking measures

5/ The new text of paragraphs 59-66, which appears here between asterisks, was presented by Sweden and the United States at the end of the Intergovernmental Meeting of 26-27 September 1994.

that ensure gender equality and the elimination of gender bias in law and in practice, inter alia by providing an appropriate legal framework to support claims to equal rights. Measures should be undertaken to make public administration in general, both at the national and local levels, aware of women's human rights and to improve women's access to justice by providing legal assistance, streamlining procedures and promote awareness of, and provide information about, women's human rights judicial personnel, police and public officials, especially at the community level. In this connection, gender-sensitive educational curricula are essential to ensure that boys and girls grow up in an environment marked by respect for equality and equal opportunities. Special attention should be paid to the eradication of women's illiteracy.

62. Governments should take urgent action to combat and eliminate all forms of violence against women in public and private life, including the elimination of sexual violence and sexual harassment, sexual exploitation and trafficking of girls, adolescents and women, the elimination of gender bias in the administration of justice, and the eradication of any conflicts which may arise between the rights of women and the harmful effects of certain traditional or customary practices, cultural prejudices and religious extremism. Governments should also promote increased awareness of the links between violence against women the lack of equality between individual women and men as well as between women and men in general in society. Governments are urged to observe the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and all other human rights instruments addressing these issues by taking effective measures, including measures directed towards the male perpetrators. Governments should also promote training and education for relevant personnel within the judiciary, the health and medical sectors and social workers. Governments should support the work of the Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women appointed by the Commission on Human Rights.

63. Violence against women and violation of the human rights of women in situations of armed conflicts, such as murder, systematic rape, sexual slavery and forced pregnancy, require particularly effective and urgent reactions by all concerned at the national, regional and international levels. Governments are urged to uphold standards set out in international humanitarian and human rights law to prevent and rectify these forms of violence. Perpetrators of such crimes should be punished and such practices and violations immediately stopped. Education in international humanitarian law should be given to members of the armed forces on a routine and continuing basis.

64. Governments are urged to repeal existing laws and regulations and remove customs and practices which discriminate against and cause harm to women and the girl child, including female circumcision. Governments should work closely with women's non-governmental organizations and community groups towards this end.

64bis. Special attention needs to be paid to ensuring non-discrimination and the equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by disabled women, including their active participation in all aspects of society.

65. Governments should take measures aimed at promoting and protecting the rights of refugee and displaced women. These measures should include the ratification of, accession to and implementation of all relevant international

instruments. Governments should also disseminate and implement the Guidelines on the Protection of Refugee Women and the Guidelines on Evaluation and Care of Victims of Trauma and Violence, in close cooperation with refugee women, in all sectors of refugee programmes. Procedures for the processing of asylum applications for women refugees should be developed, recognizing that women and men often experience persecution differently. The procedures should ensure particular sensitivity to those claimants who might have been subjected to sexual violence.

65bis. Special measures must be taken to end violence against and exploitation of migrant women.

66. Governments and interested non-governmental organizations should cooperate closely with each other and with the relevant United Nations institutions for the adoption, application and monitoring of conventions, norms and standards aimed at promoting and safeguarding the full and equal enjoyment by women of their human rights.*

B. Promote the eradication of women's poverty

67. Governments should identify which groups of women are most affected by poverty and institute measures to address that problem. Programmes to alleviate, reduce and eliminate poverty must achieve a number of objectives: access to productive assets, basic public services and social assistance at the relevant minimum income level where appropriate, as well as the provision of goods and services to the most disadvantaged groups who cannot provide for themselves. Anti-poverty and employment programmes should establish, where appropriate, food market policies to improve the access of women-headed and women-maintained households to food supplies.

67bis. Women as heads of households and families must be especially supported economically in order to reduce the large number of poor women.

68. Structural adjustment policies must take into account the effect of their implementation on the situation of women.

69. Gender analysis, including statistics, should be used systematically to identify the gender-specific impact and implications of economic, political and social reforms and policies, including international trade agreements. In many instances the gender analysis should be further broken down into age-specific categories and the outcome of the gender analysis incorporated in decision-making processes. A systematic gender analysis of the causes and consequences of poverty should be developed in order to identify those categories of women that are mostly affected. Efficient systems are needed for monitoring potentially harmful impacts so that policies can be redesigned as required. These should be developed with the active participation of Governments and non-governmental organizations.

69bis. Governments should develop policy measures to integrate or reintegrate poor women and socially marginalized women into productive employment and the economic mainstream, including women who do not qualify for retirement or unemployment benefits or child care because of the non-standard nature of their former work. Such measures might include counselling, job training, appropriate education and re-education, placement and supportive services.

70. A set of coherent and nationwide policies needs to be promoted by Governments to address the various factors which prevent the most disadvantaged groups of women who live in poverty from enjoying their basic social, economic and human rights. Such policies should be aimed at improving the situation faced inter alia by rural and elderly women, adolescent women, teenage mothers, street youth, migrants, refugee and displaced women, women belonging to ethnic minorities, women heads of households in extreme poverty, persecuted women, women with disabilities, women with HIV infection and women affected by drug or alcohol abuse.

[paras 71 and 72 amended and merged in 69bis]

73. Governments should direct special efforts to the needs of women displaced by natural and man-made disasters.

74. Governments should pay particular attention to refugee and displaced women fleeing persecution and armed conflict. Equitable access and participation with men in decision-making on durable solutions (repatriation, integration and resettlement) should be provided. Programmes recognizing the specific reception and integration need of female refugees and asylum seekers also need to be promoted, as well as gender-sensitive training of assistance personnel at all levels.

74bis. Governments should take measures to recognize the foreign qualifications of immigrant and refugee women to enable their full integration in the labour force.

75. All parties concerned in the development process, including academic institutions and non-governmental organizations, must be mobilized to improve the effectiveness of anti-poverty programmes directed towards the poorest and most disadvantaged groups of women. Women themselves should be involved at all stages of the preparation and implementation of such programmes. [However, Governments should not abrogate their responsibility to provide for social well-being by shifting social responsibility to non-governmental organizations and women.]

[para 76 will be considered under the strategic objective on promoting regional solidarity and cooperation for the advancement of women, as agreed at the Intergovernmental Meeting of 26-27 September 1994]

C. Strengthen and promote the recognition of women's full contribution to their national economies and to sustainable development

77. In order to realize fully [equal opportunities] [equality between women and men] in the contribution to the economies of the ECE region, active efforts are required for recognizing equal appreciation and influence in society of the work, experiences, knowledge and values of both women and men.

78. Governments should:

(a) Where necessary, undertake legislative and administrative reforms to give women full and equal rights with men to economic resources, including access to credit, title to property, inheritance, and equal access to natural and economic resources;

78(a)bis. Promote increased awareness and recognition of women's and men's unequal access to economic resources and their different possibilities for exerting power in economic decision-making. They should, where appropriate, undertake studies and analyses on the number of women and men taking part in economic decision-making as well as women's and men's access to economic resources. They should also promote the integration of a gender perspective in all economic decision-making;

(b) Review national income taxation systems, as well as social security systems, with a view to placing individual women and men on an equal footing;

[deleted: subpara 78 (c)]

(d) 6/ Recognize the unremunerated contributions of women to the economy and, where appropriate, take them into account in the formulation and implementation of economic and social policies as well as in the data on which such policies are based;

(e) 7/ Ensure adequate research and testing to assess whether and how women are uniquely susceptible or exposed to environmental hazards. In some cases, this may include research and data collection on specific groups of women, particularly low-income and minority women;

(f) Ensure that information is made available to communities and to women to allow them an adequate basis for participation in environmental decisions affecting their health and safety. Equal access for women to primary and secondary education and to educational opportunities in environmental science and technology is critical to the achievement of this objective;

(g) Ensure that women have environmental information available to them in formats consistent with their education levels, in order that they can become full and equal participants in addressing the environmental risks they face;

(h) Act to reduce risks to women from identified environmental hazards in the home, at work and in other environments;

(i) Facilitate opportunities for women to participate in environmental decision-making at the community, local and national level, including groups of women (e.g., low income, ethnic minority and indigenous women) who may have been excluded from environmental decision-making;

6/ The wording of this paragraph was submitted by the Secretariat following the Intergovernmental Meeting of 26-27 September 1994 and has not yet been negotiated.

7/ From this point on, the text was not negotiated at the Intergovernmental Meeting of 26-27 September 1994. However, proposed amendments submitted in writing by delegations as of 30 September are contained in a conference room paper, reproduced in the original language of submission.

(j) Strive to integrate women's concerns and women's perspectives in the design and implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable resource management mechanisms, in rural and urban areas;

(k) Support programmes that seek to reverse the human role in environmental degradation (e.g. deforestation and soil erosion) and take appropriate measures to provide alternative sources of energy and income at the household level.

79. Measures to include women in the promotion of sustainable development should be taken both in the private sector and at the policy level in the public administration.

80. Women must become aware that they have a major stake in the formulation of the economic policies that affect them directly and must therefore inform themselves about the issues and take an active role in the deliberations of decision-making bodies where policies are being debated and adopted.

D. Promote equal treatment between women and men workers and the harmonization of work and family responsibilities

1. Employment and earnings

81. Rethinking employment policies is necessary so as to ensure a broader conception of employment or work and to draw attention to a wider range of opportunities as well as to the gender implications of current patterns of women's work and employment. Major shifts in employment policies need:

(a) To attach a high priority to the formulation of economic policy all of which has a direct or indirect impact on employment of women workers;

(b) To broaden the range of employment opportunities for women, including support to entrepreneurial activities;

(c) To encourage and assist the creation of a greater number of jobs in all sectors of activities without gender segregation and with an appropriate and equitable valuation of such jobs;

(d) To reconsider the concept of a threefold division of the life cycle for women, i.e. education, work and retirement, so as to take into account gender differences and domestic, parental and family responsibilities of workers of both sexes.

82. Efforts should be made jointly by States, employers, employees' organizations and women's organizations, according to their respective responsibilities, to eliminate growing occupational segregation through increased access of women to highly skilled jobs and senior managerial positions, in particular by increasing opportunities for career development on the job, and by upgrading traditionally female dominated professions.

83. Special measures need to be adopted to provide young women with professional opportunities, in particular to widen such opportunities and training, and to promote non-traditional careers for women.

84. Governments should take the necessary steps, such as implementing and enforcing legislation, to ensure that gender discrimination is removed from working life, particularly concerning the hiring of employees, the terms and benefits of employment, the direction of work and the termination of employment.

85. Part-time work should be freely chosen and the present disadvantages attached to such work and to non-standard forms of employment need to be addressed. Measures should be designed, on a tripartite basis, to ensure that women working under atypical contracts are not deprived of basic social benefits - in particular health and pension schemes and unemployment benefits in case of job loss.

86. Legislation and regulations related to labour rights and protection should be examined and amended - including wages and working hours, social benefits and other terms and conditions - to ensure that they apply to part-time and other non-standard workers.

87. Social protection schemes should also be amended to take into account demographic changes - ageing of the population, the changing age distribution in birth rates regarding increases in teenage birth rates and decrease in older women's birth rates, the increase in single-parent families and the multiplication of reconstituted families, which have an important impact on the changing roles of mothers and fathers.

88. Governments, as well as employers and employees associations, and women's organizations, should increase their efforts to close the gap between women's and men's pay and take special measures to implement the principle of equal pay for equal work and work of equal value, in particular through strengthening the legislation including the compliance with international labour standards such as International Labour Organization (ILO) No. 100 (1951) in this respect and through clear and precise corresponding enforcement methods.

2. Working conditions of women in the work place

89. Measures should be taken to end discrimination in the workplace and to ensure equality between men's and women's conditions of work, especially regarding health and security. It is essential that protection of women's reproductive health not be used as a basis or justification for discriminatory treatment.

90. Measures should be taken by all the relevant parties to eliminate sexual harassment and all forms of violence in the workplace. Public awareness needs to be raised and, where necessary, further legislation and enforcement measures should be adopted in this respect. Particular attention should be paid to violence against female migrant workers as well as women adolescents and children affected by the trafficking of persons, especially for purposes of prostitution, other commercial sex work and other forced labour.

91. Women's representatives, such as union officials or more informally elected or chosen people, need to be given job protection in connection with the discharge of their functions.

3. Education and training for women

92. Training and retraining systems and information and support schemes directly targeted to women and girls need to be established so that they can benefit from the new job opportunities opened by economic restructuring, particularly in the services sector as well as in enterprise development through the creation of small and medium size enterprises.

93. Governments in cooperation with employers and other relevant parties, such as women's organizations, should develop education and training and retraining policies to ensure that women can acquire a wide range of skills to meet new demands. In particular policies are needed to ensure basic education, to diversify vocational and technical training for women and to increase women's access to technological education, including in the field of high technology.

94. Greater encouragement needs to be given to women and girls to pursue non-traditional areas of training and work, particularly in science, engineering and information technology, and in management and decision-making.

95. Measures should be taken to ensure equal access of women to ongoing training in the workplace so as to upgrade skills and promote career development. Special training is needed to reintegrate women after an extended temporary exit from employment owing to family duties. Women should also have access to retraining facilities when they are displaced by new forms of production or by retrenchment in order to maximize their ability to reintegrate into the labour market.

96. Gender - stereotypes with regard to professional activity should be eradicated through appropriate curricula and teaching material in education and training and media efforts.

97. Girls should be encouraged to pursue a vigorous academic and technical curriculum in order to widen their future opportunities. To this end, professional school counselling, free of gender stereotypes, should be made available.

98. Women should be offered training opportunities in how to start and manage a business.

99. School curricula should include basic information on legal literacy, women's human rights, family planning measures and other aspects related to the reproductive health of women.

100. Within the framework of regional cooperation adequate attention should be given to providing technical assistance and advisory services, training and retraining, connected with the transition to the market economy for women in countries in transition. Within the framework of bilateral and multilateral cooperation, support should be given to the education and training of girls and women in other regions of the world.

4. Access of women to entrepreneurship

101. The development of small enterprises should be promoted, and women's access to credit, including small loans without guarantees or collateral,

should be increased and strengthened. Management and entrepreneurial training as well as technological information should be further developed.

102. Women should be encouraged and trained to develop environmentally sound businesses as well as to adopt environmentally responsible policies in their current business operations.

103. Government policy should facilitate strengthening the relations among small enterprises and large public and private firms and corporations. Governments should also secure that policy and regulations do not discriminate against informal-sector enterprises run by women.

104. Governments, both at central and local levels, should enhance rural women's income-generating potential by facilitating their access to and control over productive resources and land property rights.

105. Governments and community organizations should be encouraged to establish loan pools for women entrepreneurs, drawing upon successful small-scale cooperative models.

106. NGOs should increase their efforts to provide networking arrangements for entrepreneurial women, including opportunities for the monitoring of inexperienced women by the more experienced.

107. Measures to facilitate some women's access to technologies that reduce drudgery and generate income should be encouraged. Research and development efforts - including conversion of military research and production - should be directed at product innovation leading to new investments and employment expansion for women.

5. Harmonization of work and family responsibilities

108. Responsible governmental bodies should develop policies for the provision of affordable and accessible quality care for children and other dependants, taking into account the needs of all workers: full-time, part-time, shift workers, etc.

109. Through appropriate legislation and incentives, Governments should increase the opportunities for both women and men to take parental leave and give priority to the introduction of parental benefits.

110. The organization of workplaces should enable women and men to combine work and domestic, parental and family responsibilities.

111. Temporary exits from employment, the provisions of portable employment benefits and arrangements for modifying working hours without sacrificing workers' prospects of development and advancement at work and in careers should be made possible through appropriate measures involving relevant governmental bodies and employers' and employees' associations.

112. Other key measures to reconcile work life and family life are: modifications in tax and social security systems; provision of adequate child care services - child minders, crèches, kindergartens; safe transportation for children; parental leave, and organization of care for the elderly. These measures can be designed and implemented through various innovative forms of

cooperation between the State (central and local Governments), the private sector and local communities.

113. A set of complementary training schemes oriented towards the access of women to employment and entrepreneurship, including reintegration into work after maternity leave or loss of jobs, should be designed. The schemes should include on-the-job training for upgrading skills, in-house and vocational training, re-training for acquiring specific skills or for combining generic technical and social skills, access to higher education and training for older women, and accreditation of prior learning.

114. Governments should seek to enhance the self reliance of young women, disabled women and elderly women and to facilitate their continuing participation in society. Appropriate measures should be implemented to secure economic support for elderly women experiencing divorce and whose earning abilities are reduced as a result of the division of labour during the marriage.

6. Health needs of women

115. Governments at the national, and where appropriate, local levels should:

(a) Develop accessible and affordable health services for women, including age-appropriate acute, chronic and long-term care services for physical, mental and addictive disorders;

(b) Provide prevention and early intervention services for women and girls that may offer better protection from or early detection of chronic diseases that develop over the life-cycle, such as osteoporosis, heart disease and various forms of cancers;

(c) Eliminate environmental and occupational hazards that may affect women's health and infant and maternal mortality;

(d) End violence against women and its mental and physical health consequences across the lifespan;

(e) Define and provide health education for all women and girls, including how health behaviour decisions (e.g. diet, exercise, smoking, substance abuse) may affect women's health over the lifespan;

(f) Broaden support for and the conduct of biomedical, behavioural epidemiological, and health-services research for diseases and conditions that affect women uniquely or differently;

(g) Increase participation of women in high professional and managerial positions in health institutions through legislation, training, and supportive action;

(h) Train all health-care professionals to be sensitive to women's health issues.

E. Develop more gender specific statistical systems and gender research

116. Statistical services should collect, maintain and improve data disaggregated by sex, in particular to show and monitor the contribution of women to the economy by sectors of activities, the relative remuneration of women and men in different occupations and sectors, including informal sectors, and the economic value of domestic work and volunteer work. Such contribution of women should be made more visible through its estimation in relation to the system of national accounts.

117. Statistical services should also collect, maintain and improve data desegregated by age to show the contributions of girls and adolescent women to the economy, the relative remuneration of girls and children, the economic gain to educating girls, and the economic value of their domestic work.

118. Methodologies for establishing appropriate national indicators should be developed and monitored so as to reflect the effect of inflation and all relevant economic changes on the income position of women.

119. Statistical and qualitative studies on and monitoring of the number of women and men in senior positions, including a high level in economic decision-making in the public and private sector, are needed.

120. Improved and age-specific data on all forms of violence against women, such as incidence of rape, incest and sexual abuse, and on trafficking in women are needed.

121. New concepts and definitions, together with corresponding targets, should be developed in close connection with the users of statistical data, reflecting the situation of women and men in society of today. This concerns, for example, concepts related to household and family income as well as paid and unpaid work. In order to ensure continuity in this respect, a special unit or focal point in the national statistical offices should be considered.

122. Systems producing prognosis aimed at facilitating the decision-making process in society should be designed in such a way that they counterbalance the different impact of proposed policies on women and men.

123. Governments are called upon to regularly produce genders-specific statistics that could be widely distributed and easily understood, including fact sheets, brief reports and press releases, illustrating and explaining the major trends in the evolution of the status of women.

124. Regional technical cooperation aimed at supporting countries in transition to develop and strengthen their national statistical systems, particularly as they relate to the above-mentioned issues, needs to be encouraged.

F. Promote regional solidarity and cooperation for the advancement of women

125. Governments and NGOs should explore ways and means to promote and intensify cooperation among themselves for enhancing the status of women everywhere in the ECE region, with emphasis on the demands and needs of women in countries in transition.

126. Regional and subregional intergovernmental organizations are called upon to strengthen their contribution to such cooperation within their respective area of competence, including analytical and statistical work, application of international and subregional standards, exchange of experiences and operational programmes as well as dissemination of results.

127. In the socio-economic arena, corporations, the media and NGOs, should develop various forms of cooperation and networking across all countries of the ECE region and with other regions.

128. Governments should develop mechanisms for the advancement of women as well as promote the mainstreaming of women's concerns in all areas of decision-making and, if necessary, by reallocation of resources.

129. Governments should increase the proportion of development assistance given to women-oriented activities and improve mainstreaming of the gender perspective. The specific training needs of countries with economies in transition should be given special attention and support to the efforts of less developed regions should be promoted.

6. Promote participation of women in public life

130. Political parties should take the necessary measures to ensure that women have the same opportunities as men to participate in the activities of political parties, such as scheduling meetings at convenient times and in places providing child care. Political parties should provide training opportunities where necessary to enable women to have access to responsibility in the decision making bodies of these parties.

131. Political parties should ensure the greatest possible balance between the number of men and women candidates running for elections and take measures to give equally qualified men and women equal opportunities to belong to decision-making bodies at all levels of the party's structure. On a strictly interim basis, these measures may include affirmative action measures to be decided by the parties themselves and with the encouragement of other actors, including Governments. Wherever the temporary special measure chosen is a quota system, it is proposed that the quota should not target women but that, in a spirit of equity, it may be established that neither sex may occupy a proportion of seats inferior to a given percentage.

132. All Governments of the region should increase the proportion of women in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in the national bureaucracies. Posts allocated to women should not be confined to particular sectors. For this purpose Governments should consider setting specific targets and implement measures to increase the proportion of women in government positions as well as women in high positions in public administration, with a view to applying the principle of equal opportunity.

133. Governments should promote equal rights legislation and positive action which would facilitate the hiring, promotion and training of women so that women are offered equal career opportunities to enter the public sector.

134. Governments should take steps to monitor and evaluate progress in the representation of women by, for example, encouraging the collection and dissemination of statistics on the number of women and men, in particular at

higher levels, in various decision making bodies from the local to the international level.

135. Trade unions and employers' associations should be encouraged to make efforts and to take measures to increase and improve equality of opportunity in their ranks, as well as women's representation in their decision making bodies.

136. Private firms should appoint more qualified women to the top managerial level as a matter of priority.

137. NGOs and other groups taking initiatives for promoting the advancement of women through grassroots activities, networking and advocacy should receive the necessary encouragement and support from Governments at central, provincial and local levels.

138. The media, both public and private, should promote women's access to high-level positions, with a view to influencing policies and programmes in this sector.

139. The media should monitor gender-stereotyping and women should monitor their own portrayal in the media. They should be encouraged to express their opinions about such treatment and to demonstrate their role in economic and social life.

140. The monitoring and the change in the image of women need also to be promoted through cultural and societal research, as well as public debates, while research and findings on women and the media should be shared internationally to support concerted action in an increasingly global sector.

141. Standards of conduct to avoid the most unacceptable portrayal of women should be developed.

142. The United Nations system should set an example for the promotion of women to decision-making positions by steadily improving gender balance at all levels and in all areas of the secretariat structure.

143. Closely linked to the promotion of women to decision-making positions, as well as to the objective to eliminate violence against women, is a need for Governments to take action to increase the participation of women in peace negotiations and conflict resolution, which is primarily a male domain in most countries of the region.

V. MEANS OF IMPLEMENTATION AND FOLLOW-UP IN THE ECE REGION

144. In deciding how best to implement the strategic objectives derived from the identified critical areas of concern, full account needs to be taken of the specific characteristics of each area and the elements common to all. Most policies and actions are both sectoral and cross-sectoral. They should address issues that have many dimensions - financial, legal, institutional and societal and cultural. Equally the implementation of recommended action for the advancement of women requires interaction among many parties.

145. National Governments have a central role to play in implementing the strategic objectives for the advancement of women. Equally, local NGOs and

grass-roots organizations have a special role to play in creating a social and intellectual climate responsive to women's quests and aspirations.

A. National implementation and follow-up

146. To reflect the priority of actions for the equality between men and women related to the strategic objectives, Governments should consider sets of national strategies for the advancement of women.

147. Within the framework of such strategies, each country should establish its specific priorities and identify policies and measures expected to have a high impact on the condition of women, such as preparing an Act promoting gender equality.

148. Strategies for equality between men and women should also include national targets within a time-frame and a mechanism for regular review and revision. Targets should define problems more precisely to lend transparency to government policies and ensure accountability.

149. Strategies should clearly assign responsibilities to the main parties responsible for their further development and implementation. Specific programmes need to be conceived and implemented at national, provincial and local levels.

150. In order to mainstream women's concerns and to reflect their values in decision-making processes, Governments should commit themselves to the goal of gender equality inter alia by assigning the political responsibility of the coordination of gender equality policies to a Cabinet Minister or to the Head of State's office.

151. Governments that have not already done so should establish national mechanisms or bodies for equal opportunities between women and men with a view to coordinating women's activities at the national level and serving as focal points for international cooperation and for continuously monitoring of the compliance with international standards.

152. Such national mechanisms or bodies should fall under the authority of the Government and be located within the government structure, at the highest level, allowing it to have a direct effect on government policy. To carry out their task continuously and efficiently, they should be financed from special allocations in the national budget and should employ highly professional staff on a full-time basis.

153. Supplementing the establishment of special mechanisms for the advancement of women and gender equality, routine procedures could be established in all areas and at all levels of policy-making to assure gender-sensitivity in decision-making and public planning.

154. Notwithstanding the institutional arrangements, established mechanisms or bodies for the equal opportunity for women should be attached to report to the highest possible level, such as the office of the President or Prime Minister, and periodically to their respective parliaments.

155. Equally important are arrangements and procedures through which each target of a sectoral nature can be taken by line ministries and/or sectoral institutions.

156. Monitoring and evaluation of national strategies and targets should be primarily done at national level; exchanges at the political, professional, academic and non-governmental, including grass-root levels should be stimulated in an open manner in which public authorities would organize discussions on the implementation of the platform for action, both regional and global. The process would also facilitate the preparations of national reports of State parties required by CEDAW and other reports related to the existing international conventions and other instruments of international law.

B. Regional cooperation and follow-up

157. Within the framework of regional approaches and multilateral arrangements, specific consultation mechanisms should be established to ensure the participation of all countries concerned in the preparation and implementation of programmes corresponding to the strategic objectives.

158. Regional or sub-regional groupings are thus encouraged to provide an opportunity for increasing cooperation for the advancement of women, and members of such organizations are to be invited to explore new possibilities for opening cooperation to support the advancement of women in the economic and social as in the peace and security fields.

159. Monitoring the implementation of the strategic objectives for action could start with regional meetings to exchange experiences from various national monitoring exercises. This would achieve a more uniform regional monitoring methodology. Such initial meetings should be jointly organized by major regional organizations according to their respective priority areas and budgetary resources.

160. In addition to regional cooperation among governments, institutions, such as trade unions, professional and trade associations, academic and non-governmental institutions should launch similar cooperation processes at the regional level.

161. Advancement of women offers immense possibilities for increased networking focused on the regional platform for action and based on well defined strategies and targets.

C. The regional role of the United Nations system

162. The new trend in the United Nations system to integrate economic and social issues and programmes could be strengthened by the rich experience of women-related activities which need to be mainstreamed. For this purpose, the United Nations system should play a significant role in organizing debates and exchange of experiences on specific aspects of the implementation of strategic objectives, in close cooperation with other global and regional organizations. Accordingly, existing reporting systems and mechanisms should be strengthened within the United Nations system as a whole to facilitate an integrated approach to both the implementation and the monitoring of such strategic objectives, preferably through joint programming of specific activities. In

this spirit, the ECE regional input into the platform for action could contribute to the following:

(a) Intergovernmental discussions on economic and social trends and policies, at both macro and sectoral levels, should be conducted with due consideration given to the major guidelines provided by the platform for action;

(b) Regional offices of the specialized United Nations bodies and agencies should include items related to the targets of the platform for action in the agendas of their meetings;

(c) Technical assistance and operational activities at the regional level should establish well identified targets for the advancement of women. To this end, regular consultative meetings should be convened among United Nations bodies and agencies;

(d) An international centre for NGOs in countries in transition might be established. Such a centre should coordinate and facilitate contacts between NGOs and serve as a focal point for the exchange of information on statistical data and ongoing research in order to assist those countries where such data and research are insufficient or non-existent.

VI. MOBILIZING FINANCIAL RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTING THE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

163. As investing in women yields high returns if strategies for the advancement of women are to become more than pure rhetoric or not left predominantly to voluntary work and to ad hoc funding, adequate funding, at least on a preliminary basis, must be provided.

164. In order to ensure the necessary financial means for mainstreaming the advancement of women in ECE countries, national strategies should include clear-cut allocation of resources from national budgets with desirable budgetary targets expressed in well defined percentages. In doing so, the principle of mainstreaming should be observed.

165. For economies in transition, the domestic targets should be matched by the same or increased percentage of overall public development assistance.

166. The private sector can also be effective in mobilizing resources for the implementation of strategies for the advancement of women, particularly by providing housing, health care, child-care, training and other social benefits. Governments should encourage the private sector to do so by the various means at their disposal.

167. The need to secure credit with no collateral for small-scale entrepreneurial activities should be taken into account by international and national financial institutions which should monitor the allocation of such credits by gender as far as it is possible.

168. At the regional level the significant role that could be played in mobilizing resources by the concerned global and regional institutions of the United Nations system, as well as by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development should be recognized and encouraged. ECE member States should

also seek ways and means to support the efforts in less developed regions of the world.

169. Efforts to create synergies between the regional United Nations entities and other regional or sub-regional groupings, as well as between NGOs and research institutions, need to be developed for fostering solidarity related to the implementation of the strategic objectives and targets.

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