



ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Subcommittee on Socially Vulnerable Groups

First session  
13-15 September 2004  
Bangkok

**REPORT ON THE HIGH-LEVEL INTERGOVERNMENTAL MEETING TO REVIEW  
REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION  
AND ITS REGIONAL AND GLOBAL OUTCOMES**

(Item 7 of the provisional agenda)

*Note by the secretariat*

**SUMMARY**

A review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, in 1995, and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, held in 2000, is mandated in the multi-year programme of work of the Commission on the Status of Women for its forty-ninth session in March 2005.

To prepare for the review and appraisal, ESCAP will organize the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and its Regional and Global Outcomes at Bangkok from 7 to 10 September 2004.

The High-level Meeting will discuss the achievements, gaps and challenges and provide an indication of areas where actions and initiatives, within the framework of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, are most urgent to further implementation. Discussion will also focus on the common factors that are currently hampering the advancement of women in the region. Topics of discussion will include: globalization and the economic empowerment of women; women and conflict; gender and HIV/AIDS; a gender-responsive information society; governance and political participation of women; regional cooperation; gender mainstreaming; rights-based approach; intersectional perspectives; and working with men for gender equality and the empowerment of women.



## **Introduction**

1. The Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) will convene the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and its Regional and Global Outcomes, at Bangkok from 7 to 10 September 2004. The High-level Meeting will review the regional implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, in 1995, and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, held in 2000, for the ESCAP region.

2. The output of the High-level Meeting will become the regional input into the global review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, to be carried out by the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session, to be held in March 2005.

3. An Expert Group Meeting was organized by ESCAP at Bangkok from 22 to 24 March 2004, to formulate the conceptual and organizational framework for the High-level Meeting. Discussions on the preparation for that Meeting were held by the Thematic Working Group on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality on 3 June 2004. From those discussions, it was decided that the High-level Meeting would be characterized by the following:

(a) A plenary review, within the framework of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, to identify achievements, gaps and challenges and provide an indication of the areas where actions and initiatives are most urgent to further implementation;

(b) Panel discussions on various aspects of gender and development issues most relevant to the ESCAP region;

(c) Parallel sessions with the objective of expanding the issues addressed in the panel discussions;

(d) Side events to highlight selected issues pertinent to the region.

### **A. Plenary review**

4. The plenary review will discuss the achievements, gaps and challenges and provide an indication of the areas where actions and initiatives, within the framework of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, are most urgent to further implementation. Discussion will also focus on the common factors that are currently hampering the advancement of women in the region. Representatives of each member and associate member will make a statement on the implementation in their respective country. United Nations bodies and agencies and other intergovernmental organizations will also be invited to deliver statements.

## **B. Panel discussions and parallel sessions**

5. There will be two panel discussions. The first panel will discuss in-depth, substantive issues and concerns including globalization and the economic empowerment of women, violence against women and the trafficking of women and children, and a gender-responsive information society.

6. The second panel will focus on the approaches necessary for creating and sustaining an enabling environment for the empowerment of women. The approaches to be discussed are the following:

- (a) Gender mainstreaming;
- (b) A rights-based approach;
- (c) Partnerships, including working with men and regional cooperation.

7. In addition to the items on the agenda of the High-level Meeting, parallel sessions will be organized with the objective of expanding the issues addressed in the panel discussions and highlighting issues such as governance and the political participation of women, gender and HIV/AIDS, the feminization of migration, and intersectional perspectives to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

## **C. Side events**

8. Side events organized by various agencies and organizations will include exhibitions, audio-visual displays, group presentations and performances.

## **D. Documentation**

9. The ESCAP secretariat will prepare a background document pertaining to the overall review of regional implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. That document will be based on the relevant reports of the respective member countries in order to highlight the regional and subregional situations, practices and challenges in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

10. Resource persons for the above-mentioned panel discussions and parallel sessions will prepare substantive background papers on the specific themes addressed in the discussions for distribution to participants.

## **E. Report**

11. Following the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and its Regional and Global Outcomes, a report will be prepared for submission to the Subcommittee on Socially Vulnerable Groups at its first session.