



Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the 2009 Southern Regional Model United Nations! We are very delighted to serve as your Director and Assistant Director for the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). We would like to introduce ourselves, as we will be your first contacts for your questions or suggestions both before and during the conference.

Your Director, Kristina Mader, holds a B.A. in Political Science & Government focused from Western Washington University. Kristina currently works for the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security in New York City where she assists in monitoring the full and rapid implementation of Security Council Resolution 1325. This will be Kristina's tenth year of involvement in Model United Nations, and second year on staff at SRMUN. In addition to SRMUN, she has been on staff at over a dozen conferences, including National Model United Nations and Northwest Model United Nations. Christina Stephens, your Assistant Director, graduated from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte in 2003 with degrees in Communications and Political Science. This is her second year on staff at SRMUN and she has been involved in both local and international Model UN conferences for several years. Currently, Christina is a sales consultant for Executive Wines in Charlotte, NC.

This year's topics for the Commission on the Status of Women are:

- I. Promoting Equal Participation of Women in Government**
- II. Women's Role in the Global Economy**
- III. Combating Sexual Exploitation of and Violence Against Women**

We would like to take this opportunity to highlight the unique opportunity CSW presents to delegates. CSW is integral in assessing, developing, and executing efforts globally to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment, and is thus at the forefront of policymaking initiatives within the UN system. Not only does CSW recommend action to other organizations, but also takes action itself, and therefore as delegates within this committee, you will have a direct impact on people's lives in all corners of the world. We urge you to remain aware of this point, and become familiar with CSW's mandate and its relationships with other organizations within the UN system. In addition, as the topics are linked by the core issue of women's rights, we encourage delegates to extensively research the main documents and events pertaining to the gender equality and women's rights movement, as they will be central to your work within the committee.

Delegates will find that each topic is relevant to current discussions within the international community, and are encouraged to research beyond resources that we have provided you in the background guide, as new information is constantly available. Academic research plays a central role in the educational mission of SRMUN and will greatly benefit you.

Each delegation is required to submit a position paper which covers each of the three topics. Position papers should be not longer than 2 pages in length and single spaced. Delegates are encouraged to use the position papers as an opportunity to state what your country plans to accomplish in this committee. Strong, well developed position papers are an excellent foundation for conference preparation. It is important to ensure all sides of each issue are adequately addressed and presented in a clear and concise manner that is easy for your audience to understand. More detailed information about how to write position papers can be found at the SRMUN website (<http://www.srmun.org>). **All position papers MUST be submitted by October 23th, 11:59pm EST to the to the SRMUN website. Instructions for uploading your position paper can be found on the SRMUN website.**

We look forward to the opportunity to serve as your Director and Assistant Director for the 2009 Southern Regional Model United Nations. We wish you all the best of luck and look forward to working with each of you. Please feel free to contact us if you have any questions.

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## History for the Commission on the Status of Women

*“To raise the status of women, irrespective of nationality, race, language or religion, to equality with men in all fields of human enterprise, and to eliminate all discrimination against women in the provisions of statutory law, in legal maxims or rules, or in interpretation of customary law.” - United Nations<sup>1</sup>*

The advancement of women has been a top priority for the United Nations (UN) since its inception in 1945. The UN's commitment to gender equality is evident within the preamble of the *UN Charter*, where the organization's “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small,” is boldly articulated.<sup>2</sup> This ideal was further upheld by Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) resolution *11(II)* which established the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on June 21, 1946. This resolution forged the framework for the future work of the organization in the areas of women's rights and gender equality. The Commission was mandated to report to ECOSOC as one of the body's functional committees, and furnish recommendations on ways to “promote women's rights in political, economic, social, and educational fields.”<sup>3</sup> In addition, the CSW also was designed to address urgent problems, within the scope of women's rights, which require immediate attention.

For the first three decades of its existence, the Commission promoted women's rights through international conventions and standards that sought to change discriminatory legislation and spread global awareness of women's issues. The CSW was crucial in the passage of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, and worked closely with United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR) to draft the *International Bill of Rights*.<sup>4</sup> During this time, researching and polling efforts of the CSW revealed pertinent information regarding the political and legal status of women, and the results of this research eventually led to several human rights instruments designed to achieve political equality. In 1952 the Commission drafted the *Convention on the Political Rights of Women* to acknowledge that women were entitled to vote and run for office in any election under national law and subsequent to this, and that same year, the General Assembly adopted the Convention, thereby making it part of international law.

From 1960-1970, the CSW continued to promote the welfare of women by focusing on women's economic participation in development issues and the adverse affects of poverty. However, CSW continued to lack a legal foundation for the equality of women and voraciously needed a legally binding convention that defined women's rights. In 1979 the *Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (CEDAW) was adopted by the General Assembly to alleviate this need.<sup>5</sup> This convention included 30 articles which explicitly outlined international and legally binding principles on the rights of women. To further the work of CEDAW, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) was established in 1982 and is composed of 23 experts on women's issues from around the world.<sup>6</sup> Since they share the same acronym, the Committee and the Convention are often mistaken for one another. However the Committee has a very specific mandate designed to monitor the progress of women in countries that are parties to the 1979 Convention by ensuring that they implement the national measures needed to fulfill the legal obligations of *CEDAW*. They are responsible for reviewing national reports, making recommendations on issues affecting women and opening dialog between State's Parties and CSW. Today, *CEDAW*, through the work of the Committee, continues to be a living instrument, as it addresses varying issues of concern including violence against women, HIV/AIDS, and disabled women.

With the adoption of *CEDAW*, it became clear that there was a need for a mandate expansion for the Commission, thus prompting the passage of *ECOSOC resolution 1987/22*. This resolution expanded the mandate of the CSW “to include the functions of promoting the objectives of equality, development and peace, monitoring the implementation of measures for the advancement of women, and reviewing progress made at the national, sub-

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<sup>1</sup> E/281/Rev.1. Report of the Commission on the Status of Women. Economic and Social Council. 1947.

<sup>2</sup> Charter of the United Nations. United Nations. 26 June 1946.

<sup>3</sup> E/RES/11(II). Commission on the Status of Women. Economic and Social Council. 1946.

<sup>4</sup> United Nations. Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women. 2006.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf>.

<sup>5</sup> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women. United Nations. 18 December 1979.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

regional, regional, and global levels.”<sup>7</sup> During the period known as the “Decade for Women” (1976-1985), organizations such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) were developed to be responsible for programmatic, research, and field work being done for the advancement of women.<sup>8</sup>

Since 1990, the General Assembly and ECOSOC have widened the scope of the CSW through various platforms and conferences. In 1995, following the Fourth World Conference on Women, the General Assembly mandated that the Commission “integrate into its programme a follow-up process to the Conference, regularly reviewing the critical areas of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action and to develop its catalytic role in mainstreaming a gender perspective in United Nations activities.”<sup>9</sup> ECOSOC modified the scope of CSW again in 1996 with the adoption of resolution 1996/6 which allowed the Commission to identify emerging issues, and discuss new trends and approaches to issues that affect the equality between men and women, specifically in the area of gender mainstreaming.<sup>10</sup>

The CSW recently concluded its 53<sup>rd</sup> session on March 13, 2009. The priority theme of this session was “the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS,” and the agreed conclusions addressed various aspects of this theme such as social security, reproductive rights, and the economic crisis.<sup>11</sup> The theme for the 54<sup>th</sup> Session of the CSW will be a review of the Beijing Platform for Action and the critical areas identified as preconditions for gender equality worldwide.

There are forty-five members of the CSW, each of which is elected by ECOSOC on the basis of geographical distribution as follows: thirteen members from Africa, eleven from Asia; nine from Latin America and Caribbean; eight from Western Europe and other States and four from Eastern Europe.<sup>12</sup> While most UN committees operate using resolutions to sum up their work, the CSW also adopts “agreed conclusions” at the end of each session. Agreed conclusions provide solid recommendations that are to be implemented by governmental bodies and other involved parties, at various levels of enforcement. These documents provide a plan of action for Member States that goes beyond what resolutions often provide and are another example of the unique position the CSW is in to have somewhat significant influence over policy in the area of gender equality and women’s rights within the UN system.<sup>13</sup>

The membership of the Commission on the Status of Women is currently:

ARMENIA, AZERBAIJAN, BELGIUM, BELIZE, BRAZIL, CAMBODIA, CAMEROON, CHINA, CROATIA, CUBA, DJIBOUTI, DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, ECUADOR, ERITREA, GABON, GERMANY, HAITI, INDIA, INDONESIA, ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, JAPAN, LESOTHO, MALAYSIA, MALI, MEXICO, MOROCCO, NAMIBIA, NETHERLANDS, NIGER, PAKISTAN, PARAGUAY, PERU, QATAR, REPUBLIC OF KOREA, RUSSIAN FEDERATION, SENEGAL, SPAIN, SWEDEN, TOGO, TURKEY, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES, UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND, UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, AND ZAMBIA.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> E/RES/1987/22. Measures to strengthen the role and functions of the Commission on the Status of Women. Economic and Social Council. 1987.

<sup>8</sup> United Nations. Short History of the Commission on the Status of Women. 2006.  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/CSW60YRS/CSWbriefhistory.pdf>.

<sup>9</sup> “About the Commission on the Status of Women.” Division for the Advancement of Women.  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/index.html>.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> “Fifty-third Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.” Division for the Advancement of Women.  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/53sess.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Membership of the fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Commission on the Status of Women. 2008.  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/CSW%20Members-%2053rd%20session.pdf>.

## Topic I. Promoting Equal Participation of Women in Government

*“Without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women’s perspectives at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved.”*  
– Carolyn Hannan, Director of the Division for the Advancement of Women <sup>15</sup>

### **Introduction**

In recent years, the number of women in positions of decision-making power has grown exponentially, fueled in part by women’s movements globally who seek to raise awareness of the need for women in leadership positions. Despite the attention to this issue, worldwide the number of women in these positions only lies at 18.2%, which is far below the minimum level of 30% set within fundamental gender equality documents, such as the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action (BPfa). Only 22 countries have achieved the minimum standard laid out within the BPfa, and far more have little to no presence of women in government.<sup>16</sup> The equal participation of women in government is closely intertwined with democracy, as no parliament or decision-making body can truly be representative of their population, without equal participation by both men and women.<sup>17</sup> In addition, the achievement of a substantial representation of women in politics, as it is often argued, is “essential to better meet the needs and interests of women and children and to moving to eradicate gender inequalities.”<sup>18</sup> In order to effectively promote the equal participation of women in government, comprehensive and targeted action must be taken in areas such as electoral reform, campaign finance and peacebuilding processes. The issue of women’s participation must begin with the identification of the factors which contribute to women’s exclusion from roles of decision-making power. Obstacles to women’s participation in parliament “vary with level of socio-economic development, geography, culture and the type of political system.”<sup>19</sup> The results of this low rate of participation have significant impact on the attainment of gender equality, economic development and the basic promotion and flourishing of democratic principles.

### **International Framework**

Over the past two decades, a central theme within the women’s movement has been increasing the number of women who participate in political processes. This movement has been supported by the passage of multiple international agreements which are utilized by women’s organizations as advocacy tools as well as means with which to hold governments accountable. These guiding principles serve to advance the roles of women within the political realm.

As early as 1946, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Article 21 recognized “the right of every person to take part in the government of his or her country” as well as ensuring “equal access of men and women to power, decision-making and leadership at all levels is a necessary precondition for the proper functioning of democracy.”<sup>20</sup> The 1953 Convention on the Political Rights of Women contributed to the foundation and eventual approval of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1979.<sup>21</sup> Within CEDAW, several articles address the right of women to be involved in decision-making on a

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<sup>15</sup> Carolyn Hannan. “Opening Statement.” Expert Group Meeting on the ‘Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes with particular emphasis on political participation and leadership.’ United Nations. 2005.  
[http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/eql-men/docs/ST\\_CH\\_EGM\\_political\\_decision-making\\_Addis\\_2005\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/eql-men/docs/ST_CH_EGM_political_decision-making_Addis_2005_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>16</sup> “Getting the Balance Right in National Parliaments.” Women’s Environmental & Development Organization. 2008.  
[http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/5050\\_parliamentsfactsheet03.pdf](http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/5050_parliamentsfactsheet03.pdf)

<sup>17</sup> “Parliaments & Representatives.” International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics.  
[http://www.iknowpolitics.org/en/taxonomy\\_menu/2/22](http://www.iknowpolitics.org/en/taxonomy_menu/2/22)

<sup>18</sup> Anne Phillips. “Democracy and Representation: Or, Why Should It Matter Who Our Representatives Are?” Feminism and Politics. Oxford: Oxford University Press. 1998.

<sup>19</sup> “Women in Parliament: Beyond the Numbers.” International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. 2005.  
[http://www.idea.int/gender/wip\\_handbook.cfm](http://www.idea.int/gender/wip_handbook.cfm)

<sup>20</sup> “Aide-Memoire.” Presented at the Expert Group Meeting on the ‘Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on political participation and leadership.’ United Nations. 2005.  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/eql-men/index.html>

<sup>21</sup> Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. United Nations General Assembly. 18 December 1979. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/cedaw.htm>

political level. Specifically, Article 7, which states that countries must ensure “women's equal access to and equal opportunities in political and public life. These include the right to vote and to stand for election, as well as to hold public office at all levels of government.”<sup>22</sup> In addition, Articles 4 and 8 request that “states parties agree to take all appropriate measures to overcome historical discrimination against women and obstacles to women’s participation in decision-making processes, including legislation and temporary special measures.”<sup>23</sup> Following up on these articles, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women passed General Recommendation 23 in 1997 addressing this issue as well by stating States must take all appropriate measures to ensure women have the right to: (a) To vote in all elections and public referenda and to be eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies; (b) To participate in the formulation of government policy and the implementation thereof and to hold public office and perform all public functions at all levels of government; (c) To participate in non-governmental organizations and associations concerned with the public and political life of the country.<sup>24</sup>

The Fourth World Conference on Women which was held in 1995 in Beijing, China, produced one of the most important documents to the women’s rights movement: the Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action. Twelve critical areas of concern were outlined within these documents, and further expanded upon within the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA).<sup>25</sup> Specifically, Strategic Objective G.1 and G.2 articulate the importance of taking “concrete actions to ensure women’s equal access to, and full participation in, power structures and in increasing women’s capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.”<sup>26</sup>

In 1997, the 41<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women had as a theme, women in decision-making.<sup>27</sup> The agreed conclusions “called for the acceleration of implementation of the BPfA in order to achieve women’s full and equal participation in decision-making.”<sup>28</sup> In addition, “governments were urged, *inter alia*, to establish time-bound targets for reaching the goal of gender balance in decision-making, and ensure gender mainstreaming in legislation.” All this was written with the underlying assumption that achieving equal participation in decision-making is necessary for a strong democracy.

In 2000, the General Assembly held its 23<sup>rd</sup> Special Session entitled, “Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-First Century,” during which it reviewed achievements in the promotion of women into power and decision-making positions.<sup>29</sup> Immediately following this session, Security Council Resolution 1325 was passed in an unprecedented show of support for the importance of and linkages between women, peace and security. This resolution expects all Member States to make a Commitment to achieve gender equality in power and decision-making in political affairs was reaffirmed, by this resolution which called for the integration of a gender perspective into the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements.<sup>30</sup>

General Assembly resolution 58/124 on Women and Political Participation urges “Member States to eliminate all discriminatory laws in their national legislatures, counter “negative societal attitudes about women’s capacity to participate equally in the political process.”<sup>31</sup> Building off of this effort, the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues (OSAGI) held multiple Expert Group Meetings on women in decision-making.<sup>32</sup> Both the 2004 meeting on

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> General Recommendation No. 23: Article 7 on Political and Public Life. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. 1997. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm#recom23>

<sup>25</sup> Beijing Declaration. Fourth World Conference on Women. United Nations. 15 September 1995. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/beijingdeclaration.html>

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> “50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.” Division for the Advancement of Women. United Nations. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/50sess.htm>

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> “Five-year Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (Beijing +5) held in the General Assembly, 5-9 June 2000.” United Nations. 2000. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/followup/beijing+5.htm>

<sup>30</sup> S/RES/1325. Women, peace and security. United Nations. 2000.

<sup>31</sup> A/RES/58/142. Women and political participation. General Assembly. 2003. <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/RES/58/142&Lang=E>

<sup>32</sup> “Expert Group Meetings.” Division for the Advancement of Women. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/documents/egm.htm>



“Enhancing Women’s Participation in Electoral Processes in Post-Conflict Countries” and the 2005 meeting on “Equal Participation of Women and Men in Decision-Making Processes, with Particular Emphasis on Political Participation and Leadership,” resulted in documents which adopt policy recommendations to advance women’s participation and leadership through “capacity-building, coalition-building and gender-sensitive institutional policies, programmes and mechanisms, based on the identification of the most promising practices and lessons learned to date.”<sup>1</sup>

Finally, the priority theme at the 50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2006 and the review theme at the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the CSW in 2009 both discussed women’s participation in decision-making.<sup>33</sup> The prevalence of this theme throughout the UN system and civil society, reflect the critical importance the international community places on ensuring women are equal on all levels of society, particularly at the policy-making level.

### ***Campaign Finance as a Barrier to Women’s Participation***

The Beijing Platform for Action acknowledges the “high cost of contesting elections as one of the many barriers to women in politics.”<sup>34</sup> Overall, women have fewer economic resources than men, but campaign expenses remain the same or are higher than that of men’s.<sup>35</sup> Through all phases of women’s political careers, access to adequate resources is critical for success. Whether a candidate is making the decision to run, winning a nomination, or conducting a campaign, women’s access to individual and corporate donors is much more limited than that of their male counterparts.<sup>36</sup> In most countries around the world, a significant amount of personal funds must be invested in a campaign, which is why women’s organizations have repeatedly stated the importance of addressing the “economic and financial obstacles to women’s political participation” early as a crucial step in facilitating the involvement of more women.<sup>37</sup> When women are campaigning to win the nomination of their party, costs can be higher than at any other point of the campaign. Candidates are required to build a reputation among their constituents and devote a significant amount of time, time spent away from jobs, to making connections within the political party they seek to be nominated by.<sup>38</sup> This linkage between those who win campaigns and those who are able to raise the most in funds continues to marginalize women as well as present an image of politics as corrupt. The fundamental culture of campaigns is identified by women’s organizations as something that needs to be addressed in order for women to become full actors within the political field.<sup>39</sup>

There is much that can be accomplished by a political party itself to address the inherent inequalities between men and women and campaign finances.<sup>40</sup> Specific actions that have been recommended include: the assurance of equal access to incoming resources for both men and women, designation of a specific amount of resources for women candidates as an affirmative action, and the incorporation of gender equality criteria into parties’ internal transparency and accountability.<sup>41</sup> In addition, once they have been elected, women should receive equal amount of support by political parties in terms of distribution of resources for re-election campaigns.<sup>42</sup>

Public financing is one method of campaign finance that generally has a positive impact on women. “Public finance” refers to campaign money “provided by the government to a candidate or political party used to cover a

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<sup>33</sup> “50<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.” Division for the Advancement of Women. United Nations. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/50sess.htm>

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> Gretchen Luchsinger Sidhu and Ruth Meena. “Electoral Financing to Advance Women’s Political Participation: A Guide for UNDP Support.” United Nations Development Programme. 2007. [http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/GenderGovPr\\_Elections\\_3.pdf](http://www.undp.org/governance/docs/GenderGovPr_Elections_3.pdf)

<sup>36</sup> “Women and Campaign Finance: The High Price of Politics.” Women’s Environment & Development Organization. 2008. <http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/campaignfinance1.pdf>

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> “Resource Kit on Women in Government.” Center for Legislative Development. 2007. <http://www.capwip.org/readingroom/5050sourcekit.pdf>

<sup>40</sup> “Women Candidates & Campaign Finance.” Women’s Environment & Development Organization. 2007. <http://www.wedo.org/wp-content/uploads/women-and-campaign-finance-recommendations-from-trinidad.pdf>

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

portion or all of campaign costs.”<sup>43</sup> Public financing of campaigns is “seen as democratic, fair and equitable as both women and men candidates and parties that qualify for government support are given equal amounts for campaigns.”<sup>44</sup> In several European countries, such as France, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, and the Netherlands, there are laws which govern the use of public funds if a certain number of women are not included in a political party’s nominees. In France, for example, political parties which have less than 50% women in their party list “face sanctions, such as reduction or withdrawal of campaign funding support from the government.”<sup>45</sup> Contribution limits, when legally binding and applied across all levels of government, can prevent disproportionate amounts of funding from going to male candidates, and level the playing field somewhat to allow women candidates to have a more equitable chance at being elected.<sup>46</sup> There are multiple ways that governments can legally address inequality within campaigns, specifically within campaign finance laws, that will allow women to have an equal chance

### ***Voluntary and Mandatory Gender Quotas within Electoral Systems & Political Parties***

An important variable, which has been identified as influencing the “likelihood of women being elected” to national legislatures, is the electoral system used within the country.<sup>47</sup> Electoral systems are grouped into four main groups by most international organizations: (1) plurality/majority, (2) mixed, (3) proportional, and (4) other.<sup>48</sup> Systems which are frequently used and seen across the world include: List Proportional representation (List PR), First Past the Post (FPTP), Two-Round System (TRS), Parallel Systems, Mixed Member Proportional (MMP), Block Vote (BV), and Single Non-Transferable Vote (SNTV).<sup>49</sup> Each system varies in terms of its ability to be flexible and inclusive of women, therefore in order to remedy systemic and cultural barriers to women’s participation, special measures, such as quotas, have been developed to overcome these obstacles.

Within the range of quota types, they can be separated into two categories: voluntary party quotas and constitutional and legal quotas. Voluntary party quotas are “adopted voluntarily by political parties and set by the parties themselves to guarantee the nomination of a certain number or proportion of women.”<sup>50</sup> Quotas which are constitutional, and enshrined in the country’s constitution, or legislative, and defined by law, are legally binding and therefore mandatory for all political entities to adhere to.<sup>51</sup>

The application of quotas occurs either during the nomination process or once a party has been elected. When quotas are applied to the nomination process, whether they are voluntary or legally binding, the goal is for women to be placed “strategically on a party’s lists of candidates in such a way as to give them equal opportunities to be elected to the legislative body.”<sup>52</sup> One possibility when applying quotas during the nomination process, which is often utilized within countries that have strong quota systems, is that of setting a percentage ceiling.<sup>53</sup> Results-based quotas are enshrined in the constitution or law and cannot be voluntary. These quotas “ensure that either a certain percentage or certain number of the seats in a legislature is reserved for women.”<sup>54</sup>

Based on analysis of electoral systems and the quotas that have been applied to them, several combinations have been identified as allowing for the highest number of women to be elected. The first combination, which is seen in Pakistan, uses systems with a tier for women-only candidates. This system guarantees that as many women are elected as the quota makes provisions for. Variations of this combination can be seen in the Dominican Republic,

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<sup>43</sup> “Resource Kit on Women in Government.” Center for Legislative Development. 2007.  
<http://www.capwip.org/readingroom/5050sourcekit.pdf>

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Stina Larserud and Rita Taphorn. “Designing for Equality: Best-fit, medium-fit and non-favourable combinations of electoral systems and gender quotas.” International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. 2007.  
[http://www.idea.int/publications/designing\\_for\\_equality/](http://www.idea.int/publications/designing_for_equality/)

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

Ecuador, Argentina, Belgium, Costa Rica, Iraq and Macedonia. Additional examples of successful electoral and quota systems combinations can be seen in Jordan, Cameroon, and Djibouti.<sup>55</sup>

Once quotas have been developed and applied to an electoral or party system, several variables impact the ability of these quotas to carry out their purpose. These factors include enforceability, the capacity of the electoral management body, availability of potential female candidates, and centralized and decentralized nomination procedures.<sup>56</sup> In general, it is assumed proportional representation (PR) electoral systems are more favorable toward women, than plurality-majority systems or semi-proportional systems, which is a result of political parties in PR systems developing an “inclusive party list that will attract as many voters as possible.”<sup>57</sup>

### *Case Study: South African Development Community and Gender Quotas*

The South African Development Community (SADC) is an alliance of 14 countries (Angola, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Lesotho, Madagascar, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe) in the south of Africa.<sup>58</sup> Formed in 1980, it was originally aimed at lessening the economic dependence on the then apartheid South Africa.<sup>59</sup> In 1992 the organization transformed into one with a broader goal to develop a regional community that would “ensure economic well-being, improvement of the standards of living and quality of life, freedom and social justice; peace and security for the peoples of Southern Africa.”<sup>60</sup> In 1996, the SADC established a Gender Unit, following encouragement by their Member States, to assist all Members in mainstreaming gender perspectives and concerns into the organization’s policies.<sup>61</sup> The following year, in 1997, the *Declaration on Gender and Development* was signed by SADC heads of state and government in a sign of their commitment to, among other things, use whatever methods available to ensure “the equal representation of women and men in the decision making of Member States and SADC structures at all levels, and the achievement of at least thirty percent target of women in political and decision making structures by year 2005.”<sup>62</sup>

Building off of the aforementioned *Declaration*, the *SADC Protocol on Gender and Development* was signed in August 2008 as a legally binding protocol, with the goal of providing “for the empowerment of women, to eliminate discrimination and to achieve gender equality and equity through the development and implementation of gender responsive legislation policies, programmes and projects.”<sup>63</sup> Within the protocol, there are eight topics addressed, including constitutional and legal rights, and governance. Additionally, there are 23 targets, one of which is for women to hold 50% of decision-making positions in the public and private sectors by 2015.<sup>64</sup> The adoption of this protocol means that all activities within the SADC must include a gender perspective, and States are required to report on progress periodically, as well as ensure that gender is included on the agenda when discussing regional cooperation.<sup>65</sup> The Protocol would not have been adopted if it was not for the immense support of civil society organizations throughout the region. Through the Southern Africa Gender Protocol Alliance, encompassing 16 organizations and individual activists, lobbying efforts were extremely effective in lobbying the most reluctant SADC Members and strengthening ties with those in support of this initiative.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Stina Larserud and Rita Taphorn. “Designing for Equality: Best-fit, medium-fit and non-favourable combinations of electoral systems and gender quotas.” International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance. 2007.  
[http://www.idea.int/publications/designing\\_for\\_equality/](http://www.idea.int/publications/designing_for_equality/)

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Staffan Lindberg. “Women’s Empowerment and Democratization: The Effects of Electoral Systems, Participation, and Experience in Africa.” *Comparative International Development*. 39(1): 2004, pp. 28-53.

<sup>58</sup> “About SADC.” Southern African Development Community.  
<http://www.sadc.int/>

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> “About the SADC Gender Unit.” Southern African Development Community.  
<http://www.sadc.int/gender>

<sup>62</sup> SADC Declaration on Gender and Development. Southern African Development Community. 8 September 1997.

<sup>63</sup> SADC Protocol on Gender and Development. Southern African Development Community. 17 August 2008.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Patience Zirima. “SADC Gender Protocol to accelerate women’s empowerment.” Southern Africa News Features. August 2008. <http://www.sardc.net/Editorial/Newsfeature/08590808.htm>

<sup>66</sup> Pamela Mhlanga. “Women on top of SADC agenda.” Gender Links. 7 August 2008.  
<http://www.afrol.com/articles/30181>



Since 2000, coordinated by the SADC Secretariat as part of the Sub-Regional Plan of Action on Gender, a regional Programme on Women in Politics and Decision-making (WIP) has been in operation with the aim of helping “member states to reach this target by providing female members of parliament (MPs) and political aspirants with relevant skills, and to encourage the sharing experiences and best practices across the region.”<sup>67</sup> Annual reports on progress made are presented at their summit, providing some level of accountability within the SADC. One strategy, which is trending across the region, is the use of gender quotas as an aspect in a comprehensive strategy for ensuring women’s equal political participation and representation.<sup>68</sup>

Based on most recent data, the following are the SADC Member States with the highest percentage of women in the lower houses of parliament: South Africa (43%), Angola (37.3%), Mozambique (34.8%), United Republic of Tanzania (30.4%), Namibia (26.9%), Lesotho (25%), and Seychelles (23.5%).<sup>69</sup> A recent number of studies identified common themes within countries claiming a high number of women participants beginning with fact that all countries had “experienced a political transition in the last 20 years following a period of prolonged conflict (civil war, liberation struggle, genocide, guerilla insurgency)” during which women activists and their organizations inserted “themselves into the processes of crafting new constitutions and drafting new laws that provided the legal foundations and political frameworks for the institutions and mechanisms to bring more women into political office (the use of certain types of electoral systems and gender quotas).”<sup>70</sup> In addition, women’s organizations which focused on countries during conflict and then maintained attention following the resolution of said conflict, contributed to raising awareness across the world for African women’s issues.<sup>71</sup> It is important to note that the electoral systems between these countries is varied, highlighting the fact that there is not one, best way, to combine quotas and electoral systems in order to maximize the efficiency of the system, although there are several “best practices” which have been identified.

Three of the countries with the highest representation of women, Mozambique, Namibia, and South Africa, all use a closed list PR system for their parliamentary elections, in addition to either a voluntary or mandatory party-based quota. In contrast, three of the countries with the lowest representation within the SADC, Botswana, Malawi and Zimbabwe, all utilize ‘first past the post’ electoral system, which is the most common ‘majoritarian system’ and few if any gender quotas.<sup>72</sup>

Voluntary quotas are present at the national or parliamentary level in all but a few SADC Member Countries.<sup>73</sup> In the cases of South Africa and Mozambique, the ruling parties have exceeded their 30% quotas, and not until recently, did opposition parties also establish quotas, therefore raising the overall percentage of women in parliament.<sup>74</sup> On the local level, Namibia is an example of the effectiveness of voluntary quotas with 42 women of local councils being comprised of women.<sup>75</sup>

The impact of women on parliaments within Southern Africa is challenging to measure, with only a little over a decade of work to assess, but can be roughly divided into three categories: institutional, legislative and civil society.

<sup>67</sup> Bookie Monica Kethusegile-Juru. “Quota Systems in Africa – An Overview.” Presented at the IDEA Workshop on the Implementation of Quotas – African Experiences. 2003.  
[http://www.quotaproject.org/publications/Quotas\\_Africa.pdf](http://www.quotaproject.org/publications/Quotas_Africa.pdf)

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> “Women in National Parliaments.” Inter-Parliamentary Union. 30 April 2009.  
<http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm>

<sup>70</sup> Gretchen Bauer. “Electoral Systems and Gender Quotas in Southern Africa: What Have They Achieved? What Can They Achieve?” Paper prepared for panel on Limits to Institutional Change in Africa 101<sup>st</sup> Annual APSA meeting. 2005.  
[http://convention2.allacademic.com/one/apsa/apsa05/index.php?cmd=Download+Document&key=unpublished\\_manuscript&file\\_index=3&pop\\_up=true&no\\_click\\_key=true&attachment\\_style=attachment&PHPSESSID=9694fd40b98b8d8a390d3ebb3f47daab](http://convention2.allacademic.com/one/apsa/apsa05/index.php?cmd=Download+Document&key=unpublished_manuscript&file_index=3&pop_up=true&no_click_key=true&attachment_style=attachment&PHPSESSID=9694fd40b98b8d8a390d3ebb3f47daab)

<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Yolanda Sadie. “Post-Beijing Initiatives by Governments: A Comparative Assessment of South Africa and Other SADC States.” Agenda, Issue 47. 2001, pp 65-74.

<sup>73</sup> Colleen Lowe Morna. “Beyond Numbers – Quotas in practice.” Presented at the IDEA Workshop on the Implementation of Quotas – African Experiences. 2003.  
[http://www.quotaproject.org/publications/Quotas\\_Africa.pdf](http://www.quotaproject.org/publications/Quotas_Africa.pdf)

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

In some instances, the institutional changes are clear, such as in South Africa in 1994, following the election of a significant number of women, and the building of new lavatories to supplement the one facility for women in the building.<sup>76</sup> In addition, an on-site childcare facility was built, and the parliamentary calendar was changed to accommodate school holidays.<sup>77</sup> The impact of women in the legislative arena is easier to measure with the movement to create national machineries for women within many if not most SADC Members. Laws addressing domestic violence, violence against women, and health have also been passed in countries such as South Africa, Namibia, and Mozambique.<sup>78</sup>

### ***Promoting Women's Political Involvement in Post-Conflict Areas***

Conflict impacts women differently than men, allowing women to contribute different and necessary ideals to the peace process, in addition to bringing to the table concerns often forgotten, such as healthcare and education.. There are several attributes within post-conflict countries which are shared around the world: (1) the use of elections as a peacebuilding mechanism, (2) the fragility of a democratic commitment, (3) the military's involvement in election processes, (4) the nature of political parties, (5) displaced persons, (6) limited institutional development, (7) public campaigning, (8) intimidation and fraud, (9) partisan use of state resources, and (10) limited skill base in the electorate.<sup>79</sup> There are a number of factors that result from these characteristics which can affect the ability of international organizations and national governments in being able to effectively maintain standards of gender equality. These factors include (1) time constraints, (2) influence of member states, (3) nature of mandate of international organizations, and (4) conflicting objectives.<sup>80</sup>

Building off of the idea that women need to be included in conflict and post-conflict decision-making processes and recognizing the unique needs these countries have, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 was adopted unanimously on 31 October 2000. This landmark resolution was built off of years of advocacy by civil society organizations, research and inputs of the UN and its programs, as well as a series of Security Council resolutions on the protection of civilians in armed conflict and the prevention of armed conflict.<sup>81</sup> SC Resolution 1325 emphasizes the importance of the civil society groups, particularly women, in peace processes and the implementation of peace agreements.<sup>82</sup> Specifically, there are four areas the resolution addresses, the one most relevant is that of encouraging the "participation of women in decision-making and peace processes."<sup>83</sup>

By encouraging the participation of women in decision-making and peace processes, the resolution calls for new opportunities for senior and qualified women to enter into high-level positions in not only national, but "regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management and resolution of conflict."<sup>84</sup> The resolution does not, however outline specific quotas or benchmarks for this goal, which has been an area of concern for many organizations attempting to enforce the implementation of SC Resolution 1325.

### ***Case Study: Liberia***

The continent of Africa has been disproportionately affected by conflict over the past century. Liberia is no different than many African nations, in that it has experienced a violent civil war that killed significant numbers of civilians, and wounded many others.<sup>85</sup> In 1989, the civil war began when the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), led by Charles Taylor, ousted the seated leader of the country, Samuel Doe and within weeks, had control of over 90%

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<sup>76</sup> Gretchen Bauer. "Fifty/Fifty by 2020: Electoral Gender Quotas for Parliament in East and Southern Africa." *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, 10:3. 2008, pp. 348-368.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Gretchen Bauer. "Electoral Systems and Gender Quotas in Southern Africa: What Have They Achieved? What Can They Achieve?" Paper prepared for panel on Limits to Institutional Change in Africa 101<sup>st</sup> Annual APSA meeting. 2005.

<sup>79</sup> Michael Maley. "Enhancing Women's Participation in Electoral Processes in Post-Conflict Countries: Background Paper." United Nations. January 2004.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/meetings/2004/EGMelectoral/BP1-Maley.PDF>

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup>

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> S/RES/1325. Women, Peace and Security. United Nations Security Council. 31 October 2000.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid.

of the country.<sup>86</sup> Uneasy peace was established from 1997 – 2000, following the signing of the Abuja peace agreement and subsequent elections, in which Taylor won.<sup>87</sup> In 2000, conflict erupted again when a loose alliance of anti-Taylor groups, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) invaded Liberia in order to expel the Taylor supported Revolutionary United Front (RUF).<sup>88</sup> In early 2003, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), another anti-Taylor group, emerged, and together, with LURD established control over 60% of the country by the summer of 2003.<sup>89</sup>

Women's peace networks in Africa in particular, have grown out of this conflict. Regional networks such as the African Women's Committee for Peace and Development (AWCPF), the Federation of African Women's Peace Network (FERFAP), and the Mano River Union Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET), and national organizations such as the Sudanese Women's voice for Peace, the Liberia Women's Initiative, the Sierra Leone Women's Forum, and the consortium of Burundian and Congolese women serve as examples of such organizations who are working to inform the peace negotiations in their respective areas.<sup>90</sup>

Women's roles during the war are complex, as they are in conflict around the world. There were many different levels of involvement within the peacemaking and peace-building efforts ranging from action taken within one's own family to involvement in the peace negotiations themselves. In April 2003, as LURD and MODEL moved closer to the main cities in Liberia, the Liberian Women's Initiative and the Liberian Women in Peace-building Network (WIPNET) demonstrated against the war in Monrovia, as well as distributed a statement that proposed a three step program: immediate ceasefire, dialogue among the opposing parties, and international monitoring of the ceasefire.<sup>91</sup> In the weeks following this statement, these organizations, as well as, the Coalition of Women of Political Parties in Liberia increased pressure on the government for a peaceful settlement to the conflict. This pressure undoubtedly contributed to a climate of already intense pressure from the international community, leading the Economic Commission for West African States (ECOWAS) to organize formal peace talks in Ghana in August 2003.<sup>92</sup>

MARWOPNET was one of few civil society organizations invited to be an observer at the conference, and the only women's group that received accreditation.<sup>93</sup> The group is a "sub regional peace initiative" comprised of women from Guinea, Liberia & Sierra Leone who "do not represent or incorporate the views of the majority of the women's organization either individually or collectively."<sup>94</sup> The main aim of the organization was the end of the war, which they hoped to achieve through lobbying efforts.

Prior to the talks, MARWOPNET, with the support of *Femmes Africaine Solidaire* (FAS), was trained on conflict transformation, resolution, and negotiation techniques in order to increase their "capacity as peace advocates at the negotiations."<sup>95</sup> Immediately preceding the signing of the Liberian Comprehensive Peace Agreement on 18 August, representatives of women's groups held a one-day Strategic Planning meeting, at which they analyzed the "lessons learned at the peace talks, and to strategize on the inclusion of women within all existing and proposed institutions and the post-conflict peace process."<sup>96</sup> The document resulting from this meeting, the Golden Tulip Declaration,

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<sup>86</sup> "A Short History of the Conflict in Liberia and the Involvement of NGOs in the Peace Process." Democracy NGO Participation in Formal Peace Negotiations. World Movement for Democracy. <http://www.wmd.org/wbdo/aug07/liberia.html>

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Liberian Women Peacemakers: Fighting for the Right To Be Seen, Heard and Counted. African Women and Peace Support Group. Asmara: Africa World Press, Inc. 2004.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

<sup>93</sup> "Profile of the Mano River Women's Peace Network." Democracy NGO Participation in Formal Peace Negotiations. World Movement for Democracy. <http://www.wmd.org/wbdo/aug07/mrwopn.html>

<sup>94</sup> Lois Lewis Bruthus. Peace Agreements as a Means for Promoting Gender Equality and Ensuring the Participation of Women. United Nations. 2003. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/peace2003/reports/EP1Bruthus.PDF>

<sup>95</sup> "Profile of the Mano River Women's Peace Network." Democracy NGO Participation in Formal Peace Negotiations. World Movement for Democracy. <http://www.wmd.org/wbdo/aug07/mrwopn.html>

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

was distributed to all delegates as the first in what was an ongoing process of dialogue surrounding the issues of women's participation in government.

Pressure from women's groups on political parties and the government has been instrumental in the adoption of key documents within the SADC, but also in campaigns for gender equality within individual nations. Unfortunately, there has been observed discord between female politicians and civil society organizations, oftentimes as a result of female politicians not accomplishing what they had hoped to accomplish once in office.<sup>97</sup> The countries who form the SADC serve as a rich case study into the effectiveness of gender quotas and how combined with certain electoral systems, the proportion of women in elected office can be significantly impacted in a positive way.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed by the Government of Liberia, LURD, MODEL, and Liberia's 18 political parties. The document itself does not "explicitly integrate gender perspectives to the extent of actually promoting women's participation."<sup>98</sup> Out of 37 Articles, only 6 make reference to gender perspective, however,; the lack of specifics regarding the exact role women will play and in what numbers did not set the precedent of inclusion that was hoped. The implementation of the Agreement had multiple challenges, not the least of which was the lack of respect for gender balance in all elected and non-elected appointments within the government, leading to the marginalization of women's voices in political processes. The direct correlation between women's participation in peace processes and post-conflict politics is clear, and repeated throughout not only the conflict in Liberia, but globally.

### ***Gender Budgeting***

Gender budgeting has emerged as another strategy that allows women to become involved in political processes. By encouraging a country to engage in gender budgeting, they are able to involve women in the fundamental processes of governance. This has emerged over the past decade out of advocacy efforts carried out by many international organizations. Budgeting used to be viewed as an "exclusive exercise carried out by ministries of finance" to an understanding of the impact budgetary decisions have on gender relations and gender equality on a national level.<sup>99</sup> Budgeting now is seen as a process within a government which "aligns national development plans and goals and human rights commitments with budget policies in a transparent and coherent manner."<sup>100</sup> A widely accepted definition of gender budgeting, developed by the Council of Europe's Group of Specialists on gender mainstreaming (CDEG), is: "an application of gender mainstreaming in the budgetary process. It means a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating gender perspectives at all levels of the budgetary process and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality."<sup>101</sup>

Gender responsive budgeting was developed in the 1980s by Australian federal and state governments "as a mainstreaming strategy that incorporated economic as well as social policy and a whole-of-government approach."<sup>102</sup> Initially described as "women's budgets" due to their "focus on the budget's impacts on women and girls," in the late 1980s, several organizations began developing gender budgeting programs, namely the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the UK Women's Budget Group, South African Women's Budget Initiative (SAWBI), and the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Women.<sup>103</sup> By 2003, there were

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Lois Lewis Bruthus. Peace Agreements as a Means for Promoting Gender Equality and Ensuring the Participation of Women. United Nations. 2003. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/peace2003/reports/EP1Bruthus.PDF>

<sup>99</sup> Diane Elson. "Budgeting for Women's Rights: Monitoring Government Budgets for Compliance with CEDAW." United Nations Development Fund for Women. 2006. [http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/MonitoringGovernmentBudgetsComplianceCEDAW\\_eng.pdf](http://www.unifem.org/attachments/products/MonitoringGovernmentBudgetsComplianceCEDAW_eng.pdf)

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Council of Europe, Directorate General of Human Rights, Equality Division. "Gender Budgeting: Final Report of the Group of Specialists on Gender Budgeting (EG-S-GB)." 2005. [http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human\\_Rights/Equality/PDF\\_EG-S-GB\(2004\)RAPFIN\\_E.pdf](http://www.coe.int/T/E/Human_Rights/Equality/PDF_EG-S-GB(2004)RAPFIN_E.pdf)

<sup>102</sup> Rhonda Sharp. "Budgeting for Equity: Gender Budget Initiatives within a Framework of Performance Oriented Budgeting." United Nations Development Fund for Women. 2003. [http://www.gender-budgets.org/component/option,com\\_docman/task,doc\\_view/gid,70/](http://www.gender-budgets.org/component/option,com_docman/task,doc_view/gid,70/)

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

over 50 gender responsive budget initiatives, the majority of which were being implemented in developing countries.<sup>104</sup>

Success in gender responsive budgeting varies from region to region due to many factors, not the least of which is how new the concept is within each country.<sup>105</sup> Africa, in particular, is a region for which gender budgeting is very new, but effective. In Kenya, for example, women lobbied the government for a reduction on taxes on sanitary towels.<sup>106</sup> As one participant noted, “in the Kenyan budget the sanitary towels have always been placed under luxuries. This is because men [traditionally] have nothing to do with the issue though it impacts indirectly their income.”<sup>107</sup> In India, similar lobbying resulted in a mandate for all ministries within the government to establish a “Gender Budgeting Cell” and follow-up with annual reports and performance budgets highlighting budgetary allocations for women.<sup>108</sup> The differences between the experiences of women’s groups in each country have highlighted the “urgent need for regional and country-specific tools and training applications for advancing and promoting gender-responsive budgeting.”<sup>109</sup> Specifically, a “one size fits all approach” is often cautioned against, however the sharing of knowledge, lessons learned, and good practices is useful in building region specific tools and should be encouraged and facilitated to a higher degree.<sup>110</sup>

## **Conclusion**

Through these and many other successful initiatives, women’s groups have faced challenges. One major challenge concerns the Ministry of Finance within each country, with whom the responsibility lies to integrate gender perspectives. Many times these ministries are uncooperative, leaving little alternate avenue.<sup>111</sup> Another challenge is the limited resources available overall to national machineries, which can impact the ability of governments to participate in gender budgeting.<sup>112</sup> Women’s organizations often call for “substantial funding increases for national women’s machineries” in order to adequately fund these and other gender equality and women’s empowerment efforts.<sup>113</sup> Within the government, lack of political will is another challenge, as well as lack of awareness of the concept of gender budgeting among lawmakers.<sup>114</sup> In an online discussion on the issue of “Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women” organized by UNIFEM in 2001, one participant noted that one of the greatest challenges is lack of funds for the gender mainstreaming efforts.<sup>115</sup> Not only is lack of funds within each country a challenge, but the lack of funding for women’s organizations.<sup>116</sup> Capacity building of women’s organizations to not only participate in the process, but also continue to monitor and evaluate the implementation of gender-responsive budget initiatives, is essential in order to sustain and grow awareness and acceptance of gender budgeting as itself a worthy activity, but also as a conduit through which women can gain access to positions of decision-making power.<sup>117</sup>

The multiple factors that hinder women’s participation in decision-making, including the “persistence of stereotypical attitudes, women’s disproportionate share of household and family responsibilities, poverty, structural and cultural barriers, violence against women, the lack of equal employment opportunities, limited access to education, and traditional political party structures which discourage women from seeking office,” need to be addressed at every level of society if progress is going to be made.<sup>118</sup> According to the United Nations, “increasing

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<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> “Report from the Online Discussion on Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women.” United Nations. 2007. [http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/financing\\_gender\\_equality/Online%20discussion%20report\\_FFGE-%2019%20Oct.%202007.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/financing_gender_equality/Online%20discussion%20report_FFGE-%2019%20Oct.%202007.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Carolyn Hannan. “Opening Statement at the Expert Group Meeting Peace Agreements as a Means for Promoting Gender



the participation of women in the political life of a nation constitutes an important step towards democratization.” Beyond the fundamental need to equality, women’s participation ensure “diversity in contributions to policy-making and can offer new perspectives and development priorities.” The contributions of women to peacebuilding are invaluable and necessary for sustainable peace as well as for building the foundation of a strong country that respects and adheres to international gender equality mechanisms and also includes women at the highest levels of decision-making.

### ***Committee Directive***

The achievement of equality in regards to women in politics is fundamental to the achievement of sustainable development worldwide. It is important as you do your research, to remember the impact that women can have not only within government, but also in other sectors, such as healthcare, the economy, and education. There is not one solution or one strategy that can ensure achievement of complete gender parity in leadership positions, but rather building off of past successes and learning from failures will result in the most effective plan.

It is also important to recognize the role peacebuilding plays in empowering women and promoting women’s participation in politics. Peace agreements come in multiple forms and at varied stages, such as to put an end to conflict, or further define a post-conflict society. They “form the framework for a new society consisting of both men and women.”<sup>119</sup> Although diverse, the basic issues of a peace agreement for the democratization of a country must entail the adoption of a gender perspective and must, in the process leading up to the development of the document, address the gender balance of the peace process to ensure gender rights are in the negotiation of the agreement.<sup>120</sup>

The case made by both the United Nations and civil society organizations includes the simple fact that a country cannot be democratic if it does not include half of its citizens in the process of crafting that government. We would like to highlight the importance of being creative and recognizing points of entry within diverse and unique thematic areas that will allow women to partner with men in efforts to achieve gender equality, as well as show the benefits economically and socially of having women in positions of decision-making within both the public and private sector.

## **II. Women's Role in the Global Economy**

*"Historically, economic recessions have placed a disproportionate burden on women."*  
- Sha Zukang, U.N. Under Secretary General for Economic and Social Affairs<sup>121</sup>

### ***Background***

Over the last year and a half, several of the world’s strongest economies have taken an extreme turn downward, which has significantly impacted countries throughout the world. This global financial crisis, which started as a lending and credit problem in the financial markets of the world’s strongest economies, has intensified causing the global economy to suffer drastically. Although the world’s financial institutions have coordinated various attempts at thwarting this crisis, a global recession is imminent. According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), global growth is expected to halt to a mere 3% in 2009, which is the slowest it has been since 2002.<sup>122</sup> The looming threat of a global recession is rendered that much more serious by its potentially devastating impact on women throughout

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Equality and Ensuring Participation of Women – A Framework of Model Provisions.” 2003.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/peace2003/CH-stmt.htm>

<sup>119</sup> Engendering the Peace Process: A Gender Approach to Dayton – and Beyond. The Kvinna till Kvinna Foundation. 2000.  
[http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/Peace\\_Negotiations/PeaceProcessesKvinna.pdf](http://www.peacewomen.org/resources/Peace_Negotiations/PeaceProcessesKvinna.pdf)

<sup>120</sup> Christine Chinkin. “Peace Agreements as a Means for Promoting Gender Equality and Ensuring Participation of Women.” Background Paper for the Expert Group Meeting on ‘Peace agreements as a means for promoting gender equality and ensuring participation of women – A framework of model provisions.’ United Nations. 2003.  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/peace2003/reports/BPChinkin.PDF>

<sup>121</sup> “The Impact of the Global Economic Recession on Women.” Poverty News Blog.  
<http://povertynewsblog.blogspot.com/2009/03/impact-of-global-economic-recession-on.html>. March 3, 2009.

<sup>122</sup> “The World Economy; Bad or Worse.” The Economist. October 9, 2008.  
[http://www.economist.com/daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=12382253&fsrc=nwl&mode=comment&sort=asc](http://www.economist.com/daily/news/displaystory.cfm?story_id=12382253&fsrc=nwl&mode=comment&sort=asc)

the world.

Recent research by many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has revealed that “women make up half the world but hold less than 5% of positions of power in determining global economic policy.”<sup>123</sup> This staggering gap between the number of women in the world and their role in the global economy will continue to widen as the world’s economy further plummets. It is the role of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) to examine these impacts and put forth proactive policies that will help to alleviate the pressure of the global economic crisis on women. By taking a look at the current economic situation from a gender perspective, the commission can begin to understand the need for such measures. In a thriving economy the distribution of funds for minorities, such as women, is still a struggle, making it even worse during a financial crisis. Factors such as unemployment, distribution of goods, leadership roles and financing for gender equality efforts all play an important part in examining the role of women in the global economy.

### ***Women's Access to Full and Decent Work***

Prior to the economic recession, the global framework was still not benefiting millions of working women to its fullest potential. The current economic model is designed so that companies attain the highest profits by offering the lowest wages, often at the expense of their employees.<sup>124</sup> Women and girls are often the target of this system.<sup>125</sup> Women account for 39% of the world's workforce; however the majority of that percentage is comprised of low-skilled, low-paying jobs.<sup>126</sup> Only 2% of women in business occupy senior management positions.<sup>127</sup> The result is a work environment laden with discrimination, sexual harassment, physical abuse, and generally poor working conditions.<sup>128</sup> A prime example of this situation is export processing zones (EPZs). EPZs can be found throughout the world in tax free industrial areas that specialize in exporting goods for foreign companies. In these areas labor laws are often overlooked, leaving workers unprotected, and 80% of the people they employ are women between the ages of 16 and 25.<sup>129</sup> The *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* addressed this issue in item 19 of the *Global Framework* by highlighting the fact that economic recessions and continuous restructuring in both developed and developing countries have had a disproportionately negative impact on women's employment.<sup>130</sup>

In 1995 the United Nations held the *Fourth World Conference on Women* in Beijing China.<sup>131</sup> This conference produced an incredible piece of work known as the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, which established an agenda for women's empowerment globally. The Platform for Action was designed to remove obstacles that prevented women's participation in all aspects of public and private life, by offering that men and women should be equal in economic, social, cultural and political decision making.<sup>132</sup> Several aspects of the women's empowerment issue were addressed by the Platform for Action, however one that could particularly be jeopardized by a slowing economy is the concept of excessive expenditures. Item 13 of the global framework for the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* discusses the burden of debt, military expenditures, and structural adjustment policies and programs that have been poorly executed especially in developing nations.<sup>133</sup>

The *Platform* further recognizes in item 14 that accelerated economic growth is essential for social development, but that it is not the only key necessary to ensure an equal quality of life for both men and women alike.<sup>134</sup> These two

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<sup>123</sup> “Ten Ways to Democratize the Global Economy.” Global Exchange. October 28, 2007.

<http://www.globalexchange.org/campaigns/rulemakers/TenWaysToDemocratize.html>

<sup>124</sup> “Global Economy: Women.” AFL-CIO. <http://www.aflcio.org/issues/jobseconomy/globaleconomy/women/>

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Women’s Learning Partnership: Human Rights Facts and Figures.

<http://www.learningpartnership.org/en/resources/facts/humanrights?print=1>

<sup>128</sup> “Global Economy: Women.” AFL-CIO. <http://www.aflcio.org/issues/jobseconomy/globaleconomy/women/>

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Platform for Action. Global Framework.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm#framework>

<sup>131</sup> The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Platform for Action.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm#concern>

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid.

items highlight the idea that without a viable economy, the consequences on development are detrimental. States are forced to revamp spending on developmental programs so that they can merely sustain their current situation.<sup>135</sup> This concept is exacerbated by the increasingly interconnected world that we live in. Ironically, the *Beijing Platform for Action* was developed the same year as the World Trade Organization (WTO).<sup>136</sup> According to the WTO an exceptional growth in world trade has occurred over the past 50 years with merchandise exports growing, on average, 6% annually.<sup>137</sup> Governments and private companies across the globe banded together to make trade more beneficial for all parties involved.<sup>138</sup> While this interconnectivity has more often than not proved prosperous, we are now seeing how an economic recession in one country can vastly effect countries and humans across the globe. The *Platform* recommends that employment programs be developed that are specifically designed to assist poor urban, rural and young women that are negatively affected by structural change in Strategic Objective F which discusses Women and the Economy.<sup>139</sup>

Another aspect to consider is that as companies continue to try surviving the economic recession they are forced to cut operating costs. Often employees take the brunt of these cost cutting techniques with detriment to their salaries.<sup>140</sup> For women the consequence is even greater considering that there is no country in the world where women's wages are equal to those of men.<sup>141</sup> Sex segregation in the workforce remits women to clerical and domestic positions that do not offer the same wage benefits that men in upper management are receiving.<sup>142</sup> Within the last 20 years, 33% of women in the developed world have come to hold managerial and administrative positions. It is only 15 % in Africa and 13% in Asia and the Pacific.<sup>143</sup> The *Beijing Platform for Action* addressed this concern through Strategic Objective F which specifically focused on a diagnosis of Women and the Economy.<sup>144</sup> The platform recommended that governments, employers, trade unions, and women's organizations enact laws that eliminate discrimination in the labor market with regards to hiring, promoting, employee benefits, and working conditions.<sup>145</sup>

The effect of the economic crisis on women in the job market becomes particularly interesting here as the idea of last in first out (LIFO) is applied.<sup>146</sup> This concept, which assumes that assets acquired last are the ones that are disposed of first, is commonly utilized by companies trying to maintain profitable levels during economic hardships, and is often applied to their workforce.<sup>147</sup> Considering that women have not been in the workforce for as long as men, they are more susceptible to layoffs during a recession.<sup>148</sup>

#### ***Case Study: European Commission Microfinance from a Gender Perspective***

After realizing that available credit is a necessity for a viable economy, and the persistent fears of a global economic recession, it is easy to see how gender plays a huge factor in the successes and failures of individuals and companies. A concept known as microfinance, has been used increasingly more often as an effort to combat lending issues for the poor by attempting to offer non-traditional loans aimed at helping the disadvantaged.<sup>149</sup> Microfinance is defined as a financial program, designed to aid and assist poor and low income persons. In the wider view of the UN, it is the movement towards establishing financial intuitions and programs in developing

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> "The Multi-Lateral Trading System – past, present, and future." World Trade Organization. [http://www.wto.org/english/thewto\\_e/whatis\\_e/inbrief\\_e/inbr01\\_e.htm](http://www.wto.org/english/thewto_e/whatis_e/inbrief_e/inbr01_e.htm)

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Platform for Action. Women and the Economy Diagnosis. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/economy.htm#object5>

<sup>140</sup> "Human Rights Facts and Figures." Womens Learning Partnership <http://www.learningpartnership.org/en/resources/facts/humanrights?print=1>

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

<sup>145</sup> The United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Platform for Action. Women and the Economy Diagnosis. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/economy.htm#object5>

<sup>146</sup> "Last in, first out." Forbes Investopedia. <http://www.investopedia.com/terms/l/lifo.asp>

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> "Microfinance Gateway." CGAP. 2009. <http://www.microfinancegateway.org/p/site/m/>

nations.<sup>150</sup> The goal of the microfinance crusade goes beyond credit lending, and teaches financial responsibility practices, such as savings and insurance.<sup>151</sup> Unlike traditional lending programs, microfinance programs also offer these financial products on a smaller scale to poor customers that have traditionally not been able to save money or repay loans at higher interest rates.<sup>152</sup>

Women make up a significant portion of the poor and disadvantaged in the world, and the European Commission (EC) has conducted a development study that looks particularly at the gender perspectives of microfinance programs so that they are equally attractive for men and women.<sup>153</sup> Since 1995, the Gender and Development (GAD) sector of the EC Directorate General for Development has supported microfinance programs specifically geared toward women. These programs are carried out by various intermediaries known as Microfinance Institutions (MFI's) and include those related to government, the private sector, NGOs, cooperative-type institutions, and informal lenders.<sup>154</sup>

The majority of MFI customers fall into what is considered the informal category as they generate their income from a range of various activities rather than concentrating on one particular enterprise.<sup>155</sup> An example of this customer is Micro and Small Enterprises (MSE's) which usually do not include agriculture and have fewer than 50 workers within their organization.<sup>156</sup> According to surveys conducted by GEMINI, a non-governmental organization, which provides reporting and information on social and economic factors, in Zimbabwe, Swaziland, Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi and the Dominican Republic 45% of MSE owners were women with home based businesses that concentrated on traditional manufacturing activities such as knitting, sewing, and retail trading.<sup>157</sup> During their study on microfinance programs throughout the world, the EC discovered that MSE's employ anywhere from 16 to 27 percent of the working population depending on the country being evaluated and 68 to 90 percent of them are located in rural areas where households are dependent on MSE's for income and survival.<sup>158</sup> Since women are a large part of MSE's globally, microfinance programs that aim to achieve equality and offer greater opportunities to less advantaged populations are essential for development and gender equality.<sup>159</sup>

The EC's dedication to incorporating gender issues into microfinance programs offers an excellent example of how countries around the world can take steps to make credit available to the poor, therefore empowering them to make economic adjustments that will benefit their families and communities.<sup>160</sup> As presented earlier, availability of credit is a key component to a viable economy. The limiting of credit during a recession is detrimental and usually worsens a country's economic situation. Microfinance is an avenue that can be used to combat this basic lending phenomenon. The EC did not conduct their report on gender and microfinance to simply provide women owned MSE's with credit, but rather to make microfinance programs gender sensitive through consideration of the needs and constraints of men and women in the financing sector of business.<sup>161</sup> The report concludes by examining areas such as loan use and eligibility, interest rates, loan size, loan duration, loan collateral, approval time, and several other factors that must incorporate a gender perspective for their success. CSW could benefit greatly from analysis of this EC study by using this as a starting point for adjusting lending practices worldwide.<sup>162</sup>

Savings rates and money in motion are two other areas of concern with regards to the role of women in the global economy. According to GE Money Bank research conducted in Latvia, men tend to allocate between two and four percent more money monthly to savings than women.<sup>163</sup> The concept of savings rates and money in motions refers

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Helen Binns. Integrating a Gender Perspective in Microfinance in ACP Countries. March 2008. <http://www.gdrc.org/icm/wind/binns-2.html>.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> "Microfinance Gateway." CGAP. 2009. <http://www.microfinancegateway.org/p/site/m/>

<sup>155</sup> Helen Binns. Integrating a Gender Perspective in Microfinance in ACP Countries. March 2008. <http://www.gdrc.org/icm/wind/binns-2.html>.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Helen Binns. Integrating a Gender Perspective in Microfinance in ACP Countries. March 2008. <http://www.gdrc.org/icm/wind/binns-2.html>.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> "Research: Women at the Moment are in a Financially More Risky Position than Men." GE Money Bank. <http://www.gemoneybank.lv/en/about-us/jsc-ge-money-bank/news/2009/research-women-at-the-moment-are-in-a->

to a person's current income minus spending and is usually referred to as a percentage. If the percentage is shown as a negative number, it is an indication that they are spending more money than they are earning.<sup>164</sup> When this happens, there is often a noticeable increase in consumer spending and borrowing, however, during a recession the savings rate often increases as consumers become wary and conservative in their spending habits. This fear often leads to worsening a recession. Savings rates across the globe vary greatly between countries and the motives associated with saving are equally diverse. Cultural, demographic, and economic factors contribute to this variation and are especially impactful on women and poor people in developing nations.

### Accessing Microfinance Loans and Assistance

For these forms of financial institutions to survive, they must identify their funds. Through five key organizations microfinance is accessible and viable for women.<sup>165</sup> These organizations are: Member State Governments, such as state and nationally-owned banks; NGOs, such as Cooperative for Assistance and Relief Everywhere (CARE), and Oxfam; private sector lending organizations, such as BancoSol, which previously worked as an NGO, but became a private bank in Bolivia; cooperatively owned, which includes credit unions and village banks; and individuals, which can be anyone from a friend to a family member.<sup>166</sup>

While there are five means in which to receive the funds, there are also five ways in which to disperse the necessary aid.<sup>167</sup> The first, individual lending is, according to authors David Hulme and Paul Mosley:

*'The absence of peer pressure and joint liability arrangements' in the case of individual-lending organisations, 'has not impaired their loan recovery performance and has permitted staff to focus their efforts on financial rather than social intermediation (namely, group mobilisation and group education)'. Loan performance has been secured through a combination of 'positive incentives to repay, in terms of repeat loan eligibility based on repayment performance and cash rebates and refunds for on-time completion of repayments', and "a set disincentives to default" by requiring collateral (various types), character reference and /or a guarantor.'*<sup>168</sup>

Bank Rakyat of Indonesia (BRI) and *Asociacion para el Desarrollo de Microempresas, Inc. (ADEMI)* in the Dominican Republic, are each known for their work with individual lending practices, in which ADEMI has approximately 40 percent women borrowers compared to BRI with 24 percent, although neither are specifically creating loans for women.<sup>169</sup>

Group lending is the most widely used and offered form of MFI, as a leading-edge approach to financial loans in developing nations. This form allows for large groups of people to receive necessary, and in some cases life-sustaining assistance with little or no upfront cost. Group lending offers an entire collection of people or small portions of a group, loans.<sup>170</sup> The group sizes are not predetermined, but tend to be about four to eight members.<sup>171</sup> Typically the group is interrelated on a number of factors, which provides further reassurance to the lender and allows for a larger loan. Ideally the group is also able to show a considerable amount of savings, depending on the size of the loan, as a measure of good faith and to serve as collateral on the loan. With this form of loan, the security

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financially-

<sup>164</sup> Brian Lawler. Should We Sweat Our Savings Rate. <http://www.fool.com/personal-finance/saving/2007/01/19/should-we-sweat-our-savings-rate.aspx>. January 19, 2007

<sup>165</sup> Helen Binns. Integrating a Gender Perspective in Microfinance in ACP Countries. March 2008. <http://www.gdrc.org/icm/wind/binns-2.html>.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Hulme, D., & Mosley, P. (1996). *Finance Against Poverty*. New York City: Routledge.

<sup>169</sup> Helen Binns. Integrating a Gender Perspective in Microfinance in ACP Countries. March 2008. <http://www.gdrc.org/icm/wind/binns-2.html>.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.



for the lender comes from multiple recipients, as opposed to the traditional protection of an institution.<sup>172</sup> Depending on the size of the loan, a lender may require that several groups combine, which can often exceed numbers of 20 to 70 individuals.<sup>173</sup> The Grameen Bank of Bangladesh, one of the most successful group-lending institutions, has found that money lent to women benefits more, as they typically will spend their money on food, clothing, and education, among other necessities, as compared to their male counterparts. Additionally, women are better at repaying loans, a crucial aspect in lending for the Grameen Bank, as they have successfully recovered over 95 percent of their loans from their some two million members.<sup>174</sup>

Cooperative institutions, widely known as credit unions, can be seen in every country in the world, offering short-term credit and savings programs.<sup>175</sup> While immensely successful throughout the developing world, (nine million members worldwide, with 60 percent coming from Africa and the Caribbean),<sup>176</sup> women are unable to profit from these institutions, as they often require a form of collateral (which they do not have) or a cosigner for their loans. Additionally, the short-term allowance of these loans makes them undesirable and more difficult to reap benefits from.<sup>177</sup>

Village Banks were established in the 1980s as a means to give the power and lending ability to the neighbors and citizens of those borrowing the money. The underlying goal was to create unconventional financial institutions, which could provide credit loans, without collateral, and savings programs, which would unite and further integrate these groups of people.<sup>178</sup> In their book *Village Banking*, authors Nelson, McNelly, Stack and Yanovitch state that “Village banks can invest their savings in local business ventures or community development projects, lend them out, or place them on deposit in commercial interest-bearing bank accounts. Some village banks allow members to borrow for personal as well as business purposes.”<sup>179</sup> It was the ambition of these organizations that people living in the same villages would want to promote and advance the work of their fellow man.<sup>180</sup> Following on this success, the Foundation for International Community Assistance (FICA) was established in 1984, as a means in which to provide further support and assistance to these village banks.<sup>181</sup> While Village Banks have moderate success in their lending, rural areas have increasing amount of setbacks prohibiting their success; there is less unity in these areas and often members leave for reasons not yet known.<sup>182</sup> Further, the increased illiteracy rates in these areas often removes the ability to give equality for all members.<sup>183</sup>

Lastly, MFI loans may come from self-help groups and associations, which offer credit loans and savings programs, targeted towards women. This program is successful by allowing women to borrow as a group, without requiring large collateral or cosigners. Most notably, Rotating Savings and Credit Associations (ROSCAS),<sup>184</sup> which allows women to have small amount of savings while also allowing them to borrow from these savings on a fluctuating basis.<sup>185</sup>

### ***Case Study: Southeast Asia***

For the past two decades the economic growth rate of Southeast Asia has been at a well sustained level.<sup>186</sup> Up until the recent economic downturn, all countries in the region with the exception of Laos and the Philippines were

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid.

<sup>178</sup> Ibid.

<sup>179</sup> Nelson, C., McNelly, B., Stack, K., & Yanovitch, L. (1996). *Village Banking*. New York: SEEP Network.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Helen Binns. Integrating a Gender Perspective in Microfinance in ACP Countries. March 2008. <http://www.gdrc.org/icm/wind/binns-2.html>.

<sup>182</sup> Nelson, C., McNelly, B., Stack, K., & Yanovitch, L. (1996). *Village Banking*. New York: SEEP Network.

<sup>183</sup> Helen Binns. Integrating a Gender Perspective in Microfinance in ACP Countries. March 2008. <http://www.gdrc.org/icm/wind/binns-2.html>.

<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Ibid.

<sup>186</sup> Axel Michealowa. Economic Growth in Southeast Asia and it consequences for the environment. <http://www.springerlink.com/content/j518242p48138qv4/> November 1996.

experiencing growth rates of at least 5 percent per year and significant increases in per capita incomes.<sup>187</sup> The result was an increased labor need that significantly included women in the workforce.<sup>188</sup> The impending economic recession has halted much of the export activity in this region causing corporate layoffs that are predominantly affecting women as they were the newest addition to many of these companies.<sup>189</sup> Women make up 42.7 percent of the workforce in Southeast Asia, and are mostly involved in the textile, food processing, and electronic aspects of the export industry, which have been hard hit by the global economic crisis.<sup>190</sup>

LIFO has moved women from a once prosperous position to a desperate situation that has them turning to prostitution as a means of providing for their families.<sup>191</sup> Another troubling aspect of this latest economic turnover is that as both men and women are laid off, it is much harder for a woman to find a new job, especially considering the influx of unemployed men. In most nations men are likely to be offered jobs before women therefore female unemployment rates are even higher. According to a study at Gadjadara University in Indonesia, there are also social consequences such as domestic violence that occur as the result of jobless spouses.<sup>192</sup> Developing policies that will help protect women from the LIFO phenomenon is one way the Commission can continue the advancement of women in the midst of a global economic crisis.<sup>193</sup>

### ***Current Economic Situation from a Gender Perspective***

Since the end of 2007, the world economy has undergone intense scrutiny as stock markets have fallen and large financial institutions in some of the world's wealthiest nations have collapsed or been bought out. Although governments of these nations have attempted to bail out their financial institutions with a multitude of policy changes and rescue plans, the impact on our increasingly interconnected world is enormous. The IMF has projected that the global economy will shrink by 1.3 percent in 2009, putting our world in the most severe recession since the 1940's.<sup>194</sup> This economic strain affects all humans around the world, but can have an even greater catastrophic effect on women. By looking at economic factors such as lending practices, credit availability, money in motion, savings rates, and consumer spending rates from a gender perspective, the Commission can begin to make policy adjustments that will help alleviate the pressure of a global economic recession on women.

Availability of credit is a key concern during any recession, as it refers to the amount of money that can be borrowed at any given time.<sup>195</sup> Credit availability can severely dictate the success or failure of businesses and individuals, especially in times of financial strife when lenders begin constricting the amount of loans given. Credit Registries are the institutions responsible for dispersing information used to determine credit worthiness between lenders about borrowers. These registries hold the power to greatly expand access to credit by determining risk levels for lenders and offering the borrower a more reasonable outlet for obtaining funds.<sup>196</sup> From a gender perspective women and men generally use credit at the same rate, with women actually having a slightly better credit scores on average than men. However, there are still discrepancies in loan practices that can be attributed to gender discrimination in lending. Lending gender discrimination is seen most often in the process of subprime loans, which are loans that are offered to individuals at a higher interest rate because their credit history does not qualify them for loans at the prime rate.<sup>197</sup> Even though women tend to have better credit scores they are still taking on one third of subprime loans compared to only about a quarter for men and thus paying anywhere from US\$85,000 to US\$186,000 on average more than men over the life of their loans.<sup>198</sup> This extreme gap and discrimination in lending practices by banks across the globe limits women's ability to build wealth through equity and home ownership.

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<sup>187</sup> Ibid

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> "Key Issues: Financial Crisis" International Monetary Fund. . <http://www.imf.org/external/np/exr/key/finstab.htm>

<sup>195</sup> "Definition for Credit Availability" Bnet Business Directory.  
<http://dictionary.bnet.com/definition/credit+availability.html>

<sup>196</sup> Norbert Knoll-Dornhoff. Impact of the Financial Crisis on Credit Availability for SMEs World Wide. November 11, 2008.  
<http://www.openpr.com/pdf/60366/IMPACT-OF-THE-FINANCIAL-CRISIS-ON-CREDIT-AVAILABILITY-FOR-SMEs-WORLD-WIDE.pdf> .

<sup>197</sup> "Subprime Loan Definition" Investor Words. [http://www.investorwords.com/6940/subprime\\_loan.html](http://www.investorwords.com/6940/subprime_loan.html)

<sup>198</sup> Allison Stevens. Women's Credit Profiling Called Costly, Ignored. Women's E News. March 23.

The global economic crisis has spread so rapidly that during the second quarter of 2008, the number of institutions on the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation's (FDIC) *Troubled Bank List* grew from 90 to 117, indicating that even more banks are headed towards bankruptcy.<sup>199</sup> The result is a fearful atmosphere that has made it extremely difficult for both individual and corporate borrowers to obtain the credit needed for funding. Since women are already disadvantaged in terms of credit availability, the looming global economic crisis is sure to worsen their plight.

### **Conclusion**

The Commission has struggled since its inception to advance the role of women on a global scale, and without proper attention and policy adjustment, there is a possibility that their work could be reversed as a result of the global economic crisis. This economic situation threatens to reduce the efforts of women in our global economy, by reducing jobs, cutting lending, and further devastating struggling nations. Human rights and equality are often forgotten in times like these, as attention and financial assistance is thought to be better fixing the current crack, instead of rebuilding the foundation. Additionally, lending is shaped by supply and demand, and as the supply decreases, so too will demand increase, placing woman further behind their male counterparts. Banks, credit unions, and NGOs have historically worked to provide women with the necessary funds for caring for their families and ensuring that their basic needs are met, but it is feared that the global crisis will prove too ubiquitous to deny, leaving these organizations to choose other routes.

### **Committee Directive**

Assessing key components of the current economic situation from a gender perspective facilitates the understanding that policy adjustments must be made to alleviate the unraveling of work already done by the Commission. Looking at proactive measures that incorporate micro financing strategies will empower women globally to make wise investment choices and give them tools for success. Ensuring that women are afforded the opportunity for fair and decent work will help eliminate LIFO practices that target women.

What current programs have seen success? Can these become policy, or do regional-specific strategies need to be considered instead? Assessing the different forms of lending and lenders, what can be done to assist more people without bankrupting the financial institutions? An economic recession is sure to push the bounds of policy making, especially considering it often requires further funding for certain programs. It is the role of the Commission to create positive changes that closely consider the funding necessary to make such changes. Any agreed conclusions reached should incorporate suggestions aimed at eliminating further deterioration of women's role in the global economy. Looking at ways to increase women's savings rate and ensuring access to fair credit and lending practices are among the concepts that should be included in any agreed conclusions. Lastly, the topic of women in the workforce must be given great attention and issues like LIFO should be addressed.

## **Topic III: Combating Sexual Exploitation Of and Violence Against Women**

*"We must unite. Violence against women cannot be tolerated, in any form, in any context, in any circumstance, by any political leader or by any government. The time to change is now. Only by standing together and speaking out can we make a difference."*

*- Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon<sup>200</sup>*

### **Introduction**

Exploitation of, and violence against, women is pervasive in every corner of the world, serving as a major impediment to the achievement of gender equality. Studies conducted by the United Nations have shown that a significant portion of women around the world have suffered physical, sexual or psychological violence, the most

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<sup>199</sup> Reggie Middleton. Global Recession – An Economic Reality. October 27, 2008. <http://www.safehaven.com/article-11681.htm>

<sup>200</sup> "Unite to End Violence Against Women: United Nations Secretary-General's Campaign." United Nations. <http://endviolence.un.org/>

common being physical violence inflicted by an intimate partner.<sup>201</sup> Regardless of whether these acts are perpetrated by the State and its agents, by family members or strangers, and whether or not they occur in the public or private sphere during times of peace or conflict, all Member States have an obligation to not only protect women from violence, but also to “to hold perpetrators accountable and to provide justice and remedies to victims.”<sup>202</sup>

Sexual exploitation as defined by the United Nations is “any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, social or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.”<sup>203</sup> Within the UN System, sexual exploitation has been used in reference to abuses committed by Peacekeeping troops over recent years, but is also used to refer to such practices as sexual tourism, sex slavery, human trafficking, and forced prostitution.<sup>204</sup> In addition, sexual exploitation of women within the media has garnered significant attention over the past several years due to the increase in the use of technology globally, leading to the normalization of the sexual exploitation of women.<sup>205</sup>

Sexual exploitation and violence against women are mutually reinforcing practices that often lead to one another. The Fourth World Conference on Women which was held in 1995 in Beijing, China, produced one of the most important documents to the women’s rights movement: the *Beijing Declaration & Platform for Action* (BPfA).<sup>206</sup> Within the BPfA, the term “violence against women” was defined as “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”<sup>207</sup> The exploitation of women, in the context of this topic, is defined as, “a practice by which a person achieves sexual gratification, financial gain or advancement through the abuse or exploitation of a person’s sexuality by abrogating that person’s human right to dignity, equality, autonomy, and physical and mental well-being.”<sup>208</sup>

These practices include, “trafficking, forced prostitution, prostitution tourism, mail-order-bride trade, pornography, stripping, battering, incest, rape and sexual harassment.”<sup>209</sup> Women and children made vulnerable by “poverty and economic development policies and practices,” displacement, and migration are especially at risk for sexual exploitation or violence.<sup>210</sup> In addition, according to the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, sexual exploitation, which oftentimes leads to violence, “eroticizes women’ inequality... disproportionately victimizes minority and ‘third world’ women.”<sup>211</sup> With the pervasiveness of technology globally, the internet is one of the main vehicles through which sexual exploitation occurs.<sup>212</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> “Violence against women: forms, consequences and costs.” Ending violence against women: from words to action: Study of the Secretary General. United Nations. 9 October 2006.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/launch/english/v.a.w-consequenceE-use.pdf>

<sup>202</sup> A/61/122/Add.1. Report of the Secretary-General: In-depth study on all forms of violence against women. United Nations. 6 July 2006. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/SGstudyvaw.htm#more>

<sup>203</sup> ST/SGB/2003/13. Secretary-General’s Bulletin: Special Measures for Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. United Nations. 9 October 2003.

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/refworld/rwmain?docid=451bb6764&page=search>

<sup>204</sup> Ibid.

<sup>205</sup> EGM/MEDIA/2002/Report. Participation and Access of Women to the Media, and the Impact of Media on and its use as an Instrument for the Advancement and Empowerment of Women: Report of the Expert Group Meeting. United Nations. 12 – 15 November 2002. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/media2002/reports/EGMFinalReport.PDF>

<sup>206</sup> Beijing Platform for Action. Fourth World Conference on Women. United Nations. 1995.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Donna M. Hughs. “Globalizing the Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children.” Coalition Against Trafficking in Women. 1999. <http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=16747>

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

<sup>210</sup> “UN Peacekeeping: Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.” Refugees International. November 1, 2007.

<http://www.refintl.org/policy/field-report/un-peacekeeping-responding-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse>

<sup>211</sup> Donna M. Hughs. “Globalizing the Sexual Exploitation of Women and Children.” Coalition Against Trafficking in Women. 1999. <http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=16747>

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

## *Sexual Exploitation and Abuse of Women by Peacekeeping Troops*

The issue of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) of women by UN personnel was first raised in 2001, following persistent and serious allegations of abuse by humanitarian workers of refugees in West Africa with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Nongovernmental Organizations (NGOS). In reaction, the Security Council included a reference to sexual abuse and exploitation within the peacekeeping mandate of the mission in Sierra Leone in contained within S/RES/1400.<sup>213</sup>

Following up on this, the Secretary-General issued a bulletin, the *Secretary-General's Bulletin on Special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse*, which defines acts of sexual exploitation and abuse, as well as classified them as “serious misconduct for all UN staff, including UN agencies, and stressed that these rules should also apply to entities and individuals working in cooperative arrangements with the UN.”<sup>214</sup> Despite these actions, allegations of sexual abuse by peacekeeping troops within the UN Mission to the Congo (MONUC) in 2003, initiated a review within the UN system of policies and practices within the UN system.<sup>215</sup> A 2004 report stated that “sexual exploitation and abuse damages the image and credibility of a peacekeeping operation and damages its impartiality in the eyes of the local population, which in turn may well impede the implementation of its mandate.”<sup>216</sup> SEA includes acts such as sex with minors, the bartering of food and protection for sex, and sex with prostitutes.<sup>217</sup> Following the situation in the DRC, then Secretary General Kofi Annan appointed Prince Zeid R’ad Zeid al-Hussein as the first Adviser on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by UN Peacekeepers, which resulted in the 2005 *Comprehensive Strategy to Eliminate Future Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations (A/59/710)* known as the “Zeid Report.”<sup>218</sup> The recommendations contained within this report initiated widespread reforms such as, mandatory pre-deployment training on UN codes of conduct and SEA, in-country public information campaigns to counter it, conduct and discipline teams in 11 of the 17 current peacekeeping operations (as well as all three political missions supported by DPKO).<sup>219</sup> In addition, the report also resulted in the establishment of a headquarters-based Conduct and Discipline Unit in New York, which has led to, “more consistent, reliable record keeping, as well as reporting of allegations and of the status of investigations.”<sup>220</sup>

Despite the reports written by the UN and actions taken, which include recently revising the *Standard Memorandum of Understanding* between Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs)/Police Contributing Countries (PCC) and the DPKO, the UN often does not have the opportunity to respond.<sup>221</sup> For example, in situations where a “well established allegation of SEA is levied against a member of a UN peacekeeping missions,” civilian staff are fired and repatriated, and uniformed staff are sent home and barred from future service in UN missions.<sup>222</sup> In the case of

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<sup>213</sup>“Update Report No. 3: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel.” Security Council Report. 20 February 2006.  
[http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.glKWLeMTIsG/b.1429245/k.E83E/update\\_report\\_no\\_3BRsexual\\_exploitation\\_and\\_abuse\\_by\\_UN\\_peacekeeping\\_personnelBR20\\_february\\_2006.htm](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.glKWLeMTIsG/b.1429245/k.E83E/update_report_no_3BRsexual_exploitation_and_abuse_by_UN_peacekeeping_personnelBR20_february_2006.htm)

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> A/59/710. Report of the Secretary-General: A comprehensive strategy to eliminate future sexual exploitation and abuse in United Nations peacekeeping operations. United Nations. 24 March 2005.  
[http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/LKAU-6B6G4D/\\$file/Zeid%20report%20\\_A-59-710\\_%20English.pdf?openelement](http://www.reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/LKAU-6B6G4D/$file/Zeid%20report%20_A-59-710_%20English.pdf?openelement)

<sup>217</sup> “UN Peacekeeping: Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.” Refugees International. November 1, 2007.  
<http://www.refintl.org/policy/field-report/un-peacekeeping-responding-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse>

<sup>218</sup> A/59/710. Comprehensive Strategy to Eliminate Future Sexual Exploitation and Abuse in United Nations Peacekeeping Operations. United Nations. 24 March 2005.  
<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N05/247/90/PDF/N0524790.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>219</sup> Ibid.

<sup>220</sup> “UN Peacekeeping: Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.” Refugees International. November 1, 2007.  
<http://www.refintl.org/policy/field-report/un-peacekeeping-responding-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse>

<sup>221</sup> GA/SPD/368. Recommendations on Peacekeeping Operations Approved by Fourth Committee, Including Proposed ‘United Nations Standards of Conduct.’ 17 July 2007. <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2007/gaspd368.doc.htm>

<sup>222</sup> “UN Peacekeeping: Responding to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.” Refugees International. November 1, 2007.  
<http://www.refintl.org/policy/field-report/un-peacekeeping-responding-sexual-exploitation-and-abuse>



military peacekeepers, who are not employed by the UN but rather by their home country, jurisdiction is retained by the TCC/PCC.<sup>223</sup>

### *HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Rights*

The linkage between violence against women and HIV/AIDS is multifaceted and complex with violence being both a cause and a consequence of HIV/AIDS. Violence and fear of violence are key risk factors which, according to the World Health Organization, “contribute to the vulnerability of women to HIV infection.”<sup>224</sup> Multiple activities and situations can reinforce this link, not the least of which includes: (1) “women becoming infected with the HIV virus through forced sex; (2) sexual abuse in childhood associated with risk-taking behavior later in life; (3) violence and fear of violence preventing a woman from insisting on condom use or refusing unwanted sex, (4) fear of violence, stigma, and abandonment can dissuade women from discovering their HIV-infection status, and (5) unwillingness on the part of a woman to get tested due to violence in life, which has a detrimental effect on HIV control, treatment and prevention of mother to child transmission programs.”<sup>225</sup> The intersectionality of violence against women and HIV as well as the multiplicity of types of “discrimination experienced by women living with HIV, particularly by migrant, refugee, minority, and other marginalized groups of women.”<sup>226</sup>

According to the United Nations, women exposed to HIV are twice as likely to become infected with HIV as their male counterparts, the reason being in large part women’s subordinate position in sexual relations and unequal power between men women and men and the use of violence to sustain that imbalance, which in turn limits women’s ability to negotiate safe sex.<sup>227</sup>

There are two categories of violence against women that have an impact on women’s reproductive rights, according to the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women.<sup>228</sup> The first category relates to reproductive health consequences of violence against women, which include gender-based violence, such as forced prostitution/trafficking, and cultural practices such as child marriage/early childbearing and sex-selective abortion/female infanticide.<sup>229</sup> Each of these actions constitute “violence in and of itself, in addition to inflicting serious reproductive, sexual, physical, psychological and health-related long-term harm to women.”<sup>230</sup>

The second category of violations is related to violence occurring “directly or indirectly as a result of State action/inaction in the context of reproductive health policy.”<sup>231</sup> These actions include:

*Coercive population policies and measures of population control, coerced sterilization of women from marginalized ethnic populations, criminal sanctions against all forms of abortions and contraception, and inadequate sex education for adolescents. Such State policies and measures infringe upon women’s liberty results from the neglect of the State obligation to address structural subordination of women and*

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS: Setting the Research Agenda. World Health Organization. 25 October 2000. <http://www.genderandaids.org/downloads/topics/VAW%20HIV%20report.pdf>

<sup>225</sup> “Background.” Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS. World Health Organization. <http://www.who.int/gender/violence/vawandhiv/en/>

<sup>226</sup> E/CN.4/2005/72. Intersections of Violence Against Women and HIV/AIDS: Report of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences, Yakin Erturk. 17 January 2005. <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G05/102/11/PDF/G0510211.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> 15 Years of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, Its Causes and Consequences: A Critical Review (1994 – 2009). United Nations. 2009. <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/issues/women/rapporteur/docs/15YearReviewofVAWMandate.pdf>

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

*dominant notions of sexuality that impose norms of chastity and honor upon them.*<sup>232</sup>

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women (SRVAW) there are several areas where the State's failure is even more apparent: "failure to prevent maternal mortality, non-provision of contraceptive information/family planning services that recognize and enable women's sexual autonomy, and State failure to address physical and psychological abuse perpetrated by health-care providers all amount to violence resulting directly or indirectly from State policies."<sup>233</sup>

### ***Trafficking in Women for the Purpose of Sexual Exploitation***<sup>234</sup>

Trafficking is a complex phenomenon made "even more insidious by its clandestine nature, and increasingly, the use of modern information technology as a tool for recruitment."<sup>235</sup> According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), 1.39 million people estimated to be victims of commercial sexual servitude, both transnational and within countries.<sup>236</sup> Human trafficking, as defined by the *UN Protocol to Prevent Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children* (Palermo Convention & Protocol) is the:

*recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.*<sup>237</sup>

In addition, as stated earlier, "exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, and servitude or the removal of organs."<sup>238</sup> Thus, trafficking for the purpose of sexual or economic exploitation is considered a "contemporary form of slavery, and a serious violation of women's human rights" which involves psychological terror and physical violence.<sup>239</sup> Within *Strategic Objective D3* of the *Beijing Platform for Action*, trafficking for sexual exploitation as one of many forms of violence against women and includes women who have suffered intimidation and/or violence through being trafficked.<sup>240</sup> In addition, governments are called on to "consider the ratification and enforcement of international conventions on trafficking in persons and on slavery; and to take appropriate measures to address the root factors, including external factors, that encourage trafficking in women and girls for prostitution and other forms of commercialized sex, forced marriages and forced labor in order to eliminate trafficking in women and girls."<sup>241</sup> Such measures as these were reaffirmed in the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly on the five-year review of the Platform for Action entitled, "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century".<sup>242</sup> Other documents addressing this

<sup>232</sup> Ibid.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> "Trafficking in women." INTERPOL. <http://www.interpol.int/public/THB/Women/Default.asp>

<sup>235</sup> A/HRC/10/16. Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Joy Ngozi Ezeilo. United Nations. 20 February 2009. <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/111/28/PDF/G0911128.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>236</sup> Trafficking in Persons Report 2009. United States Department of State. 2009. <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2009/123123.htm>

<sup>237</sup> Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. United Nations. 2000. <http://untreaty.un.org/English/TreatyEvent2003/Texts/treaty2E.pdf>

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Ibid.

<sup>240</sup> Beijing Platform for Action. Fourth World Conference on Women. United Nations. 1995. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>

<sup>241</sup> EGM/TRAF/2002/Rep.1 Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Trafficking in Women and Girls. United Nations. 18 – 22 November 2002. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/trafficking2002/reports/Finalreport.PDF>

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

issue include: the *ILO Convention No. 29 on Forced or Compulsory Labour*, arts. 1, 2 & 6,<sup>243</sup> the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, art. 7(1)(c) and (2)(c)<sup>244</sup>, the *Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery*, arts. 1, 3, 5, 6 and 7;<sup>245</sup> the *General Assembly Declaration on Violence Against Women*, arts. 2 & 3;<sup>246</sup> and the *Vienna Declaration of Programme of Action*.<sup>247</sup>

At the regional level, there are a multiple instruments that define the work of many organizations, such as the *Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings*.<sup>248</sup> This convention, which entered into force in February 2008, is a model example of using the “rights-based approach” to combat trafficking in persons that goes beyond the definition of trafficking that is within the *Palermo Protocol* and articulates the “principle of non-discrimination and including safeguards for the protection of rights and provision of assistance to victims.”<sup>249</sup> Additional regional documents include the *SAARC Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution*,<sup>250</sup> the *OAS Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women: Convention of Belem do Para*<sup>251</sup>, the *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights*<sup>252</sup>, and the *Protocol to the African Charter on the Rights of Women in Africa*.<sup>253</sup> There are also sub regional initiatives that are worthy of mention, such as the *ECOWAS/ECCAS Joint Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children in West and Central Africa* (2006-2009).<sup>254</sup>

As the fasted growing form of transnational organized crime, with very high earnings and very low risks, trafficking thrives due to, in part, inadequate laws in many countries.<sup>255</sup> In turn, laws that do exist often do not recognize a trafficked person as a victim, which can have enormous implications on a person's future once they are no longer in that situation.<sup>256</sup> Contemporary situations of armed conflict or internal disturbances often lead to trafficking. During these situations, women and girls are vulnerable to torture, rape, forced pregnancy, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution and trafficking.<sup>257</sup>

There are both supply and demand dimensions of the root causes and consequences of trafficking. On the supply side, the factors that cause a person, usually woman, to become vulnerable to trafficking include: development processes marked by class, gender and ethnic concerns that marginalize women, in particular, from employment and education; displacement as a result of natural and human made catastrophes; dysfunctional families; gendered

<sup>243</sup> Forced Labour Convention (No. 29). International Labour Organization. 1930.

<http://webfusion.ilo.org/public/db/standards/normes/appl/appl-displayConv.cfm?conv=C029&hdroff=1&lang=EN>

<sup>244</sup> Rome Statute. International Criminal Court. 1998. <http://www.un.org/icc/romestat.htm>

<sup>245</sup> Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery. Economic and Social Council. 30 April 1957. <http://www.unhchr.ch/html/menu3/b/30.htm>

<sup>246</sup> A/Res/48/104. Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. General Assembly. 20 December 1993. <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/res/48/a48r104.htm>

<sup>247</sup> Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action. United Nations. 12 July 1993.

[http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/\(symbol\)/A.CONF.157.23.En?OpenDocument](http://www.unhchr.ch/huridocda/huridoca.nsf/(symbol)/A.CONF.157.23.En?OpenDocument)

<sup>248</sup> Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. Council of Europe. 2005.

[http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/trafficking/Docs/Convtn/CETS197\\_en.asp#TopOfPage](http://www.coe.int/t/dghl/monitoring/trafficking/Docs/Convtn/CETS197_en.asp#TopOfPage)

<sup>249</sup> A/HRC/10/16. Report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Joy Ngozi Ezeilo. United Nations. Human Rights Council. 20 February 2009.

<http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G09/111/28/PDF/G0911128.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>250</sup> Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children for Prostitution. South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation. 5 January 2002. <http://www.saarc-sec.org/old/freepubs/conv-trafficking.pdf>

<sup>251</sup> Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women: Convention of Belem do Para. Organization of American States. 9 June 1994.

<http://www.oas.org/cim/english/convention%20violence%20against%20women.htm>

<sup>252</sup> African [Banjul] Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Organization of African Unity. 27 June 1981. <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/instree/z1afchar.htm>

<sup>253</sup> Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa, African Union. 13 September 2000. <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/africa/protocol-women2003.html>

<sup>254</sup> The Multilateral Plan of Action against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children in West and Central Africa (2006-2009). 6 July 2006. [http://www.ceeac-eccas.org/img/pdf/Multilateral\\_Agreement\\_Trafficking-1184251953.doc](http://www.ceeac-eccas.org/img/pdf/Multilateral_Agreement_Trafficking-1184251953.doc)

<sup>255</sup> EGM/TRAFF/2002/Rep.1 Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Trafficking in Women and Girls. United Nations. 18 – 22 November 2002. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/trafficking2002/reports/Finalreport.PDF>

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

cultural practices, gender discrimination and gender-based violence in families and communities.<sup>258</sup> On the demand side, according to the United Nations, the causes of trafficking are: globalization that has fuelled the development of economic sectors with a woman-specific demand for cheap labor and the growth of the commercial sex industry; restrictive immigration policies and laws that are obstacles to the demand for labor being met by supply, thus generating a market for trafficking; exploitation in the labor market, especially exploitation of illegal and unregulated work of migrants; economic and political tradeoffs between public officials and enforcement agencies that make trafficking a high profit low risk venture; consumerism, greed, and impoverishment of values resulting in the exploitation of the vulnerability of human beings to trafficking.<sup>259</sup> Traffickers motivated by both “will and intent to exploit for profit” take advantage of women and children within the context of migration as well, which further exacerbates their vulnerability.<sup>260</sup>

## Conclusion

According to the 2008 study carried out by the UN Secretary-General, worldwide, states “are failing to implement in full the international standards on violence against women. They are not challenging gender-based discrimination and are allowing crimes to be committed with impunity.”<sup>261</sup> Indeed, the UN charges that “failing to hold perpetrators accountable not only encourages further abuses but also gives the message that violence against women is acceptable or normal.”<sup>262</sup> Globally, there are 102 Member States that have no specific legal provisions on domestic violence.<sup>263</sup> In addition, within 53 states, “marital rape is not a prosecutable offence,” and only 93 states have “some legislative provision prohibiting trafficking in human beings.”<sup>264</sup>

Violence against and sexual exploitation of women is a fundamental obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of gender equality, development, and peace.<sup>265</sup> Gender-based violence not only reflects, but also reinforces inequalities between men and women.<sup>266</sup> Furthermore these practices compromise the health, dignity, security and autonomy of its victims. Within violence and exploitation are a wide range of human rights violations, including abuse, rape, trafficking, harmful traditional practices, and forced prostitution.<sup>267</sup> These abuses can leave not only psychological scars, but also physical ones which unalterable damage the health of women in general, but also specifically their reproductive and sexual health.<sup>268</sup> As the “most pervasive yet least recognized human rights abuse in the world” it is the responsibility of the state to address all forms of exploitation of and violence against women through direct, concerted action which will comprehensively and swiftly attack the traditional attitudes which perpetuate these practices.<sup>269</sup>

<sup>258</sup> “Violence Against Women: Unmet needs, broken promises.” Ending violence against women: from words to action: Study of the Secretary General. United Nations. 9 October 2006.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/launch/english/v.a.w-consequenceE-use.pdf>

<sup>259</sup> EGM/TRAF/2002/Rep.1 Report of the Expert Group Meeting on Trafficking in Women and Girls. United Nations. 18 – 22 November 2002. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/trafficking2002/reports/Finalreport.PDF>

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> “Violence Against Women: Unmet needs, broken promises.” Ending violence against women: from words to action: Study of the Secretary General. United Nations. 9 October 2006.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/vaw/launch/english/v.a.w-consequenceE-use.pdf>

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.

<sup>263</sup> A/63/214. Report of the Secretary-General: Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. 4 August 2008. <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/63/214&Lang=E>

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Beijing Platform for Action. Fourth World Conference on Women. United Nations. 1995.

<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/>

<sup>266</sup> Ibid.

<sup>267</sup> A/63/214. Report of the Secretary-General: Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. 4 August 2008. <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/63/214&Lang=E>

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> General Recommendation No. 19 (11<sup>th</sup> session): Violence against women. Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. 1992. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw/recommendations/recomm.htm>

### *Committee Directive*

Delegates are encouraged to ask the question, where are the gaps in legislation on violence against women, and how can Member States and regional mechanisms bridge these gaps? Suggestions for specific areas of focus which have not received adequate attention are, include: (a) Definitions of rape that specify use of force rather than lack of consent; (b) Definitions of domestic violence that are limited to physical violence; (c) Treatment of sexual violence as a crime against the honor of the family or against decency, rather than against women's right to bodily integrity; (d) Use of the defense of "honor" to justify or mitigate acts of violence against women; (e) Reduction of sentences in rape cases where the perpetrator marries the victim; (f) Inadequate protection for trafficked women; (g) Laws that allow early or forced marriage; (h) Inadequate penalties for crimes of violence against women; and (i) Penal laws that discriminate against women.<sup>270</sup>

Within the subtopic of peacekeeping, there are many problems underlying this issue, including: the limited control the UN has over individual peacekeepers who are subjected to their home country's military discipline, the involvement of personnel from other agencies.<sup>271</sup> In addition, other problems are, immunity that is given to UN personnel, slow response by troop contributing countries in regards to implementing or training on this issue, and criticism of the UN system itself in how it has dealt with this issue.<sup>272</sup> In regards to HIV/AIDS and Violence Against Women, Member States are encouraged to explore locally based interventions and share resources and knowledge among regional organizations.<sup>273</sup> Finally, it is crucial that States strengthen national and international frameworks in order to recognize the linkages between HIV/AIDS and violence against women.<sup>274</sup>

Overall, delegates are encouraged to assess their strengths in regards to these issues, particularly grassroots efforts and national mechanisms, and identify ways to feed into regional and international programs as well as contribute positively and effectively towards forward-thinking action which will make a real difference in the amount of violence perpetrated against women globally.

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<sup>270</sup> A/63/214. Report of the Secretary-General: Intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women. 4 August 2008. <http://daccess-ods.un.org/access.nsf/Get?Open&DS=A/63/214&Lang=E>

<sup>271</sup> "Update Report No. 3: Sexual Exploitation and Abuse by United Nations Peacekeeping Personnel." Security Council Report. 20 February 2006. [http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.gIKWLeMTIsG/b.1429245/k.E83E/update\\_report\\_no\\_3BRsexual\\_exploitation\\_and\\_abuse\\_by\\_UN\\_peacekeeping\\_personnelBR20\\_february\\_2006.htm](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.gIKWLeMTIsG/b.1429245/k.E83E/update_report_no_3BRsexual_exploitation_and_abuse_by_UN_peacekeeping_personnelBR20_february_2006.htm)

<sup>272</sup> Ibid.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.



## Topic I: Promoting Equal Participation of Women in Government

“Cutting Edge Pack: Gender and Participation.” Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex. 2001.  
[http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports\\_gend\\_CEP.html#Participation](http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports_gend_CEP.html#Participation)

*The BRIDGE (Gender and Development) Cutting Edge Pack on Gender and Participation is the result of a collaborative project facilitated by the BRIDGE initiative of the Institute of Development Studies. The pack provides an accessible overview of the latest thinking on “Participation” and summaries of the most useful resources identified by partner organizations. Within the pack is an Overview Report and a Supporting Resources Collection document which address the issue of participation from a gender perspective. The pack explores participatory approaches to gender change in project and programme implementation, policy, and organisations and institutions. In addition, successful experiences and practices are identified, and examples of failure, and mistakes to avoid, are also described.*

“Cutting Edge Pack: Gender and Governance.” Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex, 2009.  
[http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports\\_gend\\_CEP.html#Governance](http://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/reports_gend_CEP.html#Governance)

*The BRIDGE (Gender and Development) Cutting Edge Pack on Gender and Participation is the result of a collaborative project facilitated by the BRIDGE initiative of the Institute of Development Studies. The pack provides an accessible overview of the latest thinking on “Participation” and summaries of the most useful resources identified by partner organizations. Within the pack is an Overview Report and a Supporting Resources Collection document which address the issue of governance. The document argues that governance processes – with their emphasis on principles of accountability, transparency, responsiveness and inclusiveness – should be a means to social transformation. It goes on to state that despite this potential, they are failing to deliver on gender equality, and women are having to struggle to get their voices heard and needs met. The Cutting Edge Pack maps out persistent obstacles to gender equality in governance and offers possible ways forward - including promoting gender balance in positions of authority, making rights central to governance institutions and processes at all levels, and building political will for change.*

“E-Discussion Forum on Gender Quotas as a Mechanism to Promote Women's Political Participation.” International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics), June 2008.  
<http://www.iknowpolitics.org/en/node/6276>

*The International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics (iKNOW Politics) held its second E-Discussion Forum on Gender Quotas as a Mechanism to Promote Women's Political Participation from June 4-11, 2008. The E-Discussion Forum focused on strengthening the knowledge base about gender quotas, the implementation of gender quotas around the world, and their impact on women's political representation. This resource provides a solid foundation for delegates on this issue which is crucial in the promotion of women's political participation.*

“Enhancing Women's Participation in Electoral Processes in Post-Conflict Countries, Expert Group Meeting held in Glen Cove, New York from 19 – 22 January 2004.” Division for the Advancement of Women, 2004.  
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/meetings/2004/EGMelectoral/index.html>

*The Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women (OSAGI), organized an Expert Group Meeting on “Enhancing women's participation in electoral processes in post-conflict countries”, in Glen Cove, New York from 19 to 22 January 2004. The meeting was jointly supported by the Department of Political Affairs, in close collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women, as well as several intergovernmental organizations supporting electoral processes. The findings were an input to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-eighth session, as part of the discussion of the theme: women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building. Through this website, delegates can access the Aide-Memoire, Programme of Work, Speeches and press releases, Discussion papers, and the Final Report, all of which can be invaluable in assisting delegates with their research.*

“Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on political participation and leadership,’ Expert Group Meeting held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 24 to 27 October 2005.” Division for the Advancement of Women, 2005. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/eql-men/index.html>

*In accordance with its multi-year programme of work for 2001-2006, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) considered the “Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels” as one of two thematic issues during its fiftieth session in 2006. In order to contribute to a further understanding of this issue and to assist the Commission in its deliberations, the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), in collaboration with the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) and the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), organized an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on “Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes, with particular emphasis on political participation and leadership”. The findings and recommendations of the Expert Group Meeting will be presented at the panel discussion on equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels during the 50<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women.*

“Information Portal on Gender, Citizenship & Governance.” The Royal Tropical Institute, 2008. <http://portals.kit.nl/smartsite.shtml?id=23624>

*The information portal on Gender, citizenship and governance provides a unique entry point to free, full-text electronic publications, e-journals, e-newsletters, e-discussion groups and forums, websites, bibliographic databases, and directories of organizations and projects. The portal brings together theoretical and practical perspectives on the interrelationships between gender, citizenship and governance. The information resources offered deal with the theory and practice of gender justice and citizenship, the responsiveness and accountability of governmental institutions to citizens, women in particular, and women’s capacity / ability to claim their rights. Themes addressed include political participation & representation, including quota’s, decentralization & local government, women’s rights, gender institutional mainstreaming, and gender-responsive budgeting.*

“Peace agreements as a means for promoting gender equality and ensuring participation of women – A framework of model provisions,’ Expert Group Meeting held in Ottawa, Canada from 10-13 November 2003.” Division for the Advancement of Women, 2003. <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/egm/peace2003/>

*In accordance with its multi-year programme of work for 2002-2006, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) reviewed the thematic issue of “women’s equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peace-building” at its forty-eighth session in 2004. In order to contribute to a further understanding of this issue and to assist the Commission in its deliberations, the Division for the Advancement of Women organized, in collaboration with the Office of the Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Department of Political Affairs, an Expert Group Meeting was held. The Expert Group Meeting addressed the issue of peace agreements and women’s participation in them as a reflection of women’s inclusion in formal peace negotiations and as a determinant of their involvement in post-conflict peace-building. Explicit attention to the participation of women, and reflection of gender perspectives in such agreements is stated to be crucial by the participants in order to ensure that such agreements fully address the gender-specific consequences of armed conflict, the needs and priorities of women and girls in the aftermath of conflict, and their participation in the reconstruction of post-conflict societies, and thus in the prevention of future conflict. Through this website, delegates can access the Aide-Memoire, Programme of Work, Speeches and press releases, Discussion papers, and the Final Report, all of which can be invaluable in assisting delegates with their research.*

Progress of the world’s women 2008/2009: Who answers to women? Gender and accountability. United Nations Development Fund for Women, 2008. <http://www.unifem.org/progress/2008/>

*Progress of the world’s women 2008/2009 focuses on five key areas where the need to strengthen accountability to women is urgent: politics and governance, access to public services, economic opportunities, justice, and finally the distribution of international assistance for development and security.*

*This document, which is an annual publication of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), is a high quality source for delegates because it provides the latest institutional data and analysis of the accountability Member States have to their citizens in regards to participation of women in politics.*

**“From Rhetoric to Reality: Finding the Way Gender Equity and Peacebuilding: A Discussion Paper.”** International Center for Research on Women, 2003. [http://www.icrw.org/docs/gender\\_peace\\_report\\_0303.pdf](http://www.icrw.org/docs/gender_peace_report_0303.pdf)

*This paper is the product of a review of recent literature on issues of gender in the context of conflict and post-conflict reconstruction. It was prepared as background material for an international workshop on gender equity and peacebuilding jointly convened by the International Center for Research on Women (ICRW) and the International Development Research Centre (IDRC). Key findings and research questions are presented in relation to the effective integration of gender concerns into policies and programs that shape post-conflict societies. This document is an excellent source of information for delegates who want to get a better handle on the complexities of post-conflict peacebuilding and the ability of women to participate in these and subsequent activities.*

## **Topic II: Women's Role in the Global Economy**

**“Institutionalizing a Gender Perspective”** Advancing Gender Equality: World Bank Action Since Beijing.

[www.cityshelter.org/.../Institutionalizing%20a%20gender%20perspective.pdf](http://www.cityshelter.org/.../Institutionalizing%20a%20gender%20perspective.pdf)

*This article, published by the World Bank, takes a close look at lending practices as they relate to poverty. The document shows the importance of incorporating gender issues into lending practices and how by doing so, many programs designed to relieve poverty throughout the globe can also lead to the empowerment of women. By examining the role of women in agricultural, water improvement, energy, transportation, community development, and legal reform programs, the World Bank is attempting to adjust lending practices accordingly, which significantly impacts the success and failure of companies and individuals during a recession.*

Nouriel Roubini. A Global Breakdown of the Recession in 2009 – Forecasting Pain, from the US to Australia. 15 January 2009. [http://www.forbes.com/2009/01/14/global-recession-2009-oped-cx\\_nr\\_0115roubini.html](http://www.forbes.com/2009/01/14/global-recession-2009-oped-cx_nr_0115roubini.html)  
*Nouriel Roubini, a writer for Forbes, attempts to breakdown the current economic situation, by briefly analyzing some of the world's most viable economies. This article assesses the current economic situation, and makes very probable arguments about the interconnectivity of the world's global economies. Additionally this source will help delegates grasp the reality of the global economic crisis, and some of the factors needed to determine the vastness of the issue.*

Amelita King Dejardin. Economic Meltdown has a Woman's Face. *The Japan Times*. March 2009.

<http://search.japantimes.co.jp/cgi-bin/ea20090308a1.html>

*This article specifically discusses job losses in Asia and how Women are more adversely affected. By detailing the reasons why women and men are being treated differently in the workforce, and more particularly, during the recession, the author makes the statement about the need for policy adjustments. This article details past recessions in Asia, and the impact of those recessions on women. This source offers very viable recommendations for policy adjustments that should be considered during debate.*

**“Women In 33 Countries Highly Vulnerable To Financial Crisis Effects.”** World Bank Press Release 2009/245/PREM. March 2009.

<http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/NEWS/0,,contentMDK:22092604~pagePK:34370~piPK:34424~theSitePK:4607,00.html>

*In this Press Release from the World Bank the specific risks to safety and survival for women during the global economic crisis is laid out with references to 33 particular countries. The press release encourages States to formulate stimulus packages that encompass gender issues, and work toward the empowerment of women. This article also explicitly details the gender specific impacts of the crisis and references the World Bank's Gender Action Plan as a viable solution to the problem.*

Elizabeth Eilor. The Gender Perspective of the Financial Crisis. Commission on the Status of Women 53<sup>rd</sup> Session. Interactive Expert Panel. March 2009.  
[http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw53/panels/financial\\_crisis/Panel%20on%20Financial%20crisis-%20Eilor.pdf](http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/csw53/panels/financial_crisis/Panel%20on%20Financial%20crisis-%20Eilor.pdf)

*This agreed conclusion reached during the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the CSW, incorporates a gender perspective for the global economic crisis. The interactive expert panel discusses the impact on women in the workforce in addition to the negative effects that a global economic crisis can have on impoverished women in the developing world. One of the most important issues addressed is that of direct foreign investment, and how gender issue must be taken in to consideration and a link must be made between investors and policy makers to ensure that women are receiving equal opportunities. This document additionally makes viable recommendations relating to education and economic empowerment.*

“Who Pays the Price? The Impact of the Global Economic Recession on Women in Developing Countries”  
Womankind Worldwide. March 2009.  
<http://www.womankind.org.uk/documents/WhoPaysThePrice.March09.pdf>

*This policy briefing put out by Womankind aims to address the global economic recession from the aspect of the developing world. The document outlines the hazardous effects of mass unemployment rates and how the recession will push even more women into poverty. One unique aspect that this briefing touches on is the impact on migrant workers and the potential for violence against women as resources become more and more scarce. Womankind makes specific recommendations for governments to prevent several of the harsh effects that this global economic crisis will have on women.*

“Governments Must Focus on women as Economic Agents During Global Financial Crisis” Economic and Social Council. Wom/1721. Commission on the Status of Women 53<sup>rd</sup> Session. 5 March 2009.

*This particular release by the Economic and Social Council in response to the Commissions 53<sup>rd</sup> session, focuses on the need to incorporate women as economic agents and ensure that they do not suffer disproportionately during this global financial crisis. The release compiles arguments made by several speakers to the Commission, and highlights several of the important aspects of the topic that need to be addressed including microfinance and lending programs.*

“Responding to the Economic Crisis – Coherent Policies for Growth, Employment, and Decent work in Asia and Pacific.” International Labor Organization. 18-20 February 2009.  
[http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_101737.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---asia/---ro-bangkok/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_101737.pdf)

*In this document, The International Labor Organization highlights Asia in the economic crisis and assesses the impacts and responses from a gender perspective. The document starts by assessing Asia's current economic situation and then presents information regarding workers at risk and how men and women are affected differently. Several responses to the crisis are outlined and the case is made that a gender perspective must be a part of any resolution. This is an excellent resource because it specifically relates to Asia and can offer additional information for the case study presented in the background guide.*

### **Topic III: Combating Sexual Exploitation Of and Violence Against Women**

“Because I am a Girl: The State of the World's Girls 2008 - Special Focus: In the Shadow of War.” Plan International, June 2008. [http://reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/AMMF-7FZHVS/\\$file/Plan-Jun2008.pdf?openelement](http://reliefweb.int/rw/lib.nsf/db900sid/AMMF-7FZHVS/$file/Plan-Jun2008.pdf?openelement)

*This report is the second in a series of eight reports published by Plan examining the rights of girls throughout their childhood, adolescence and as young women. The 2008 report, subtitled ‘In the Shadow of War’, examines the state of girls in conflict situations around the world and looks at what happens to them before, during and after war is over. It makes recommendations for change at international, national and local levels. The report is organized in two sections – the first is a comprehensive overview of data and an analysis of why and how girls experience conflict in particular ways due to their age and sex. The second section monitors global statistics to see how girls are faring. Delegates will find this resource invaluable in*

*their research on this issue.*

*Brussels Call to Action to Address Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond.* International Symposium on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond, Brussels, 21-23 June 2006.

<http://www.unfpa.org/emergencies/symposium06/docs/brusselscalltoactionfinal.doc>

*At the conclusion of the International Symposium on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond, which was held in Brussels, Belgium from the 21-23 June 2006, delegates issued a call for urgent and long-term action against sexual violence in all its forms, in conflict and beyond. This document is another important piece of the international framework on the issue of sexual violence.*

“Combating Violence Against Women in the OSCE Region Report: Compilation of Good Practices.” OSCE Secretariat, Office of the Secretary General, Gender Section, June 2009.

<http://www.osce.org/item/38013.html?ch=1314>

*The publication, “Bringing Security Home: Combating Violence Against Women in the OSCE Region,” documents more than 95 good practices to help eliminate gender-based violence and highlights their impact in preventing violence against women, protecting victims and prosecuting offenders. Strategies for involving men and young people in anti-violence activities are also described. This document is an example of a strong regional initiative to address sexual violence but also outlines important efforts that have been successful and those that have failed. It will provide delegates with ideas for future action that can be taken, and is an excellent supplement to any research.*

“Masculinity and Civil Wars in Africa - New Approaches to Overcoming Sexual Violence in War.”

Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, January 2009.

<http://www.gtz.de/de/dokumente/en-masculinity-and-civil-wars-2009.pdf>

*This resource, written by the Government of Germany, provides an analysis of the different roles that men and women can play as a conflict unfolds offers new perspectives to help understand wars and restore peace in post-war societies. Specifically, the document highlights how sustainable peace building requires, among other things, contravening the behavioral logic of violent actors and preventing reestablishment of the old discordant social order, and therefore has direct implications on the incidence of sexual violence. This document is another regionally focused resource which will allow delegates to gain insight into this issue.*

“Sexual Violence Against Women and Girls in War and Its Aftermath: Realities, Responses, and Required Resources.” United Nations Populations Fund Briefing Paper, June 2006.

<http://www.unfpa.org/emergencies/symposium06/docs/finalbrusselsbriefingpaper.pdf>

*Prepared as a briefing paper for the Symposium on Sexual Violence in Conflict and Beyond, this document examines the nature and scope of violence against war-affected women and children, provides an overview of existing programmes and resources to combat it, and ends with an assessment of progress to date and challenges.*

“Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict : Global Overview and Implications for the Security Sector.” Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, December 2007.

<http://se2.dcaf.ch/serviceengine/FileContent?serviceID=DCAF&fileid=F493CA07-B64B-9ED2-9D5C-92E57A64DB9D&lng=en>

*This report demonstrates the horrifying scope and magnitude of sexual violence in armed conflict. The first part of the report, the Global Overview, profiles documented conflict-related sexual violence in 50 countries - in Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe and the Middle East - that have experienced armed conflict over the past twenty years. Each profile contains a short summary of the conflict, a description of forms of sexual violence that occurred and, where available, quantitative data on sexual violence. The second part of the report, entitled Implications for the Security Sector, explores strategies for security and justice actors to prevent and respond to sexual violence in armed conflict and post-conflict situations. It*



*focuses in particular on peacekeepers; police; the justice sector, including transitional justice; civil society initiatives; and how DDR programmes can address sexual violence. Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict: Global Overview and Implications for the Security Sector is an important resource for security sector and development institutions, advocates, humanitarian actors, and policy makers seeking to address sexual violence during and after armed conflict.*

“Sexual Violence in Conflict: Making Data Work for Change.” Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces & Alliance for Direct Action against Rape in Conflicts and Crises, Geneva, August 2006.  
[http://protection.unsudanig.org/data/darfur/papers/GBV/DCAF%20-%20Sexual%20Violence%20in%20Conflict-Making%20data%20work%20for%20change\(Aug06\).pdf](http://protection.unsudanig.org/data/darfur/papers/GBV/DCAF%20-%20Sexual%20Violence%20in%20Conflict-Making%20data%20work%20for%20change(Aug06).pdf)

*The Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) has initiated a project to compile and analyze available data on sexual violence in conflict, build consensus around best practices for data collection and analysis, as well as to publish and publicize existing data, for improved advocacy. This is the result of that project and is a high quality source for delegates on this issue.*

“Sexual Violence Research Agenda.” Sexual Violence Research Initiative, Global Forum for Health Research, 2008. <http://www.svri.org/agenda.pdf>

*This document is the result of a program within the Sexual Violence Research Initiative to drive the process of preventing and responding to sexual violence effectively forward. This research agenda for sexual violence is the first step in the process of identifying key research gaps and sharing them with researchers, funders of research, policy makers and other key stakeholders. This source is a good resource for delegates in identifying possible actions, avenues of focus, and a clear indication of the needs of the NGO and research community.*

“Soldiers Who Rape, Commanders Who Condone: Sexual Violence and Military Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo.” Human Rights Watch, 2009.  
<http://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/drc0709web.pdf>

*This report, published by Human Rights Watch in June 2009, looks at abuses of sexual violence committed in the Democratic Republic, specifically by the government army, the by the Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo (FARDC). The FARDC is one of the main perpetrators, contributing to the current climate of insecurity and impunity in eastern Congo. More specifically, the report looks at the 14th brigade as an example of the wider problem of impunity, the broader efforts to stop it, and why such efforts have failed thus far. Since its creation in 2006, this brigade has committed many crimes of sexual violence in different areas of North and South Kivu in eastern Congo. It has also been responsible for abductions, killings, torture, looting and extortion. Without sufficient food or pay, soldiers have attacked the civilian population to loot and extort goods. This document provides delegates with another case study to examine sexual violence through the lens of conflict.*

“Unfolding The Realities: Silenced Voices of Women in Politics.” South Asia Partnership International, December 2007.  
<http://sapint.org/fileDownload.php?file=200802141847191.pdf&filepath=http://sapint.org:80/uploads/publications/200802141847191.pdf>

*This report, Unfolding The Realities: Silenced Voices of Women in Politics is an endeavor to explore violence faced by women politicians in the South Asian Region. It reflects on the realities of violence, intimidation and practices that adversely affect the active participation of South Asian women in decision-making. It is an excellent resource for delegates that highlights linkages between women’s participation and violence against women.*

“Women and War.” International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), May 2008. <http://www.icrc.org/Eng/women>

*This publication, developed by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), looks at the ways in which women can be affected by conflict and the actions taken by the ICRC to take their specific needs into account. It also promotes those rules of international humanitarian law which provide specific protection for women in war.*

“Women, Peace and Security: Sexual Violence in Situations of Armed Conflict.” Security Council Report, July 2009.  
[http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.glKWLeMTIsG/b.5263125/k.36C2/July\\_2009brWomen\\_Peace\\_and\\_Security.htm](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/site/c.glKWLeMTIsG/b.5263125/k.36C2/July_2009brWomen_Peace_and_Security.htm)

*In anticipation of the 2009 thematic debate on “Women, Peace and Security: Sexual violence in situations of armed conflict,” Security Council Report published this report. The report includes areas of focus for the debate, council dynamics, key recent developments leading up to the debate, and background information on the issue of sexual violence. Delegates are encouraged to utilize this resource as foundation for their further research on the examination of this topic within the UN, and specifically the Security Council as well as one of the most recent documents on this issue.*