UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA

1.   **1.   The** African ministers in charge of gender and women affairs met at the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women (Beijing+10), in Addis Ababa, October 2004 to review the status of implementation of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action. They reaffirmed and renewed their commitment to gender equality, equity and women's empowerment as stated in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 and related UN and international, regional and subregional agreements as stated in this document on the **Outcome and the Way Forward**.

1. Context

2.   Over the past decade, international commitments to gender equality, equity and women's empowerment have been reaffirmed in different UN Conferences, including those contained in the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action (BPFA). The world's leaders have agreed to take these commitments forward in the Millennium Declaration and to set targets for the achievements of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The Beijing+10 review process coincides with the ICPD+10 and MDG+5 review, offering an opportunity for greater coherence and focus on gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women in all areas. The Beijing +10 review process is about accountability for the delivery on existing commitments and concrete steps forward to ensure gender equality, equity and women's empowerment, in all areas.

3.   The decade following the adoption of the Beijing PFA has witnessed many changes in the African continent, including the development of regional declarations and mechanisms on gender and development. The advances achieved in democracy and peace fronts at the national level have contributed to positive change at the regional level. The creation of the African Union (AU), which is committed to the principle of gender equality and equity, provides further opportunities for increased participation of women in national, subregional and regional decision-making. The AU Commission was formed on a 50/50 gender parity basis. The first Speaker of the AU Pan-African Parliament (PAP) is a woman and at least one in every five national members of the PAP is a woman. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa has been adopted. In 2004, African Heads of State adopted a Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, which obliges States to respect normative standards on women's human rights. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) is also expected to enhance women's human rights through the social development indicators

2. **Achievements and Remaining Challenges in the Implementation**
of the Dakar and Beijing Platforms for Action

8.   A critical link must be drawn between the Beijing and Cairo Platforms for Action and

health care services and commodities, affordable preventive health services for rural populations and training grassroots health providers.

18. However, the offer of and access to comprehensive health services continues to be a major challenge, especially for rural and urba

women's projects.   Sex-disaggregated data and information from gender-sensitive indicators are often not collected, or lost in aggregation of published data or not used.

HIV/AIDS

22.   There is growing public awareness about STDs and HIV/AIDS in Africa, through advocacy by governments, parliaments, public sector, development partners and civil society organizations.   The threat posed by HIV/AIDS and related diseases such as malaria and TB, is now widely acknowledged at the policy level throughout Africa. Every country has established a National AIDS Commission.   Some countries have succeeded in reducing infection rates while a few others have succeeded in keeping infection rates relatively low.   Several African countries have approved codes and declarations on non-discrimination against people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWA). Increasing attention is being paid to the HIV/AIDS pandemic's link with poverty and sustainable development.

23.   African women are the most affected by HIV/AIDS. Almost 70 per cent of people infected with HIV/AIDS live in Africa. Women form 58 per cent of those infected in Africa and they carry the overwhelming burden of the impact of the HIV/ADS epidemic. HIV/AIDS has decimated the ranks of the most productive age groups, and restructured families such that the burden of care e cT8oallies n the ot5.2(se)-10., ant1(h)-5.6(e5)6.3(y)-19.6(nge2(se)-1

activities in the subsistence and the care economies. Gender-aware social security and pension systems should be developed and extended to all women. In order to improve women's position in the labour market, national programmes creating opportunities for decent jobs and working conditions for women and men must be developed and implemented.

Poverty

26. Measures to mainstream gender concerns into poverty reduction strategies should include gender analysis of macroeconomic policies. This would expose differential impacts of poverty on women and men and identify constraints on poverty eradication. Gender equality principles must be incorporated into all budgeting to ensure equitable resource allocation. Processes in the development of poverty reduction plans should be consultative, gender-sensitive and inclusive. Indicators for monitoring the impact of poverty reduction programmes and measures and the MDG target on poverty should be engendered. In the area of globalisation, there should be a programme of training for women.

Education and Training

27. To address gender imbalances in education and training, countries should institute and strengthen affirmative action measures including scholarships at all levels for female students; distance and non-formal education and literacy programmes for women; innovative and aggressive strategies to redress the under-representation of women and girls in the sciences, mathematics and technology-related disciplines and careers, including the promotion of science among children in general and young girls in particular. Women's access to professional training should also be strengthened. In addition, the main financial partners of African education systems should show their firm commitment to the female population in their interventionist policies.

Health

28. In order to reach MDG 6 and ICPD targets on reducing maternal mortality and morbidity, Governments in collaboration with parliaments, NGOs and the private sector must provide accessible sexual and reproductive health care services and education for women and girls in accordance with the legislation in force in each country. Preventive interventions to curb the spread of malaria, cardiovascular diseases, cancer that affect women, as well as HIV/AIDS and TB particularly among women and girls, should be supported. Processes and programmes to achieve the MDG target of reducing child mortality should also be engendered.

Governance, power and decision-making

29. All political/governance bodies must institutionalise policies that guarantee gender equality. The AU 50:50 gender parity principle must be replicated and implemented at all levels of national, subregional and regional governance, including through affirmative action and set timelines. Women's access to elected positions (municipal and parliamentary) must be supported to reach these targets. Leadership training programmes for women, especially young women, should be developed and supported

to enable them to exercise responsibilities at all levels. Considering the value of the independent women's movement representing women's voices in Africa, women's organizations should be encouraged and supported. The Pan-African Women's Organization should also be reorganized and revitalized.

Media

30. Given the importance of communication and the speed with which information and communication technology (ICT) evolves, it is important that the region adopts and implements gender-aware media policies. There is also a need to: improve women's access to media and new ICTs; support women's press and communication initiatives; and, encourage the use of media and new ICTs to promote women's activities, project positive images and fight against stereotypes and discrimination. In this regard, there is a need to stress the importance of the World Summit on the Information Society that will be held in November 2005 and we call upon the international community to actively participate in the work for this summit, with a view to reducing the current digital divide.

Human Rights of Women

31. A gender-sensitive and human rights-based approach should inform planning, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of PRSPs, MDGs, national priorities, annual plans and expenditure frameworks. Harmful and/or discriminatory practices that sustain gender inequality and inequity must be eliminated, and social, cultural, traditional and religious norms and values that sustain equality, equity and justice must be promoted. Partnership between women and men in addressing practices which have a negative impact on gender equality should be developed. The Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights on the Rights of Women should be signed and ratified by all States in Africa, preferably by the end of 2005. Governments should domesticate and implement all the international and regional instruments on women's rights and gender equality and equity which they have ratified, and to ensure their implementation.

Conflict Prevention, Peace Building and Reconstruction

32. Measures that affirm the role and rights of women during the negotiation, transition and reconstruction phases should be upheld and mechanisms for their implementation and monitoring should be strengthened at regional and international levels. The trauma of rejection of female refugees on account of the consequences of rape and other forms of gender based violence must be addressed. Support to women in political processes in countries emerging from conflict must be increased so they can influence conflict prevention, peace building and reconstruction. UNSC Resolution 1325 and the AU Protocol on Women's Rights must be fully implemented. Advocacy and punitive action against impunity must be stepped up. The principle of denying to warlords and perpetrators of violence against women and girls, positions of leadership in post conflict reconstruction should be adopted as an international norm. Governments must put in place functional mechanisms and intervention programmes for the protection of women and girls in refugee and IDP camps against violence and all forms of sexual abuse. Humanitarian interventions must pay attention to the health needs, especially

reproductive and sexual health, of women and girls in conflict, refugee, and IDP situations.

Environment

33.	African governments should adopt gender-responsive policies, programmes, strategies and measures on environment. Women should play a prominent role in the design and implementation of policies and programmes on water, energy, sanitation, land and forestry conservation and management, as well as in rural and urban planning. Rural women and their concerns must be integrated into the planning and management of eco-systems, eco-tourism and biodiversity. The achievement of MDG 7 with respect to ensuring environmental sustainability must be engendered.

The girl-child

Partnerships with Men

36. Accelerating the implementation of the BPFA in the context of the MDGs requires that gender equality is no longer seen only as the women's agenda. Men's full commitment, accountability and partnership with women is crucial. Government decision-making institutional and organizational cultures must be transformed to embrace gender equality and women's rights in behaviours, attitudes and norms, through gender sensitization, capacity-building and monitoring at all levels. Innovative rights-based and culture-sensitive focused programmes must be developed for the participation and active involvement of men and boys in the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. Programmes that address families should be developed to integrate the culture of equality and human rights processes in all aspects of the socialization process, including the sharing of domestic work and childcare.

International Support

37. The support of the UN system to Africa to the implementation and monitoring of the BPFA and the MDGs is appreciated. Technical and financial support for training, capacity-building, research and documentation have been undertaken and should be strengthened in the coming years. The developed countries and international financial and trade institutions are called upon to strengthen the implementation of the commitments they have undertaken in UN conferences and summits, including Beijing and Beijing+5, to support African countries in their efforts to implement the agreed outcomes of these meetings. This should include the provision of official development assistance (ODA) at agreed levels, addressing comprehensively debt problems of African countries, ensuring access of African exports to world markets and the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building, in keeping with the spirit of partnership and mutual accountability.

Section B – Institutional Measures For Effective Gender Mainstreaming

38. An important ingredient for accelerating

It will be necessary to integrate the issue of gender into the mechanisms of APRM and other areas of evaluation. The MDG annual reporting process should integrate a review of the implementation of the BPFA. Furthermore, the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI), currently being piloted, could provide a framework for priority-setting, tracking progress and accountability, and upon completion could be adopted for use by member States. The AU should be encouraged to convene a meeting of Ministers for Women's Affairs to agree on monitoring priorities for tracking delivery against the commitments of the Solemn Declaration on Gender Equality in Africa, adopted in 2004.

Other Decisions by the Conference

45. The Seventh African Regional Conference on Women on Beijing + 10 also made the following decisions:

    a. The African women should organize a Dialogue with women from the north, in New York during the Global review of Beijing + 10, to look for a sustainable solution to the perpetual problem of conflict in Africa
    b. The *Outcome and the Way Forward* document adopted by the Seventh African Regional Conference on Women is Africa's contribution to the global review process on Beijing + 10
    c. The recommendations of the 12 Thematic Sessions constitute a working document for African countries and other stakeholders
    d. The participation of Africa at the 49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women will be coordinated by the African Union