

**52nd session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
25 February to 7 March 2008**

**Interactive expert panel
Key policy initiatives on financing for gender equality and the
empowerment of women**

26 February 2008

Moderator's Summary

1. At its fourth meeting, on 26 February 2008, the Commission held an interactive panel discussion on the theme "Key policy initiatives on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women". The panellists were: Ms. Isabella Bakker, York University, Canada; Ms. Mireille Brunings-Stolz, Central Bank of Suriname; Ms. Mayra Buvinic, The World Bank; Ms. Lydia Alpízar Durán, Association for Women's Rights in Development and Chairperson of the expert group meeting on financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women, convened by the United Nations Division for the Advancement of Women and hosted by the Government of Norway, in Oslo, Norway, from 4 to 7 September 2007; Ms. Caren Grown, American University, Washington D.C.; and Ms. Dubravka Šimonovi , Chairperson of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. The panel was moderated by Mr. Julio Peralta (Paraguay), Vice-Chairperson of the Commission.

2. Financial resources are critical for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, and are necessary for both women-specific targeted and gender-mainstreaming interventions. Financing is also necessary for the full and effective implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), as highlighted by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women. Commitments on financing for gender equality and women's empowerment have been made by Governments, including at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in 2000, and the International Conference on Financing for Development in 2002. While some progress has been made, these commitments have not been fully implemented.

3. There are many opportunities for enhancing financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women. These include the implementation of, and follow-up processes to, the Monterrey Consensus and the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness. Participants also discussed the need for enhanced use of key policies, strategies and tools at the national level to strengthen financing for gender equality and women's empowerment.

4. Although it was widely recognized that gender equality made good economic sense, macroeconomic policies continued to fail to take into account gender equality concerns. Participants noted that while progress had been made in incorporating gender

perspectives in social sectors, such as education and health, this was not the case in

monitoring the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment, including resource allocations. Despite their mandates and responsibilities, many national machineries for the advancement of women received a disproportionately small percentage of national budgets. The Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women had consistently highlighted the insufficient allocation of resources for national mechanisms for the advancement of women. Participants emphasized the need for adequate resources for the sustainability of the work of such mechanisms. Participants also noted the need for enhancing the work of the entities of the United Nations system in support of gender equality. In order to sustain a vibrant women's movement, increased funding for women's organizations was also considered essential.

14. Participants stressed the urgency of translating existing commitments for gender equality into action. Towards this end, a package of measures had to be in place in response to specific national realities, which should include a strong legal framework, comprehensive policies and strategies, and effective institutions to promote gender equality. All of these measures had a cost, and consistent funding therefore had to be part of the package.

15. Participants agreed that the integration of gender perspectives should be pursued as a priority in the preparations for and outcome of the upcoming Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus (2008), as well as the Third High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness to review the implementation of the Paris Declaration (2008).