

**Presentation by Carolyn Hannan, Director
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**at the panel on:
“Transforming the mainstream: New goals and strategies”
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areas and the linkages between them. Women are disproportionately affected by many of the problems demanding world attention, including poverty and conflict, and a strong focus on women's needs, contributions and priorities in the commitments to be made at this historic meeting is critical to ensuring effective and enduring solutions to the huge challenges facing humanity.

A global review of progress in achieving the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the 2000 Millennium Development Goals, is being carried out at global, regional and national levels, and in some cases even local levels, to assess achievements, highlight gaps and challenges and identify effective and sustainable ways forward. The 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women was strongly focused on national level implementation, in particular through high-level roundtables and interactive expert panels. The high profile of the session, with over 80 Ministers attending, and significant levels of participation (more than 1800 government delegates, and over 2600 representatives of non-governmental organizations, as well as representatives of United Nations bodies and other international and regional organizations) was an important achievement and indication of the continued importance attached to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as the global policy framework, and of continued critical role of the United Nations, particularly through providing a critical space for bringing together all stakeholders on promotion of gender equality.

In assessing achievements, as a result of reviews carried out at national level, many Member States noted progress in achieving the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the 2000 Millennium Development Goals, and in particular in the areas of:

Analysis of the responses from Governments clearly indicated, however, that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remains far from being fully achieved. Progress has been uneven within and across regions. While some gains had been seen in relation to each of the 12 Critical Areas of Concern in all regions, serious obstacles and challenges were also reported in every area.

Persistent gaps in all regions included low levels of women's representation in decision-making positions

improvements to enhancing the enabling environment for promoting gender equality. Other speakers will discuss these approaches in their presentations during this panel.

Change and renewal are also needed in institutions working to promote gender equality and empowerment of women to create a more enabling environment for incorporating gender perspectives in policy formulation. Gender equality advocates in many different contexts - in Governments, in the United Nations and other international and regional organizations, in civil society and in academia - are concerned to find new ways to ensure conducive institutional environments for policy change. This includes critically assessing and re-evaluating institutional mechanisms and processes and identifying new modalities. In the context of the United Nations it will be important to ensure that attention to the institutional mechanisms and resources for gender equality are given adequate consideration in the United Nations reform process. One challenge facing the United Nations is ensuring greater involvement of civil society in its work. This includes, in keeping with the pr ty 2010 150 111 170 134 0092 cm BT

The most critical opportunity for moving positions forward on promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women, which need to be fully utilized, is the 2005 World Summit to be held in September this year. This global meeting will set the global agenda on development, security and human rights for the decade ahead and it is critical to influence the process from a gender equality perspective.

The Secretary-General's report, "*In larger freedom: Towards development, security and human rights for all*" - which provides the initial framework for discussions of Member States - does include reference to the recommendations that we

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In December 2003, the General Assembly of the United Nations requested the Secretary-General to prepare an in-depth study on violence against women. The study will be completed by June 2006, and submitted to the General Assembly for consideration. The goals of the study are to: highlight the persistence of all forms of violence against women in all parts of the world, and the unacceptability of such violence; strengthen political commitment and joint efforts of all stakeholders to prevent and eliminate violence against women; and identify ways and means for better and more sustained and effective implementation of Government commitments and obligations to combat all forms of violence against women, and increase accountability.

The process of preparation of the study is as import

World Summit will provide the impetus for such leadership in the future to ensure full implementation of the commitments in the Platform for Action and all obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.