United Nations A/C.2/60/L.64

General Assembly

Distr.: Limited
9 December 2005

Original: English

Sixtieth session
Second Committee
Agenda item 56 (b)
Eradication of poverty and other development issues: women in development

Draft resolution submitted by the Rapporteur of the Committee, Abdulmalik Alshabibi (Yemen), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/60/L.43

Women in development

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 52/195 of 18 December 1997, 54/210 of 22 December 1999, 56/188 of 21 December 2001, 58/206 of 23 December 2003 and 59/248 of 22 December 2004 and all its other resolutions on the integration of women in development, and the relevant resolutions and agreed conclusions adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women,[1] including the Declaration adopted at its forty-ninth session,

Reaffirming the Beijing Declaration[2] and Platform for Action[3] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[4] and recalling the outcomes of all other relevant major United Nations conferences and summits,

Reaffirming also the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[5] which affirms that the equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured, and calls for, inter alia, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as being effective and essential to eradicating poverty and hunger, in combating diseases and in stimulating development that is truly sustainable,

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[1] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1997, Supplement No. 7* (E/1997/27), chap. I.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[3] Ibid., annex II.

[4] Resolutions S/23-2, annex, and S/23-3, annex.

[5] See resolution 55/2.

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Recognizing that access to basic affordable health care, preventive health information and the highest standard of health, including in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, is critical to women's economic advancement, that lack of economic empowerment and independence increases women's vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, including the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, and that the neglect of the full enjoyment of human rights by women severely limits their opportunities in public and private life, including the opportunity for education and economic and political empowerment,

Reaffirming that gender equality is of fundamental importance for achieving sustained economic growth, poverty eradication and sustainable development, in accordance with the relevant General Assembly resolutions and United Nations conferences, and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services,

Reaffirming also the significant contribution that women make to the economy, that women are key contributors to the economy and to combating poverty through both remunerated and unremunerated work at home, in the community and in the workplace and that the empowerment of women is a critical factor in the eradication of poverty,

Recognizing that the difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, in particular the least developed countries, have resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty,

Recognizing also that population and development issues, education and training, health, nutrition, the environment, water supply, sanitation, housing, communications, science and technology, and employment opportunities are important elements for effective poverty eradication and the advancement and empowerment of women,

Recognizing further, in this context, the importance of respect for all human rights, including the right to development, and of a national and international environment that promotes, inter alia, justice, gender equality, equity, civil and political participation and civil, political and fundamental freedoms for the advancement and empowerment of women,

Reaffirming the need to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by the earliest possible date and at all levels by 2015 and that equal access to education and training at all levels, in particular, inter alia, in business, trade, administration, information and communication technologies and other new technologies, as well as the need to eliminate gender inequalities at all levels, are essential for gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication and to allow women's full and equal contribution to, and equal opportunity to benefit from, development,

Recognizing that poverty eradication and the achievement and preservation of peace are mutually reinforcing, and recognizing also that peace is inextricably linked to equality between women and men and to development, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution,

Aware that, while globalization and liberalization processes have created employment opportunities for women in many countries, they have also made women, especially in developing countries and in particular in the least developed countries, more vulnerable to problems caused by increased economic volatility, including in the agricultural sector, and that special support, particularly for women who are small-scale farmers, and empowerment are necessary to enable them to take advantage of the opportunities of agricultural market liberalization,

Recognizing that enhanced trade opportunities for developing countries, including through trade liberalization, will improve the economic condition of those societies, including women, which is of particular importance in rural communities,

Expressing its concern that, while women represent an important and growing proportion of business owners, their contribution to economic and social development is constrained by, inter alia, the denial and lack of equal rights and access of women to education, training, information, support services and credit facilities, and control over land, capital, technology and other areas of production,

Also expressing its concern about the underrepresentation of women in political and economic decision-making, and stressing the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in the formulation, implementation and evaluation of all policies and programmes,

Noting the importance of the organizations and bodies of the United Nations system, in particular its funds and programmes, including the United Nations Development Fund for Women, in facilitating the advancement of women in development, and noting the work done by the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General;[6]

2. *Also takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General entitled "World Survey on the role of women in development: women and international migration",[7] and recommends that it be considered within the context of the High-Level Dialogue on Migration and Development, to be held in 2006;

3. *Calls upon* Governments, the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates, all sectors of civil society, including non-governmental organizations, as well as all women and men to fully commit themselves and to intensify their contributions to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration[2] and Platform for Action[3] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;[4]

4. *Stresses* the importance of creating a favourable and conducive national and international environment in all fields of life for the effective integration of women in development;

5. *Urges* all Governments to develop and promote strategies to mainstream a gender perspective in the design and implementation of economic and development policies, including in budgetary policies and processes at all levels, and in the monitoring and evaluation of related programmes of action;

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[6] A/60/162.

[7] A/59/287/Add.1.

6. *Acknowledges* that the gender segmentation of the labour market creates an additional challenge for women in the economy, restricting opportunities for them in sectors traditionally dominated by men, and calls upon Governments and all other stakeholders, where appropriate, to make further efforts to address the gender wage gaps and gender segmentation of the labour market and to improve the conditions and security of women's employment in all sectors of the economy;

7. *Calls upon* all Governments to incorporate a gender perspective in all policies on international migration, including, inter alia, for the protection of women migrants from violence, discrimination, trafficking, exploitation and abuse;

8. *Requests* Governments to ensure the full and equal participation of women in decision-making and in policy formulation and implementation at all levels so that their priorities, skills and potentials can be adequately reflected in national policies;

9. *Recognizes* the mutually reinforcing links between gender equality and poverty eradication, as well as the need to elaborate and implement, where appropriate, in consultation with civil society, comprehensive gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies that address social, structural and macroeconomic issues;

10. *Recognizes also* that violence against women and girls is one of the obstacles to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and the implications of violence against women and girls for the social and economic development of communities and States, and calls upon States to elaborate and implement strategies in support of their obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent violence against women and girls;

11. *Recognizes further* the need to strengthen the capacity of Governments to incorporate a gender perspective in policies and decision-making, and encourages all Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system, and other relevant stakeholders to assist and support developing countries in integrating a gender perspective in all aspects of policymaking, including through the provision of technical assistance and financial resources;

12. *Stresses* the importance of developing national strategies for the promotion of sustainable and productive entrepreneurial activities that will generate income among disadvantaged women and women living in poverty;

13. *Urges* all Governments to ensure women's equal rights with men and their full and equal access to education, training, employment, technology and economic and financial resources, including credit, in particular for rural women and women in the informal sector, and to facilitate, where appropriate, the transition of women from the informal to the formal sector;

14. *Encourages* Governments, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other actors of civil society to promote and protect the rights of women workers, to take action to remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work and to initiate positive steps to promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value;

15. *Urges* all Governments to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women with regard to their access to bank loans, mortgages

and other forms of financial credit, giving special attention to poor, uneducated women, and to support women's access to legal assistance;

16. *Calls upon* Governments and entrepreneurial associations to facilitate the access of women, including young women and women entrepreneurs, to education and training in business, administration and information and communication technologies;

17. *Recognizes* the role of microfinance, including microcredit, in the eradication of poverty, the empowerment of women and the generation of employment, notes in this regard the importance of sound national financial systems, and encourages the strengthening of existing and emerging microcredit institutions and their capacities, including through the support of international financial institutions;

18. *Stresses* the need for assistance to enable women in developing countries, particularly grass-roots women's groups, to have full access to and use of new technologies, including information technologies, for their empowerment;

19. *Urges* States to design and revise laws that ensure that women are accorded full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through inheritance, and to undertake administrative reforms and other necessary measures to give women the same right as men to credit, capital and appropriate technologies and access to markets and information;

20. *Calls upon* Governments to encourage the financial sector to mainstream gender perspectives in their policies and programmes;

21. *Also calls upon* Governments to promote, inter alia, through legislation and family-friendly and gender-sensitive work environments, the facilitation of breastfeeding for working mothers and the provision of the necessary care for working women's children and other dependants and to consider promoting policies and programmes, as appropriate, to enable men and women to reconcile their work, social and family responsibilities;

22. *Recognizes* the need to empower women economically and politically, particularly poor women, and in this regard encourages Governments, with the support of their development partners, to invest in appropriate infrastructure and other projects, as well as to create opportunities for economic empowerment, in order to alleviate women and girls from time-consuming everyday tasks;

23. *Expresses its concern* that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforces gender inequalities, that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they have become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis;

24. *Reaffirms* the commitment to achieve universal access to reproductive health by 2015, as set out in the International Conference on Population and Development,[8] integrating this goal in strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration[5] aimed at reducing maternal mortality, improving maternal health,

[8] See *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18).

reducing child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS and eradicating poverty;

25. *Calls upon* the international community to make efforts to mitigate the effects of excess volatility and economic disruption, which have a disproportionately negative impact on women, and to enhance trade opportunities for developing countries in order to improve the economic situation of women;

26. *Urges* the international community, the United Nations system and relevant organizations to give priority to assisting the efforts of developing countries to ensure the full and effective participation of women in deciding and implementing development strategies and integrating gender concerns into national programmes, including by providing adequate resources to operational activities for development in support of the efforts of Governments to ensure full and equal access of women to health care, capital, education, training and technology, as well as full and equal participation in all decision-making;

27. *Recognizes* that a substantial increase in official development assistance and other resources will be required if developing countries are to achieve the internationally agreed development goals and objectives, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that in order to build support for official development assistance, cooperation will be needed in further improving policies and development strategies, both nationally and internationally, to enhance aid effectiveness;

28. *Urges* developed countries that have not yet done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product as official development assistance to developing countries and 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of the gross national product of developed countries to least developed countries, as reconfirmed at the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, held in Brussels from 14 to 20 May 2001,[9] encourages developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help to achieve development goals and targets, acknowledges the efforts of all donors, commends those donors whose official development assistance contributions exceed, reach or are increasing towards the targets, and stresses the importance of undertaking to examine the means and time frames for achieving the targets and goals;

29. *Encourages* the international community, the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society to continue to provide the necessary financial resources to assist national Governments in their efforts to meet the development targets and benchmarks agreed upon at the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly and other relevant United Nations conferences and summits;

30. *Encourages* the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, as appropriate, to assist Governments, at their request, in building

[9] See A/CONF.191/13.

institutional capacity and developing national action plans or further implementing existing action plans for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

31. *Urges* Governments to create and maintain a non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive legal environment by reviewing legislation, with a view to striving to remove discriminatory provisions as soon as possible and eliminating legislative gaps that leave women and girls without protection of their rights and without effective recourse against gender-based discrimination, and encourages assistance to countries in achieving this aim;

32. *Urges* multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

33. *Encourages* Governments, international organizations, including the United Nations system, the private sector and civil society to fully incorporate a gender perspective into the implementation of and follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development and the International Conference on Financing for Development and to implement the specific recommendations on microfinance and microcredit for women and gender budget policies;

34. *Stresses* the importance of collecting and exchanging all relevant information needed on the role of women in development, including data on international migration, as well as the need to develop statistics disaggregated by sex, and in that regard encourages developed countries and relevant entities of the United Nations to provide support and assistance to developing countries, upon their request, with respect to establishing, developing and strengthening their databases and information systems;

35. *Calls upon* all organizations of the United Nations system, within their organizational mandates, to mainstream a gender perspective and to pursue gender equality in their country programmes, planning instruments and sector-wide programmes and to articulate specific country-level goals and targets in this field in accordance with the national development strategies;

36. *Calls upon* the United Nations system to integrate gender mainstreaming into all its programmes and policies, including in the integrated follow-up to United Nations conferences, in accordance with agreed conclusions 1997/2 on gender mainstreaming adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1997;[10]

37. *Encourages* all relevant United Nations funds and programmes and the specialized agencies, in accordance with their respective mandates, to assist Governments, at their request, in strengthening their capacity to promote and support the economic advancement of women through, inter alia, employment and entrepreneurship practices and programmes that affirm and empower women;

38. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to update the *World Survey on the Role of Women in Development* for the consideration of the General Assembly at its sixty-fourth session, noting that the survey should continue to focus

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[10] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 3* (A/52/3/Rev.1), chap. IV.A, para. 4.

on selective emerging development themes that have an impact on the role of women in the economy at the national, regional and international levels;

39. *Decides* that the theme for the next survey will be “Women’s control over economic resources and access to financial resources, including microfinance”;

40. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session a report on the progress made in the implementation of the present resolution, including women’s increased participation in government decision-making bodies and its impact on the eradication of poverty;

41. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-second session the sub-item entitled “Women in development”.