

protocol to the Convention; elaboration of a gender mission statement and strategies for effectively implementing the agreed conclusions; agreement, with the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), of a joint work plan aimed at facilitating the mainstreaming of human rights of women (E/CN.6/1998/2/Add.1); and development of a policy on gender and a strategy for its effective implementation, with the objective to ensure that the UN human rights system has the capacity and the commitment to integrate a genuine gender perspective into all aspects of its work.

In addition to the review of initiatives taken by the OHCHR, the report also notes steps taken by the human rights treaty bodies, mechanisms and procedures. The report also refers to the resolutions on the subject of human rights of women (violence, trafficking, women migrant workers, integration) that were adopted by the Commission at previous sessions as well as references to women in both country-specific and thematic texts.

With regard to the human rights treaty bodies, the report recommends, *inter alia*, that they:

- ♦ continue efforts to develop a gender analysis of each article of each treaty, cross-referenced to the Women's Convention, including the development of gender-sensitive model questions to be used in the review of states parties' reports;
- ♦ be encouraged to develop a common strategy towards mainstreaming human rights of women into their work, including through cooperation in the drafting of general comments and/or recommendations which reflect a gender perspective; be encouraged to incorporate a gender perspective into their concluding observations that delineate the strengths and weaknesses of each state party insofar as enjoyment by women of the rights guaranteed by a particular treaty is concerned; and
- ♦ incorporate a gender dimension into future revision of general comments and/or recommendations and guidelines previously adopted, with the assistance of the OHCHR in this area.

The report also drew on the recommendations contained in the report of the 1995 expert group meeting.

Women living in extreme poverty

A report on mainstreaming human rights of women was prepared for the 42nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women (2 to 13 March 1998) under the agenda item dealing with follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women. This report, prepared jointly by the OHCHR and DAW was distributed as an official document of the Commission on Human Rights (E/CN.4/1998/22) and contains information on, *inter alia*: ensuring women's real enjoyment of their human rights; the context for women's enjoyment of human rights and the consequences of the denial of rights to women; factors and obstacles affecting women's real

enjoyment of their human rights; progress in ensuring women's real enjoyment of their human rights; international human rights instruments; the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action; the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; gender equality in the Platform for Action; human rights of women as a critical area of concern and as an integral component of the Platform for Action; and, the actors responsible for implementing actions in the Platform for Action concerning women's enjoyment of economic and social rights.

The report: examines the impact of women's unequal enjoyment of rights on their socio-economic status; assesses how the denial of rights — particularly those relating to economic development and economic resources — creates obstacles to women's equality and thus their enjoyment of human rights; pays particular attention to gender factors that perpetuate women's unequal access and treatment with regard to economic and social rights and opportunities; and assesses the progress made in intergovernmental and expert bodies in addressing women's enjoyment of human rights, particularly those related to economic development, economic resources and the elimination of poverty.

The report notes, *inter alia*: notwithstanding efforts at the non-discriminatory application of human rights, the vision of human rights, and the mechanisms to concretize it, have profited women less than men; the majority of the world's 1.3 billion people living in poverty are women; access to, and control of, productive resources, particularly land, are key to addressing women's poverty; education and training for women and girls yields high social and economic returns and is a precondition for the empowerment of women; women's participation in various aspects of economic and community life has increased, but remains lower than that of men; women's work is in low-paid or unpaid occupations limiting the possibility for savings, credit or investment, and security; and the denial to women of economic power and economic independence is a major cause of violence against women because it prolongs their vulnerability and dependence.

The report concludes by stating that women's full enjoyment of their human rights, including those relating to economic development and resources, is essential to any strategy aimed at poverty eradication and sustainable development.

Commission on the Status of Women

At its 1998 session the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) considered a number of issues related directly to human rights of women. Chapter IV of the report of the 1998 CSW session (E/CN.6/1998/12) refers to critical areas of concern set out in the Beijing Platform for Action and action to be taken by governments, the international community, the UN, non-governmental organizations and the public and private sector to improve the situation of, and conditions for, women. The areas considered are violence against women, women