

BANGKOK COMMUNIQUÉ

The High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and Its Regional and Global Outcomes was held in Bangkok from 7 to 10 September 2004, and was attended by 44 members and associate members of ESCAP, United Nations bodies, programmes and specialized agencies, representatives of intergovernmental agencies and observers from non-governmental organizations.

WE REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT to the consensus Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE the gains made including:

- The formulation of national policies and action plans to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- The establishment and the strengthening of national machineries or institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women.
- Improved women's health, including maternal and reproductive and sexual health, nutritional status and longer life expectancy.
- The formulation and revision of domestic laws and regulations to eliminate discrimination against women.
- Affirmative actions to increase women's participation in politics and decision-making.
- Increased access by women to education and a significant decrease in women's illiteracy rate.
- Improved economic empowerment of women.
- Active and enhanced participation of women's non-governmental organizations and civil society.

WE ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THERE ARE GAPS in the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, including:

- Combating continuing violation of human rights and all forms of discrimination against women and girls.
- The insufficient catalytic role of national machineries for the advancement of

women in the national planning and policy-making process.

- Strengthening of women's national machineries and institutional mechanisms.
- Improving allocation of financial and human resources and increasing allocation of financial resources.
- The insufficient catalytic role of national machineries for the advancement of women in the national planning and policy-making process.
- The lack of policies, legislations and programmes to protect women migrant workers' human rights.
- The lack of reproductive health information and services or care to women, particularly young women and adolescents.
- The lack of regional cooperation and partnership initiatives for combating trafficking in persons, HIV/AIDS and promoting the protection of women migrant workers and global market mechanisms.
- The limitation of financial and human resources for promoting gender equality.
- Women's disproportionate representation among the poor (feminization of poverty).
- The high prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in the region particularly among women.
- The low level of women's participation in decision-making at various levels.
- The persisting violence against women including trafficking of women and children and girl child marriage.
- The lack of reliable and relevant sex and age disaggregated data and gender statistics.
- The persisting portrayal of women and girls as sexual objects and commodities in media and information and communication technology.

WE RECOGNIZE THE NEED TO ADDRESS THE FOLLOWING CHALLENGES:

- Combating continuing violation of human rights and all forms of discrimination against women and girls.
- Strengthening of women's national machineries and institutional mechanisms.

- Improving allocation of financial and human resources and increasing allocation of financial resources.
- Developing gender-sensitive indicators and sex disaggregated statistics for measuring progress.
- Forging close cooperation and partnership with stakeholders.
- Creating an enabling environment to support policies and affirmative action programmes to ensure women's access to economic resources and opportunities, education and health, and including reproductive health.
- Increasing the accessibility, availability, affordability and quality of reproductive health services, especially for poor, young and marginalized women.
- Reducing the vulnerability of women and girls to HIV/AIDS.
- Promoting gender mainstreaming as a systematic approach to ensure gender-responsive implementation of policies and plans to be institutionalized.
- Addressing the negative impacts of globalization and trade liberalization such as job insecurity and violations of labour rights.
- Providing adequate social and legislative protection to vulnerable women.
- Reducing and alleviating poverty.
- Supporting and recognizing community and independent media to counter the negative and stereotypical portrayal of women and girls.
- Protecting women and children in situations arising from militarism, war and armed conflict, and in particular, from the use of rape and sexual violence and hostage-taking as a strategy of war.
- Mainstreaming of women in environmental decision-making at all levels in the context of environmental degradation and pollution, climate change, and their impact on gender.

FURTHERMORE, WE RECOGNIZE the importance of ensuring linkages and cross-fertilization with commitments to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, International

Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, the Millennium Declaration, the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, which are recognized as effective in realizing women's human rights and gender equality.

WE ENCOURAGE the strengthening of cooperation and partnerships, and the commitment to allocating increased resources by governments, non-governmental organizations, development partners, and regional, international and intergovernmental agencies.

WE THEREFORE RENEW OUR COMMITMENT TO THE FULL AND EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION.

WE OFFER THIS COMMUNIQUÉ AS THE ASIAN AND PACIFIC CONTRIBUTION TO THE MEETING ON THE GLOBAL REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT BY THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN AT ITS FORTY-NINTH SESSION TO BE HELD IN NEW YORK IN MARCH 2005.