



# MEXICO

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STATEMENT BY  
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FOR WOMEN,  
AT THE HIGH LEVEL PLENARY  
OF THE FORTY NINTH SESSION  
OF THE COMMISSION ON  
THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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## Check against delivery

Madame Chairperson,

On behalf of the delegation of Mexico, I wish to congratulate the Commission on its performance and on the work done for this 49th session on the follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, ten years after its adoption and nearly thirty years after the First World Conference on Women, held in Mexico in 1975.

I wish to highlight the importance of the national preparatory process for this session in replying to the questionnaire by the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW) and, from the regional perspective, with the process that led to the realization of a significant contribution from the region of Latin America and the Caribbean to this session and to the efforts of the international community, namely, the Mexico Consensus that emanated from the IX Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean of ECLAC, which was held in Mexico, last June. This Conference, over whose Bureau I have the honor to preside, is the most important intergovernmental forum in the region for the advancement of women, and the Mexico Consensus is our contribution from the region.

We have developed a regional network of national mechanisms for women in Latin America and the Caribbean which today, within the framework of Beijing +10, contributes to the strengthening of our joint work based on this review and evaluation and will permit us to identify the progress achieved, the lessons learned, areas of weakness, difficulties and, above all, the common challenges that still remain to strengthen the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and its full application, in the context of a new century marked by globalization and new paradigms.

For Mexico, this is an opportunity to reaffirm the international commitments undertaken and to continue to promote the protection, defence and respect for the human rights of women in each and every one of the critical areas of concern set out in the Beijing Platform for Action. The Platform is the valid framework on which we will continue to develop our programmes and actions to promote equality and eradicate discrimination.

Mexico reaffirms its commitment to all the international instruments it has ratified, which provide specific protection for the rights of women, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which it ratified in 1981; the Optional Protocol thereto, ratified in 2002; and the only legally binding instrument worldwide on gender-based violence, namely, the Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence against Women, known as the Convention of Belem do Para, which was adopted in 1994.

In this connection, we note that in October 2004, States Parties adopted the Statute of the Mechanism to Follow-up the Implementation of the Convention of Belem do Para, which will not only provide for reporting on progress made in combating violence against women, but will also clearly underscore the need to promote cooperation and the exchange of best practices in order to translate regional commitments into concrete actions in each of our countries, as unmistakable evidence of the commitment of the Governments of the region to eliminating this scourge that afflicts our societies.

Mexico was a strong supporter of this initiative in keeping with its hemispheric vocation and with the support of the current Government of my country, under which efforts have continued to combat gender-based violence at the national level and beyond. Today we are now creating under our "For a Life without Violence" programme an additional subsystem specifically geared towards the follow-up of national actions and based on the above-mentioned Statute for the Follow-up of the Convention of Belem do Para.

CEDAW represents for Mexico a commitment by the State and we have systematically fulfilled our reporting responsibilities under the Convention. We are currently preparing our sixth periodic report.

In addition, and as the region's contribution to the review of regional and hemispheric achievements and best practices, Mexico has continued to expand the project which we are promoting jointly with UNIFEM, namely, the CEDAW interactive website (SICEDAW), on which to date 110 reports have been stored electronically from 26 countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, of which 84 are from Governments, 10 from the Committee and 16 are "shadow" reports.

Human rights are a key issue on Mexico's political agenda and the current Government has implemented an open-door policy towards international organizations and civil society, and maintains an open invitation to United Nations human rights rapporteurs, including the recent visit of Ms. Yakin Ertuk, Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, its Causes and Consequences.

Concerning the handling of the cases of women murdered in Ciudad Juarez, the Federal Government has taken a number of actions since 2000 through different agencies and has coordinated the actions of the various Government departments. In 2003, a special prosecutor was appointed to handle and investigate these cases with a view to their prosecution and administration of justice, and the Programme of Action of the Federal Government to Prevent and Combat Violence against Women in Ciudad Juarez, which incorporates the recommendations of competent national and international human rights organizations, such as the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (CIDH) and the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH).

In addressing this serious problem, my Government has collaborated at all times with CEDAW, which has resulted in an extremely fruitful process for both parties. We hope that in the near future more members of the international community will join the States Parties to the Optional Protocol of CEDAW.

Madam Chairperson,

Mexico has made significant progress towards the elimination of discrimination and the achievement of gender equality, consistent with the mandate and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. This has been possible thanks to the work and the commitment of the Executive Branch, the Commissions on Gender Equality of the Legislative Branch, the governments of federal entities, civil society, women's organizations and the women's movement, which are all committed to the rights enshrined in CEDAW and to the actions mandated in the Platform.

Ten years after Beijing, the creation and strengthening of national institutions for the advancement of women have significantly strengthened the capacity of the Mexican State to achieve the objectives of Beijing. In 2001, the national mechanism for the advancement of women that existed at the time was elevated under the law that created the National Women's Institute (INMUJERES) to the status of a decentralized public body with legal personality, its own budget and technical and management independence at the highest level. This demonstrates the commitment of the State. The 31 states of the Mexican Republic and the Federal District currently have organizations for the advancement of women.

The 12 critical areas of concern set out in the Platform for Action and the National Development Programme of the current Government, together with the process of national consultations, comprised the basic framework that led to the creation of the National Programme for Equality of Opportunities and Non-Discrimination against Women (PROEQUIDAD), whose content consists of 9 specific objectives and short-, medium-, and long-term goals.

In terms of legislation, other achievements to be highlighted are amendments to articles 1 and 4 of the Political Constitution of the United Mexican States, which provide for equality between men and women before the law and the prohibition of all gender-based discrimination, and the Federal Law on the Prevention and Elimination of Discrimination, which provides for the creation of the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination; the Law on the National Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples, the General Law on Social Development; the Law on the Promotion of Activities by Civil Society Organizations; and the Law for the Protection of Children and Adolescents, among others.

The reforms to the Federal Code of Electoral Institutions and Procedures (COFIPE) in 2002 were geared towards ensuring the participation of women in posts subject to popular elections at the federal level with the establishment of gender-based quotas under the electoral laws, which led to a 22.8 per cent increase in the participation of women in the Congress. This created a framework of reference for the electoral reforms at the local level throughout the country and launched a new dialogue in the debate over parity. Some 22 federal entities have established obligatory temporary measures.

Today in Mexico, article 55 of the Rules of Operation of the Expenditure Budget of the Federation instructs offices to include in the evaluation of their projects the indicators of results desegregated by sex and age group. Article 16 provides that the amounts authorized for gender equity programmes will not be subject to budgetary adjustments. Some 21 offices and entities of the Federal Public Administration have visible resources for the benefit of women, which are implemented through 134 programmes and activities.

In the fight against gender-based violence, 24 of the 31 federal entities currently have laws on the handling and prevention of domestic violence.

At the national level, we have the national programme "For a Life without Violence", which is a key instrument in the design of programmes and campaigns for the prevention of violence. The mechanism that makes the programme operational is the Institutional Bureau for the Coordination of Actions to Prevent and Handle Domestic Violence and Violence against Women. We have a free 24-hour telephone Life without Violence

hotline, which is available every day of the year (in 2004, some 11,396 calls were received), and a national network of shelters for women consisting of 34 shelters in 24 states. In order to develop adequate policies and programmes for combating violence against women, we apply the National Survey on the Dynamic of Household Relations carried out in 2003 by INMUJERES in collaboration with the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Data Processing (INEGI) and UNIFEM. The Survey revealed the reality of the frequency and scale of violence within households and is today the objective basis for developing solutions and assigning responsibilities and inter-institutional actions in collaboration with civil society organizations.

Mexico's social policy has designed and incorporated concrete actions to address the needs of women living in poverty. In the area of health, of particular note is the Women and Health Programme (PROMSA), which led to the introduction of Popular Health Insurance and the creation of the National Centre for Gender and Reproductive Health, as a decentralized organ of the Ministry of Health with responsibility for coordinating the programmes: Beginning Life as an Equal, Reproductive Health, and Gender Equity.

The Secretariat for Social Development is implementing the Opportunities programme and the Habitat programme, which support women living in situations of poverty through actions that contribute to the development of their skills, facilitate their insertion into the labour force and help to improve the quality of their lives. Other programmes that benefit women are "Productive Opportunities", the "Combating Urban Poverty", and "Women Heads of Household". It also conducted the survey "What the poor are saying" and created the Unit for Monitoring the Experiences and Perceptions of Poverty from a Gender Perspective.

In the effort to facilitate the analysis and measurement of the realities of women as an input in the development of public policies from a gender perspective, another of the areas being heavily promoted in Mexico has been the design of tools and instruments for the measurement of data desegregated by sex. Among the products developed in the joint work of the National Women's Institute and the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Data Processing (INEGI) are the System of Indicators for Monitoring the Situation of Women in Mexico (SISESIM), the National Survey on the Use of Time; the System of Indicators for the Measurement of Domestic Violence in Mexico, comprised of two subsystems: the 2003 National Survey on the Dynamic of Household Relations (ENDIREH) and the Universal Register of Domestic Violence (RUVI); and by the Ministry of Health, the National Survey of Violence against Women (ENVIM, 2003). INMUJERES, together with women's organizations at the state level, is developing the State System of Gender Indicators (SEIG), which more and more states are joining.

Madam Chairperson

Ten years after Beijing, Mexico recognizes that progress has been made towards the creation of institutions and mechanisms for the advancement of women, but that there is still need to overcome areas of weakness and obstacles and to continue to adopt measures to eliminate discrimination against women. Inequalities still remain and it is essential to change the cultural norms that promote and perpetuate the gender equalities that are still deeply rooted in our societies.

Today at this session, nearly 30 years after the First World Conference on Women, 10 years after the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and nearly five

years after the adoption of the Millennium Declaration and Goals, Mexico is heeding the timely appeal of the international community to redouble its efforts aimed at guaranteeing the protection and defence of the human rights of women in the social, economic, political and cultural fields and to address the 12 critical areas of concern set out in the Beijing Platform for Action.

The Mexico Consensus, as I mentioned at the start of my statement, is our regional contribution to this evaluation of the CSW and the path to follow, the framework upon which we must build our working strategies for the implementation of the Platform. The States that adopted the Mexico Consensus reaffirm our decision to adopt measures in various fields to achieve gender equity and we are confident that it will be a substantive part of the reflection, work and outcome of this session.

Thank you very much.