

## CHAPTER 2

# Gender equality, equity and empowerment of women

### SUMMARY

Women's perspectives and concerns appeared throughout the Programme of Action, but they were also the subject of a separate chapter. The Programme of Action stated that empowerment and autonomy of women and the improvement of their status were important ends in themselves, but they were also essential for the achievement of sustainable development. Therefore, the Programme of Action explicitly called for women to be fully involved in policy- and decision-making processes and implementation at all stages and urged that women as well as men be provided with the education to meet their basic human needs and to exercise their human rights. The document also called for the elimination of all forms of exploitation, abuse, harassment and violence against women, adolescents and children. It highlighted the special vulnerabilities of the girl child and called for an end to discrimination and to the root causes of son preference. Lastly, the Programme of Action urged that gender equality be promoted in all spheres of life and that men be encouraged and enabled to take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour as well as their social and family roles.

Achieving gender equality, equity and empowerment of women are recurrent topics in resolutions adopted by the Commission, regardless of the Commission's particular theme in a given year. Resolutions have stressed the importance of the full participation and partnership of both women and men in all aspects of productive and reproductive life and have recognized that the empowerment of women is an effective way to combat poverty, hunger and disease and to stimulate sustainable development. Gender equality in economic, social and political life has been recognized as a precondition for advancing the social empowerment of women. Furthermore, member States have been urged to enact and strictly enforce laws that ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and, in addition, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age at marriage, and to raise the minimum age at marriage, where necessary. The Commission has spoken out repeatedly and forcefully about the urgent need to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and has called on Governments to strengthen their efforts in this regard.

Given new and emerging population trends, the Commission has highlighted women's concerns and special vulnerabilities as they relate, for example, to international migration, HIV/AIDS or ageing. Groups that have been recently identified in this context include migrant children, women migrant domestic workers, young women, especially those affected by HIV/AIDS, and older women. Also new in comparison to the Programme of Action is the Commission's call for integrating a gender perspective into policies, programmes and partnerships, such as those focusing on international migration, the well-being of young people, the eradication of poverty in rural areas or HIV/AIDS. At the forty-second session of the Commission in 2009, member States called for instituting zero tolerance regarding violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional and customary practices such as female genital mutilation. This call was repeated verbatim at the forty-third (2010) and forty-fourth (2011) sessions. At the forty-fifth session (2012), Governments were urged to collaborate with local women's and youth groups to raise collective and individual awareness as to how such harmful practices violate the human rights of women and girls. At the forty-seventh session (2014), child, early and forced marriages were stated explicitly as harmful practices that need to be prevented and eliminated.

## **EXCERPTS FROM THE PROGRAMME OF ACTION**

### **Chapter IV: Gender Equality, Equity and Empowerment of Women**

#### **A. Empowerment and status of women**

##### Objectives

4.3. The objectives are:

- (a) To achieve equality and equity based on harmonious partnership between men and women and enable women to realize their full potential;
- (b) To ensure the enhancement of women's contributions to sustainable development through their full involvement in policy-and decision-making processes at all stages and participation in all aspects of production, employment, income-generating activities, education, health, science and technology, sports, culture and population-related activities and other areas, as active decision makers, participants and beneficiaries;
- (c) To ensure that all women, as well as men, are provided with the education necessary for them to meet their basic human needs and to exercise their human rights.

##### Actions

4.4. Countries should act to empower women and should take steps to eliminate inequalities between men and women as soon as possible by:

- (a) Establishing mechanisms for women's equal participation and equitable representation at all levels of the political process and public life in each community and society and enabling women to articulate their concerns and needs;
- (b) Promoting the fulfilment of women's potential through education, skill development and employment, giving paramount importance to the elimination of poverty, illiteracy and ill health among women;
- (c) Eliminating all practices that discriminate against women; assisting women to establish and realize their rights, including those that relate to reproductive and sexual health;
- (d) Adopting appropriate measures to improve women's ability to earn income beyond traditional occupations, achieve economic self-reliance, and ensure women's equal access to the labour market and social security systems;
- (e) Eliminating violence against women;
- (f) Eliminating discriminatory practices by employers against women, such as those based on proof of contraceptive use or pregnancy status;
- (g) Making it possible, through laws, regulations and other appropriate measures, for women to combine the roles of child-bearing, breast-feeding and child-rearing with participation in the workforce.

4.5. All countries should make greater efforts to promulgate, implement and enforce national laws and international conventions to which they are party, such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, that protect women from all types of economic discrimination and from sexual harassment, and to implement fully the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights in 1993. Countries are urged to sign, ratify and implement all existing agreements that promote women's rights.

4.6. Governments at all levels should ensure that women can buy, hold and sell property and land equally with men, obtain credit and negotiate contracts in their own name and on their own behalf and exercise their legal rights to inheritance.

4.7. Governments and employers are urged to eliminate gender discrimination in hiring, wages, benefits, training and job security with a view to eliminating gender-based disparities in income.

4.8. Governments, international organizations and non-governmental organizations should ensure that their personnel policies and practices comply with the principle of equitable representation of both sexes, especially at the managerial and policy-making levels, in all programmes, including population and development programmes. Specific procedures and indicators should be devised for gender-based analysis of development programmes and for assessing the impact of those programmes on women's social, economic and health status and access to resources.

4.9. Countries should take full measures to eliminate all forms of exploitation, abuse, harassment and violence against women, adolescents and children. This implies both preventive actions and rehabilitation of victims. Countries should prohibit degrading practices, such as trafficking in women, adolescents and children and exploitation through prostitution, and pay special attention to protecting the rights and safety of those who suffer from these crimes and those in potentially exploitable situations, such as migrant women, women in domestic service and schoolgirls. In this regard, international safeguards and mechanisms for cooperation should be put in place to ensure that these measures are implemented.

4.10. Countries are urged to identify and condemn the systematic practice of rape and other forms of inhuman and degrading treatment of women as a deliberate instrument of war and ethnic cleansing and take steps to assure that full assistance is provided to the victims of such abuse for their physical and mental rehabilitation.

4.11. The design of family health and other development interventions should take better account of the demands on women's time from the responsibilities of child-rearing, household work and income-generating activities. Male responsibilities should be emphasized with respect to child-rearing and housework. Greater investments should be made in appropriate measures to lessen the daily burden of domestic responsibilities, the greatest share of which falls on women. Greater attention should be paid to the ways in which environmental degradation and changes in land use adversely affect the allocation of women's time. Women's domestic working environments should not adversely affect their health.

4.12. Every effort should be made to encourage the expansion and strengthening of grass-roots, community-based and activist groups for women. Such groups should be the focus of national campaigns to foster women's awareness of the full range of their legal rights, including their rights within the family, and to help women organize to achieve those rights.

4.13. Countries are strongly urged to enact laws and to implement programmes and policies which will enable employees of both sexes to organize their family and work responsibilities through flexible work-hours, parental leave, day-care facilities, maternity leave, policies that enable working mothers to breast-feed their children, health insurance and other such measures. Similar rights should be ensured to those working in the informal sector.

4.14. Programmes to meet the needs of growing numbers of elderly people should fully take into account that women represent the larger proportion of the elderly and that elderly women generally have a lower socio-economic status than elderly men.

## **B. The girl child**

### Objectives

4.16. The objectives are:

- (a) To eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child and the root causes of son preference, which results in harmful and unethical practices regarding female infanticide and prenatal sex selection;
- (b) To increase public awareness of the value of the girl child, and concurrently, to strengthen the girl child's self-image, self-esteem and status;
- (c) To improve the welfare of the girl child, especially in regard to health, nutrition and education.

### Actions

4.17. Overall, the value of girl children to both their family and society must be expanded beyond their definition as potential child-bearers and caretakers and reinforced through the adoption and implementation of educational and social policies that encourage their full participation in the development of the societies in which they live. Leaders at all levels of the society must speak out and act forcefully against patterns of gender discrimination within the

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family, based on preference for sons. One of the aims should be to eliminate excess mortality of girls, wherever such a pattern exists. Special education and public information efforts are needed to promote equal treatment of girls and boys with respect to nutrition, health care, education and social, economic and political activity, as well as equitable inheritance rights.

4.18. Beyond the achievement of the goal of universal primary education in all countries before the year 2015, all countries are urged to ensure the widest and earliest possible access by girls and women to secondary and higher levels of education, as well as to vocational education and technical training, bearing in mind the need to improve the quality and relevance of that education.

4.19. Schools, the media and other social institutions should seek to eliminate stereotypes in all types of communication and educational materials that reinforce existing inequities between males and females and undermine girls' self-esteem. Countries must recognize that, in addition to expanding education for girls, teachers' attitudes and practices, school curricula and facilities must also change to reflect a commitment to eliminate all gender bias, while recognizing the specific needs of the girl child.

4.20. Countries should develop an integrated approach to the special nutritional, general and reproductive health, education and social needs of girls and young women, as such additional investments in adolescent girls can often compensate for earlier inadequacies in their nutrition and health care.

4.21. Governments should strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. In addition, Governments should strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age at marriage and should raise the minimum age at marriage where necessary. Governments and non-governmental organizations should generate social support for the enforcement of laws on the minimum legal age at marriage, in particular by providing educational and employment opportunities.

4.22. Governments are urged to prohibit female genital mutilation wherever it exists and to give vigorous support to efforts among non-governmental and community organizations and religious institutions to eliminate such practices.

4.23. Governments are urged to take the necessary measures to prevent infanticide, prenatal sex selection, trafficking in girl children and use of girls in prostitution and pornography.

### **C. Male responsibilities and participation**

#### **Objective**

4.25. The objective is to promote gender equality in all spheres of life, including family and community life, and to encourage and enable men to take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour and their social and family roles.

#### **Actions**

4.26. The equal participation of women and men in all areas of family and household responsibilities, including family planning, child-rearing and housework, should be promoted and encouraged by Governments. This should be pursued by means of information, education, communication, employment legislation and by fostering an economically enabling environment, such as family leave for men and women so that they may have more choice regarding the balance of their domestic and public responsibilities.

4.27. Special efforts should be made to emphasize men's shared responsibility and promote their active involvement in responsible parenthood, sexual and reproductive behaviour, including family planning; prenatal, maternal and child health; prevention of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV; prevention of unwanted and high-risk pregnancies; shared control and contribution to family income, children's education, health and nutrition; and recognition and promotion of the equal value of children of both sexes. Male responsibilities in family life must be included in the education of children from the earliest ages. Special emphasis should be placed on the prevention of violence against women and children.

4.28. Governments should take steps to ensure that children receive appropriate financial support from their parents by, among other measures, enforcing child-support laws. Governments should consider changes in law and policy to ensure men's responsibility to and financial support for their children and families. Such laws and policies should

also encourage maintenance or reconstitution of the family unit. The safety of women in abusive relationships should be protected.

4.29. National and community leaders should promote the full involvement of men in family life and the full integration of women in community life. Parents and schools should ensure that attitudes that are respectful of women and girls as equals are instilled in boys from the earliest possible age, along with an understanding of their shared responsibilities in all aspects of a safe, secure and harmonious family life. Relevant programmes to reach boys before they become sexually active are urgently needed.

## EXCERPTS FROM RESOLUTIONS AND ENTIRE RESOLUTION

### Entire resolution:

- Resolution 2000/1 – Population, gender and development

### Resolution 1998/1

#### Health and mortality

[...]

1. *Calls upon* the relevant bodies of the United Nations system to work in close coordination with each other, and with other international organizations and non-governmental organizations, in cooperation with Governments, in strengthening national capacities to collect, analyse and utilize health and mortality data at both national and local levels, in the priority areas of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, including infant, child, adolescent and maternal health and mortality; sexual and reproductive health, with special attention to family planning, sexually transmitted infections and human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS); and violence against women and children and female genital mutilation and other harmful practices; and in the areas of infectious disease, substance abuse and measurement of adult mortality and morbidity;

[...]

### Resolution 2000/1

#### Population, gender and development

*The Commission on Population and Development,*

*Reaffirming* the commitment of Member States to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development,<sup>1</sup>

*Recalling* the recommendations of the Programme of Action and reaffirming the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action relating to gender equality, equity and the empowerment of women,

*Recalling also* that the theme for the thirty-third session of the Commission on Population and Development was population, gender and development,

*Noting* the fundamental importance of gender dimensions for all aspects of demographic change and development of a society,

*Noting also* the significance of policies and programmes affecting gender relations,

*Recognizing* the need to eliminate all discrimination and abuse against women and children, including sexual abuse, exploitation, trafficking and violence, and exposure, especially of young women, to high risks of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) infection,

1. *Requests* the Population Division of the United Nations Secretariat to continue to incorporate gender perspectives in all its research on population policies, levels and trends, including, inter alia, the analysis of demographic, social and economic data disaggregated by age and sex, so that Governments may benefit by

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achieving a better understanding of the relationships between population, gender and development in the global context and through intercountry comparisons;

2. *Also requests* the Population Division, in conducting these analyses, to pay particular attention to the gender dynamics and demographic implications of the human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) pandemic, infant, child and maternal mortality, and ageing of populations, and to improving the statistical description and analysis of the phenomena of all forms of discrimination and abuse against women and children, including sexual abuse, exploitation, trafficking and violence, as well as to the gender dimensions of migration.

<sup>1</sup> *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

### Resolution 2005/1

#### Population, development and HIV/AIDS, with particular emphasis on poverty

[...]

12. *Urges* Governments to implement measures to increase capacities of adults and adolescents to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, and through prevention education that promotes gender equality within a culture- and gender-sensitive framework;

13. *Also urges* Governments to take all necessary measures to empower women and strengthen their economic independence, and to promote and protect the full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms in order to enable all individuals to protect themselves from HIV infection, sexually transmitted infections and reproductive ill health;

14. *Stresses* the importance of ensuring that young women and men have access to information, education, including peer education and youth-specific HIV education, sexual education and services necessary to develop the life skills required to reduce their vulnerability to HIV infection and reproductive ill health, in full partnership with young persons, parents, families, educators and health-care providers;

[...]

### Resolution 2005/2

#### Contribution of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, in all its aspects, to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration

[...]

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of integrating the goal of universal access to reproductive health by 2015 set at the International Conference on Population and development into strategies to attain the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, in particular those related to improving maternal health, reducing infant and child mortality, promoting gender equality, combating HIV/AIDS, eradicating poverty and achieving universal access to primary education;

[...]

7. *Stresses* that promoting women's reproductive health, their full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, their empowerment, their equal access to resources and their freedom from gender-based violence is essential to achieving gender equality, addressing the feminization of poverty and halving poverty by 2015;

[...]

**Resolution 2006/2**  
**International migration and development**

[...]

4. *Requests* States to effectively promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants regardless of their immigration status, especially those of women and children, in conformity with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the international instruments to which they are party;

[...]

6. *Recognizes* that trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants continue to pose a serious challenge to humanity and require a concerted international response, and to that end urges all States to devise, enforce and strengthen effective measures to prevent, combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in persons, to counter the demand for trafficked victims and to protect the victims, in particular women and children subjected to forced labour, or sexual or commercial exploitation, violence or sexual abuse;

[...]

13. *Urges* Member States and relevant international organizations to incorporate a gender perspective in all policies and programmes on international migration in order to, inter alia, reinforce the positive contributions that migrant women can make to the economic, social and human development of their countries of origin and their host countries as well as to strengthen protection of women migrants from all forms of violence, discrimination, trafficking, exploitation and abuse, by promoting their rights and welfare, while recognizing in this regard the importance of joint and collaborative approaches and strategies at the bilateral, regional, interregional and international levels;

[...]

**Resolution 2007/1**  
**Changing age structures of populations and their implications for development**

[...]

5. *Stresses* the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in policy and planning processes at all levels and the need to eliminate discrimination on the basis of gender and age, including the elimination of all forms of violence against women of all ages, and of ensuring equal rights and their full enjoyment by women of all ages;

[...]

13. *Encourages* Governments to apply policies that support gender equality, protect the human rights of older persons, particularly older women, and assist abused older persons;

[...]

23. *Calls upon* the relevant United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to continue promoting partnerships at the national and international levels to promote a holistic package of gender-sensitive interventions to ensure the wellbeing of young people and improve their life prospects, inter alia, by enhancing their educational attainment, promoting healthy lifestyles and safeguarding their health, including sexual and reproductive health, and by supporting young people's social engagement and participation, including in activities to reduce poverty and marginalization;

[...]

**Resolution 2008/1**  
**Population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development**

[...]

2. *Calls upon* Governments, in formulating population distribution policies, to ensure that their objectives and goals are consistent with internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development

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Goals, all human rights and fundamental freedoms, the eradication of poverty in both urban and rural areas, the promotion of gender equality, equity and empowerment of women and environmental sustainability;

[...]

6. *Emphasizes* the need to eradicate poverty in rural areas, including through strategies that, integrating a gender perspective, are aimed at promoting interactions between cities and rural localities, particularly by generating employment for rural residents, creating opportunities to market agricultural products in urban areas and facilitating access to credit, education, vocational training and health services for rural residents and rural-urban migrants;

7. *Also emphasizes*, in the context of population distribution, urbanization, internal migration and development, and bearing in mind national priorities, the importance of establishing and funding active labour market policies devoted to the promotion of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including the full participation of women in all international and national development and poverty eradication strategies, the creation of more and better jobs for women, both urban and rural, and their inclusion in social protection and social dialogue;

8. *Urges* Governments to improve the plight of the urban poor, many of whom work in the informal sector of the economy, and to promote the integration of internal migrants from rural areas into urban areas by developing and improving their income-earning capability, with special attention to women, in particular female workers and female heads of households;

[...]

15. *Encourages* Governments, in formulating and implementing policies, strategies and programmes on HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support and on other communicable diseases, to focus on the diverse and special needs of urban and rural populations and of migrant populations, including temporary migrants, and emphasizes the need to address the overall expansion and feminization of the HIV/AIDS pandemic;

[...]

### Resolution 2009/1

#### **The contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals**

[...]

7. *Urges* Governments, in order to ensure the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, to, inter alia, protect and promote the full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms regardless of age and marital status, including by eliminating all forms of discrimination against girls and women, working more effectively to achieve equality between women and men in all areas of family responsibility and in sexual and reproductive life, empowering women and girls, promoting and protecting women's and girls' right to education at all levels, providing young people with comprehensive education on human sexuality, on sexual and reproductive health, on gender equality and on how to deal positively and responsibly with their sexuality, enacting and enforcing laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses, ensuring the right of women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, combating all forms of violence against women, including harmful traditional and customary practices such as female genital mutilation, developing strategies to eliminate gender stereotypes in all spheres of life and achieving gender equality in political life and decision-making, which would contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals;

8. *Also urges* States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and, in addition, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

[...]

18. *Also urges* Governments to integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support into primary, maternal and child health-care programmes and integrate sexual and reproductive health information and services into HIV/AIDS plans and strategies, so as to increase coverage of antiretroviral treatment and prevent all forms of transmission of HIV, including mother-to-child transmission, protecting human rights and fighting stigma and discrimination by empowering women to exercise their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, free of coercion, discrimination and violence;

19. *Calls upon* Governments to strengthen initiatives that increase the capacities of women and adolescent girls to protect themselves from the risk of HIV infection, principally through the provision of health care and health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and that integrate HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment, care and support, including voluntary counselling and testing and prevention education that promotes gender equality;

[...]

27. *Recognizes* that sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights and women's rights and empowerment deserve increased attention in humanitarian assistance and post-crisis recovery, and therefore emphasizes the need for Governments, United Nations agencies, regional and international organizations and non-governmental organizations involved with providing support to countries and regions affected by crises to address the specific needs of those affected in a comprehensive and coherent manner;

28. *Calls upon* Governments, with the help of the international community, as needed, to achieve universal access to quality education, with particular priority given to primary and technical education and job training, to combat illiteracy and to eliminate gender disparities in access to, retention in and support for primary and secondary education and to promote non-formal education for young people, guaranteeing equal access for women and men to literacy centres, in order to benefit fully from the demographic dividend;

[...]

#### **Resolution 2010/1 Health, morbidity, mortality and development**

[...]

11. *Emphasizes* that advances in health depend, among other factors, on the promotion and protection of all human rights, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and the elimination of gender-based discrimination, especially by ensuring equal opportunities for women and men in education, employment and access to social services, including health services; by instituting zero tolerance regarding violence against women and girls, including harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation or cutting; by preventing child and forced marriage; and by ensuring women's and men's access to the means to determine the number and spacing of their children;

12. *Urges* Governments, in order to ensure the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, to, inter alia, protect and promote the full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms regardless of age and marital status, including by eliminating all forms of discrimination against girls and women; working more effectively to achieve equality between women and men in all areas of family responsibility and in sexual and reproductive life; empowering women and girls, promoting and protecting women's and girls' right to education at all levels; providing young people with comprehensive education on human sexuality, on sexual and reproductive health, on gender equality and on how to deal positively and responsibly with their sexuality; enacting and enforcing laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses; ensuring the right of women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence; combating all forms of violence against women, including harmful traditional and customary practices such as female genital mutilation; developing strategies to eliminate gender stereotypes in all spheres of life and achieving gender equality in political life and decision-making, which would contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals;

[...]

16. *Notes with concern* the feminization of the pandemic of HIV/AIDS, especially among young women, and the fact that women now represent 50 per cent of people living with HIV worldwide and nearly 60 per cent of people living with HIV in Africa and, in that regard, reaffirms the commitment to intensify efforts to ensure a wide range of prevention programmes that take account of local circumstances, ethics and cultural values, such as information, education and communication, as well as encouraging responsible sexual behaviour, including abstinence and fidelity, and expanded access to essential commodities, including female condoms and microbicides, through the adoption of measures to reduce costs and improve availability;

[...]

**Resolution 2011/1**  
**Fertility, reproductive health and development**

[...]

5. *Also reaffirms* that gender equality cannot be achieved without promoting and protecting the right of women to enjoy the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, including sexual and reproductive health, and reaffirms further that expanding access to sexual and reproductive health information and health services is essential for achieving the Beijing Platform for Action, the Cairo Programme of Action and the Millennium Development Goals;

6. *Urges* Governments, in order to ensure the contribution of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, to, inter alia, protect and promote the full respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms regardless of age and marital status, including by eliminating all forms of discrimination against girls and women, working more effectively to achieve equality between women and men in all areas of family responsibility and in sexual and reproductive life, empowering women and girls, promoting and protecting women's and girls' right to education at all levels, providing young people with comprehensive education on human sexuality, on sexual and reproductive health, on gender equality and on how to deal positively and responsibly with their sexuality, enacting and enforcing laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses, ensuring the right of women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, combating all forms of violence against women, including harmful traditional and customary practices such as female genital mutilation, developing strategies to eliminate gender stereotypes in all spheres of life and achieving gender equality in political life and decision-making, which would contribute to the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals;

7. *Stresses* that States should eliminate all forms of discrimination against the girl child and the root causes of son preference, which results in harmful and unethical practices regarding female infanticide and prenatal sex selection, increase public awareness of the value of the girl child, and concurrently, strengthen the girl child's self-image, self-esteem and status, and improve the welfare of the girl child, especially in regard to health, nutrition and education, and urges Governments to take the necessary measures to prevent infanticide, prenatal sex selection, trafficking in girl children and use of girls in prostitution and pornography;

[...]

10. *Encourages* Governments to prioritize universal access to sexual and reproductive health as part of health systems strengthening to eliminate preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and to take action at all levels to address the interlinked root causes of sexual and reproductive ill health, unintended pregnancy, complications arising from unsafe abortion, and maternal mortality and morbidity, including poverty, malnutrition, harmful practices, lack of accessible and appropriate health-care services, information and education, and gender inequality, taking into account people living in the most vulnerable situations, including persons with disabilities, displaced and refugee populations and irregular migrants, and paying particular attention to achieving gender equality and eliminating all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls, with the full involvement of men;

[...]

22. *Urges* Member States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and, in addition, to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage, and to raise the minimum age for marriage where necessary;

23. *Calls upon* Governments to incorporate gender perspectives and human rights into health-sector policies, programmes and research activities, paying attention to the specific needs and priorities of women and girls, ensuring women's right to the highest attainable standards of health and their access to affordable and adequate health-care services, including sexual, reproductive and maternal health care and lifesaving obstetric care, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and recognizes that lack of economic empowerment and independence has increased women's vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, involving the risk of contracting HIV and AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other poverty-related diseases;

24. *Urges* Member States, the United Nations and civil society to include in their development priorities programmes that enable men to support women's access to safe conditions for pregnancy and childbirth, contribute to family planning, prevent sexually transmitted infections and HIV and end violence against women and girls;

[...]

26. *Encourages* Member States to adopt and implement legislation and policies to promote the reconciliation of paid work and family responsibilities, inter alia, through 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, increased flexibility in working arrangements, and to ensure that both women and men have access to maternity, paternity, parental and other forms of leave and are not discriminated against when availing themselves of such benefits;

[...]

## **Resolution 2012/1** **Adolescents and youth**

[...]

7. *Urges* Governments to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms regardless of age and marital status, including, inter alia, by eliminating all forms of discrimination against girls and women, by working more effectively to achieve equality between women and men in all areas of family responsibility, in sexual and reproductive life, and in education at all levels, and by protecting the human rights of adolescents and youth to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health;

8. *Urges* Member States to enact and strictly enforce laws to ensure that marriage is entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses and to enact and strictly enforce laws concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage, and to raise the minimum age for marriage, where necessary;

9. *Urges* all States to develop, adopt and fully implement laws and to take other measures, such as policies and educational programmes, as appropriate, to eradicate harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and early and forced marriage, which are violations of the human rights of women and girls, and to intensify efforts, in cooperation with local women's and youth groups, to raise collective and individual awareness on how such harmful practices violate the human rights of women and girls;

[...]

## Chapter 2: Gender equality, equity and empowerment of women

12. *Urges* all States to enact and enforce legislation to protect all adolescents and youth, including those in situations of armed conflict, natural disasters or humanitarian emergencies, from all forms of violence, including gender-based violence and sexual violence, trafficking in persons and involvement in criminal activities, and to provide social and health services, including sexual and reproductive health services, and complaint and reporting mechanisms for the redress of violations of their human rights;

[...]

16. *Calls upon* Governments to take all necessary measures to eliminate all forms of discrimination against girls and young women, to remove all obstacles to gender equality, to promote the empowerment of girls and young women in all aspects of youth development, and to encourage boys and young men to participate fully in all actions towards gender equality;

17. *Also calls upon* Governments to support and encourage men in their important role as fathers and in helping their children transition successfully to adulthood, including by providing adequate financial support for their children and families, to promote positive male role models and programmes for boys to become gender-sensitive adults and to enable men to support, promote and respect women's sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, recognizing the inherent dignity of all human beings;

18. *Urges* Member States to improve and actively support opportunities for young people to gain access to productive employment and decent work, including through investment in youth employment programmes, youth-adult partnerships entrepreneurship and other income generation strategies, active labour markets, public-private partnerships and other measures to facilitate the participation of young people in labour markets, in accordance with States' respective national laws and international obligations and commitments, and to reinforce links between national development strategies and policies on education, training, social integration and mobility, taking into account gender equality and the empowerment of women;

[...]

21. *Calls upon* Member States to ensure the right to education of good quality for women and girls, on an equal basis with men and boys, and that they complete a full course of primary education, and to renew their efforts to improve and expand the education of girls and women at all levels, including at the secondary and higher levels, as well as vocational education and technical training, in order to, inter alia, achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and poverty eradication;

[...]

28. *Reiterates* the need for Governments to ensure that all women and men have comprehensive information about, and access to, a choice of the widest possible range of safe, effective, affordable and acceptable modern methods of family planning, including long-acting methods and male and female condoms, so that they are able to exercise free and informed reproductive choices, and stresses that Governments and development partners, through international cooperation, should ensure that family planning programmes have a sufficient and continuous supply of safe, effective, affordable and acceptable modern contraceptives;

29. *Calls upon* Governments to pay particular attention to adolescents and youth, especially young women and adolescent girls, in significantly scaling up efforts to meet the goal of ensuring universal access to HIV prevention, treatment, care and support, free of stigma and discrimination and with a gender perspective, and to provide comprehensive information, voluntary counselling and testing to adolescents and youth living with HIV as they transition into adulthood;

30. *Also calls upon* Governments to strengthen national social and child protection systems, and care and support programmes for adolescents and youth, in particular for young women and adolescent girls affected by and vulnerable to HIV, as well as their families and caregivers, including through the provision of equal opportunities to support the development to full potential of orphans and other children affected by and living with HIV, especially through equal access to education, the creation of safe and non-discriminatory learning environments, supportive legal systems and protections, including civil registration systems, and provision of comprehensive information and support, including youth-friendly health centres, to children and their families and caregivers, especially age-appropriate HIV information to assist children living with HIV as they transition through adolescence, consistent with their evolving capacities;

[...]

**Resolution 2013/1**

**New trends in migration: demographic aspects**

[...]

4. *Calls upon* States to promote and protect effectively the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all migrants regardless of migration status, especially those of women and children, and to address international migration through international, regional or bilateral cooperation and dialogue and a comprehensive and balanced approach, recognizing the roles and responsibilities of countries of origin, transit and destination in promoting and protecting the human rights of all migrants, and avoiding approaches that might aggravate their vulnerability;

[...]

8. *Urges* all Member States to devise, enforce and strengthen effective measures and specific policies to prevent, combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in persons, to counter the demand for trafficked victims and to protect the victims, in particular women and children subjected to forced labour, sexual exploitation, violence or sexual abuse;

[...]

25. *Calls upon* States to protect the human rights of migrant children, especially migrant girls, given their vulnerability, particularly unaccompanied migrant children, ensuring that the best interests of the child are a primary consideration in State policies on integration, return and family reunification, including repatriation mechanisms;

26. *Urges* Member States and relevant international organizations to incorporate a gender perspective into all policies and programmes on international migration in order, inter alia, to reinforce the positive effects that migration can have for the empowerment of women and the contributions that migrant women can make to the economic, social and human development of their countries of origin and their host countries, and to strengthen actions to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence, coercion, discrimination, trafficking in persons, and exploitation and abuse of women and girls;

27. *Urges* Governments to take into account the best interests of the child by adopting or strengthening measures to promote and protect the human rights of migrant girls, including unaccompanied girls, regardless of their immigration status, so as to prevent labour and economic exploitation, discrimination, sexual harassment, violence and sexual abuse in the workplace, including in domestic work;

[...]

29. *Also calls upon* Member States to increase measures to protect women migrants from violence and harassment, including sexual harassment and bullying, in both public and private spaces, and to address security and safety through awareness-raising policies and programmes;

30. *Recognizes* that migrants and displaced persons in many parts of the world have limited access to health care, including for sexual and reproductive health, and face specific threats to their reproductive health and rights, and calls upon Governments to provide services that are particularly sensitive to the needs of individual women and adolescents and responsive to their often powerless situation, with particular attention to those who are victims of sexual violence;

[...]

32. *Urges* States that have not yet done so to adopt and implement legislation and policies that protect all women migrant domestic workers and to include therein and improve, where necessary, relevant monitoring and inspection measures in line with applicable International Labour Organization conventions and other instruments to ensure compliance with international obligations, and to grant women migrant workers in domestic service access to gender sensitive, transparent mechanisms for bringing complaints against employers, while stressing that such instruments should not punish women migrant domestic workers, and calls upon States to promptly investigate and punish all violations of their rights;

[...]

**Resolution 2014/1**

**Assessment of the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development**

[...]

9. *Urges* Governments to address existing gaps in the implementation of the Programme of Action, including in such areas as respect for, and protection, promotion and fulfilment of, human rights, and gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, as well as unequal progress in achieving universal and equitable access to health services, including for sexual and reproductive health, and newborn and child health, uneven progress in health conditions and life expectancy, and the elimination of violence and discrimination without distinction of any kind;

[...]

13. *Expresses* deep concern about the pervasiveness of gender-based violence, in particular violence against women and girls, and reiterates the need to further intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls and harmful practices, including child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, and recognizes that violence against women and girls is one of the obstacles to achieving the empowerment of women and that women's poverty and lack of political, social and economic empowerment, as well as their marginalization, may result from their exclusion from social policies for and the benefits of sustainable development and can place them at increased risk of violence;

[...]