

**Report of the 8th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting
Kampala, Uganda, 11-14 June 2007**

**Financing Gender Equality for
Development and Democracy**

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FOREWORD

The 8th triennial Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (8WAMM), held in Kampala, Uganda, from 11 to 14 June 2007, was significant for a number of reasons. First, it was one of the biggest meetings on gender equality anywhere in the world in 2007, attended by 32 of the Commonwealth member countries, as well as by major international and regional agencies. It also featured a parallel Partners' Forum for civil society and other professional organisations, young people and the private sector. Commonwealth associations – particularly those made up of parliamentarians, local government, business councils and networks – also held events in the wings of 8WAMM.

Second, the 2007 meeting was of special importance as it took place in Uganda five months before the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) was held there in November. This provided a significant opportunity to take gender equality and women's rights issues from one meeting to the next.

Third, 8WAMM presented a unique opportunity for member countries to reflect on progress made since the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 was adopted at 7WAMM in 2004. Its theme of *'Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy'* reflected the growing awareness that women's rights and gender equality are being overlooked in development and democratisation processes. In the Commonwealth, we see the impact of that neglect in a number of ways: different levels of access to services and resources for women and men, girls and boys; the feminisation of poverty; high maternal mortality; girls being denied an education; widespread HIV/AIDS prevalence among women and girls; a low percentage of female parliamentarians.

This Report provides a record of the meeting and its outcomes. Ministers looked at whether and how gender equality is being financed. They closely examined the 'new' aid delivery mechanisms such as direct budget support to see whether these have marginalised the views and priorities of women. They considered the role of National Women's Machineries and the public sector in financing gender equality; the implications for gender equality of financing HIV and AIDS interventions; and how investing in gender equality could promote peace and democracy. Their conclusion was that increased investments in gender equality must be a priority to ensure sustained economic growth and achieve democracy, peace, security and development. Without development and peace, we cannot have an equal world. Political will and sufficient financial resources are the essential components for the achievement of that world.

Rt Hon Don McKinnon
Commonwealth Secretary-General
January 2008

KAMPALA COMMUNIQUÉ

1. The 8th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (8WAMM) was held in Kampala, Uganda, from 11-14 June 2007. Delegations from 32 countries attended the meeting. The meeting was opened by H E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda. The keynote address was delivered by the Hon Luísa Dias Diogo, Prime Minister of Mozambique.
2. The Meeting was chaired by the Hon Syda Bbumba, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda. All delegations expressed their appreciation to the host Government for the hospitality and excellent conference arrangements for the meeting.
3. Ministers commended the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat, particularly the Gender Section, in assisting countries in the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action (PoA) for Gender Equality 2005-2015.
4. Ministers acknowledged that increased investments in gender equality must be a priority to ensure sustained economic growth and the achievement of democracy, peace, security and development.
5. Ministers expressed their concern that the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that are seriously off-track are the ones based on the achievement of gender equality, improving maternal health and combating HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases (MDGs 3, 5 and 6).
6. Ministers emphasised that the timely implementation of the Commonwealth PoA for Gender Equality 2005-2015 requires adequate resources, and the operationalisation of the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework, as agreed, will require full commitment by governments of all member countries.
7. Ministers noted that substantially more effort is required to achieve gender equality as evidenced by the following statistics in Commonwealth countries:
 - Only five out of the 53 countries have achieved 30 per cent representation of women in national parliament;
 - 30 million children are not in primary school, the majority of whom are girls;
 - 60 per cent of HIV and AIDS cases globally are in the Commonwealth, and a growing proportion are women and girls;
 - There are 300,000 maternal deaths per annum; and
 - Some Commonwealth countries are among those with the highest infant and maternal mortality rates.
8. The Meeting discussed the following agenda items:
 - Tracking the Money for Gender Equality
 - National Women's Machineries (NWMs) and Public Sector: Role in Financing Gender Equality
 - Financing HIV and AIDS Interventions: Implications for Gender Equality
 - Investing in Gender Equality: Promoting Peace and Democracy.

Tracking the Money for Gender Equality

9. There were four Ministerial Roundtables on Aid Effectiveness; Gender-Responsive Budgets (GRBs); Micro-finance and Innovative Financing for Gender Equality; and Gender and Trade. Ministers' conclusions from the Roundtables included:

- the importance of developing indicators for tracking the money that is being allocated by governments and donors for gender equality and women's empowerment;
- the need to develop and enhance capacity for the implementation of GRBs. Finance Ministers must take the lead in implementing GRBs working closely with NWMs. Gender audits and impact assessment must be undertaken by respective ministries;
- the need to build women's capacity to access markets, develop products and create an enabling environment for women to scale up their businesses to enter global markets. It is imperative that women participate in trade policy formulation and negotiations; and
- the critical role of micro-finance and innovative financing for women's empowerment and for greater involvement of women in managing micro-finance. Given that there are good practices across the Commonwealth, they emphasised the sharing of lessons learned.

National Women's Machineries and Public Sector: Role in Financing Gender Equality

10. Ministers stressed that strong NWMs are needed to achieve gender equality and underpin the achievement of wider social and economic goals. NWMs need authority and resources to be effective.

11. Strong NWMs are important now, more than ever, to ensure that national development plans and new aid modalities reflect gender equality. Enhanced responsibility and accountability in the public and private sectors will ensure improved and equitable socio-economic outcomes.

Financing HIV and AIDS Interventions: Implications for Gender Equality

12. Gender inequalities lie at the heart of the HIV epidemic. Ministers called for strengthened national programmes on prevention, treatment, care and support, including anti-retroviral treatment, female condoms, microbicides and research on an HIV vaccine.

13. Stigma and cultural and gender stereotyping contribute to women's vulnerability to sexual and other forms of violence and decrease their ability to protect themselves and negotiate safer sex. This calls for a co-ordinated multisectoral response.

14. The increased feminisation of HIV and AIDS requires enhanced and broader access to gender-sensitive sexual and reproductive health services as well as dialogue between women and men, girls and boys.

15. Women and girls bear the disproportionate costs of care yet lack rights to resources such as access to land, finance and information. Ministers emphasised the need to implement

policies and commitments to address gender inequality in HIV and AIDS funding and programming.

Investing in Gender Equality: Promoting Peace and Democracy

16. Ministers recognised the uneven and slow progress in achieving the minimum 30 per cent target of women in leadership and decision-making at all levels, and urged governments to provide and implement appropriate laws and policies through constitutional and legislative reforms to achieve gender balance.

17. They highlighted the critical importance of providing financing and voter education, in particular for women, in order to promote and achieve inclusive democracy and good governance.

18. Acknowledging the negative consequences and impact of conflicts on women and girls, Ministers strongly urged governments to provide resources to address the challenges in conflict and post-conflict situations, including disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR).

19. Ministers noted that since women and girls bear the brunt of conflict, and also participate as combatants, the need for their involvement in peace negotiations and post-conflict management is critical. Thus, Ministers urged governments to provide access to women to participate and be represented in these processes.

20. Ministers agreed to the establishment of a Commonwealth Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security.

Other Priority Issues

21. Ministers raised other issues of concern that hinder the full and equal participation of women and impede the socio-economic development of Commonwealth countries. These include:

Maternal mortality

Ministers noted that it is within the grasp of Commonwealth countries to make major strides to reduce persistently high maternal mortality rates.

Education of girls

Ministers highlighted the critical importance of investing in girls' education.

Violence against women and girls

Ministers recognised that the on-going level of gender-based violence in Commonwealth countries, the most pronounced being male violence against women, is both a shameful abuse of human rights and a significant barrier to positive economic and social outcomes.

Partnership with men

Ministers noted that changing attitudes and mindsets and working in partnership with men and boys is critical.

Dialogue with Partners

22. Ministers acknowledged the substantive contributions of Commonwealth intergovernmental bodies, associations and civil society organisations that met under the auspices of the Partners' Forum from 8-10 June at the same venue.

23. Ministers further recognised that the challenge of prioritising gender equality can only be addressed effectively through coordinated action and genuine partnership with civil society. Ministers underscored the critical importance of empowering youth and providing resources to build their capacity to participate at all levels.

24. Ministers viewed partners as a valuable source of human, financial and technical capability. They reaffirmed their commitment to collaborate with partners to improve co-ordination.

Gender Architecture

25. Ministers supported the creation of a strong, unified, independent and properly resourced UN entity for gender equality and women's empowerment.

Emerging Gender Issues

26. Ministers noted that emerging issues as they relate to women, such as climate change, migration, the digital divide, diversity and disability, are matters to be considered when the Plan is reviewed in 2010.

Next Meeting

27. Ministers warmly welcomed the offer of the Government of Barbados to host the Ninth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (9WAMM) in 2010.

Commonwealth Secretariat
Speke Resort & Conference Centre
Munyonyo, Kampala, Uganda
June 2007

KAMPALA STATEMENT TO THE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT MEETING 2007 FROM THE EIGHTH COMMONWEALTH WOMEN'S AFFAIRS MINISTERS MEETING

Thirty-two Commonwealth countries attended the Eighth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (8WAMM), the first WAMM since Heads of Government endorsed the Commonwealth Plan of Action (PoA) for Gender Equality 2005-2015. The Meeting made key recommendations on 'Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy'.

MINISTERS:

1. REAFFIRMED that gender equality, women's rights and empowerment are fundamental to the achievement of development, democracy and peace, and will also assist member states to meet emerging challenges impacting on women.
2. RECOGNISED that financing priorities for the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment provide the foundation for member states to promote and achieve economic growth, development, peace and democracy, and the full enjoyment of all human rights.
3. RECALLED that the Commonwealth Heads of Government endorsed the PoA in Malta, November 2005, and agreed to allocate adequate resources at the national level for its full and effective implementation.
4. REINFORCED their commitment to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), and noted with deep concern that the achievement of the MDGs is significantly off-track, and progress has been uneven and slow, particularly on those that relate to women and girls.
5. NOTED that substantially more effort is required to finance the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, as evidenced by the following statistics in Commonwealth countries:
 - Only 5 out of the 53 countries have achieved 30 per cent representation of women in national parliaments;
 - 30 million children are not in primary school, the majority of whom are girls;
 - 60 per cent of HIV and AIDS cases globally are in the Commonwealth, and a growing proportion are women and girls;
 - There are 300,000 maternal deaths per annum; and
 - Some Commonwealth countries are among those with the highest infant and maternal mortality rates.

MINISTERS THEREFORE:

6. URGE that our national governments, as a critical priority, now ensure adequate resources for the full and effective implementation of the PoA, and the achievement of the MDGs, in the particular areas of:
 - Strengthening national women's machineries, public sector and civil society organisations;

- Reducing the incidence of HIV and AIDS and maternal and infant mortality;
- Eliminating violence against women and girls;
- Increasing access for women to markets, property rights, credit and productive resources;
- Improving women's participation, leadership and representation in decision-making;
- Eliminating gender disparities in education and training;
- Ensuring women's participation in peace building, conflict prevention and resolution.

7. CALL for the urgent development and implementation of gender-responsive budgeting and integration of gender analysis, monitoring and assessment of the impact of budget expenditure on women, taking into account their diversity.

8. CALL for greater national efforts towards aid effectiveness to improve accountability and outcomes for gender equality and women's empowerment.

9. CALL for incorporation of the impact of aid effectiveness on gender equality and women's empowerment at the 2008 High Level Forum in Accra to review the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness.

10. ENCOURAGE Commonwealth Heads of Government to ensure participation of Women's Affairs Ministers in Commonwealth fora addressing issues that impact on women and note the opportunity for Women's Affairs Ministers to participate in the Commonwealth Finance Ministers' Meeting and Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

11. REQUEST that the Chair of 8WAMM be afforded an opportunity to present this Statement in person to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting to be held in Uganda in November 2007.

WE NOW URGE COMMONWEALTH HEADS OF GOVERNMENT TO ENSURE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF AGREED INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL AND NATIONAL COMMITMENTS TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, THROUGH ALLOCATION OF ADEQUATE RESOURCES TO FINANCE GENDER EQUALITY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY.

Commonwealth Secretariat
 Speke Resort & Conference Centre
 Munyonyo, Kampala, Uganda
 June 2007

MONDAY, 11 JUNE

OPENING CEREMONY

Welcome by Hon Syda Bbumba, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda

Expressing her pleasure in welcoming everyone to the official opening, Hon Syda Bbumba, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda said that it marked not just the climax in a long process of preparations, but also the beginning of the next phase of the Commonwealth's journey towards the goal of gender equality and women's empowerment as enshrined in various international and regional frameworks. She said that the theme of the meeting, 'Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy', had been specifically selected to enable reflection on commitments to actualise the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015, endorsed by Commonwealth Heads of Government in Malta in 2005. While she noted that advances in gender equality in the last decades offered hope and the courage to re-commit energies to working towards the targets that had been set, she stressed that finances were a major constraint, particularly for developing countries. She added that other notable constraints related to capacity and in some instances, strong social and retrogressive cultures that perpetuated discriminatory tendencies and practices.

Hon Bbumba said that the Ugandan Government was particularly proud to be hosting the meeting as it had put in place an enabling environment for promoting gender equality. She went on to mention some of the policy and legal frameworks that had facilitated action and led to an increase in female representation in parliament (30.6 per cent in 2006) and increased national literacy rates for women. The Government also emphasised gender and equity budgeting, which had generated some good lessons that would be shared during the meeting.

Hon Bbumba reminded those present that the previous seven WAMM meetings had come up with outcomes that had influenced the global gender agenda, including raising global awareness on the impacts of structural adjustment policies on women and introducing gender-responsive budgets. She said that the task of the next three days was therefore to take stock of progress, re-examine strategies and come up with a concrete output that would also leave a mark on the global gender agenda. In addition, the meeting's outcomes would feed into the Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting in September 2007; the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Kampala in November 2007; the UN Commission on the Status of Women in 2008, the theme of which would be Financing Gender Equality; and the Review of Paris Declaration on New Aid Modalities meeting in Ghana in 2008.

Describing financing gender equality for development and democracy as a broad topic that ranged from allocating adequate resources for mainstream budgets to financing specific projects for women, Hon Bbumba offered her perspective that women, who faced poverty disproportionately, should be able to access adequate and appropriate finances for their projects to empower them economically so that they were able to determine their destiny and shape their life choices. She felt that financing gender equality should also consider the level of support to activities to integrate gender in policy and programmes as well as enhancing budgets for the Ministers responsible for Women's Affairs.

Hon Bbumba ended by thanking all those who had worked tirelessly to make the meeting a reality, notably the Commonwealth Secretariat under the leadership of the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and the entire team for their support and participation. She also expressed her gratitude to all members of the National Organising Committee (NOC) and staff of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development for their hard work.

Speech by Rt Hon Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General¹

Rt Hon Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General, highlighted the significance of the Eighth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (8WAMM) in the context of the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) and in the theme being addressed: 'Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy'. He said that it was 'the simple truth' that there could be neither development nor democracy without women's participation and that gender equality was a recognised marker for progress in societies.

Mr McKinnon stressed the message that 'women count' – not only because they made up half the people on the planet but because discounting women had led to them bearing considerably more than half the world's problems. Taking stock of progress towards reaching the Millennium Development Goals on gender gaps on education and on maternal deaths, he concluded that "we are massively failing women". He said that he believed this was a policy issue, a human rights issue and a money issue. In particular, he expressed his concern about increasing evidence that women were being missed by development aid. He noted that this was due to both inadequate levels of funding as well as funding constraints, conditionalities over aid and complicated new aid modalities.

Mr McKinnon went on to say that the Commonwealth and its member countries had already done the policy work to ensure that gender was recognised as a component of all government policy – from health, to education, to business, to political representation – and had produced training manuals and capacity-building programmes to turn policy into practice. In addition, systems had already been developed to monitor and evaluate progress. He urged those present to mobilise the available tools, such as gender-responsive budgets, to see that women did not go 'missing' in development and democratic agendas, saying that this was their responsibility as ministers.

Mr McKinnon concluded by calling on delegates to lobby everyone who would be attending the review of progress on implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Accra, Ghana, in 2008. The message should be that, for real development effectiveness, gender had to be at its heart, and one of the results of Accra must be an agreed set of indicators to show that this was being done.

Speech by H E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda

The meeting was then officially opened by H E Yoweri Kaguta Museveni, President of the Republic of Uganda. In his speech, President Museveni extended a warm welcome to those present on behalf of the Government and people of Uganda. He reminded them that the theme of that year's Commonwealth Day had been 'respecting difference and promoting understanding' and suggested that this should not be limited to diversities in economics, geography, politics or race but should also include inequalities between women and men. He

¹ See www.thecommonwealth.org/document/165311/8wamm.htm for the complete text.

urged that unequal gender relations be redressed in order for Commonwealth societies to achieve political, economic and human development.

President Museveni emphasised that his Government was committed to ensuring that women were fully engaged in the political, economic and social development of the country. To this end, laws had been enacted spelling out quotas for women in parliament and local council structures. There was also a Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, which was headed by a Cabinet Minister. The President went on to list some of the investments made by his Government in areas such as providing safe water; increasing primary school enrolment from 2.5 million children to 7.7 million (50 per cent girls); introducing universal secondary education; and improving literacy. In the area of health, he mentioned that successful interventions included reducing HIV prevalence from 30 per cent to 6 per cent; ensuring that all children are fully immunised; and increasing access to health units within a radius of 5 kilometres from 30 per cent to 70 per cent. In the next financial year, the Government would be introducing a scheme to ensure that the poor, especially women, could access affordable financial services. He said that these various investments ultimately had a high impact on reducing gender inequalities given that women had a primary role of providing water for household use, bore the brunt of caring for the sick, were often discriminated against in education and training and were seldom able to access credit and financing from formal banking institutions due to factors such as lack of collateral.

President Museveni suggested that the current socio-economic situation in the under-developed Commonwealth, particularly in Africa, continued to be ‘dismal’ due to a number of strategic constraints. He highlighted three critical factors that had to be addressed to ensure social and economic transformation:

- the need for under-developed Commonwealth countries to process their products and have them ready to be put on the shelves of supermarkets in the more developed counties;
- the need to strategise on how poorer nations could increase access to the markets of the West for processed goods, with fair trading arrangements between the rich and poor nations; and
- the need to continue investing in human resource development so that developing countries moved from basing production only on natural resources to ‘tapping the products of the intellect’.

President Museveni urged those present to collectively reflect on the theme of the meeting in light of the issues he had identified. Saying that it was imperative to develop strategies that would not only make Commonwealth values and aspirations a reality for all, but also accelerate the pace for achieving gender equality and women’s empowerment nationally and globally, he expressed his wish for fruitful deliberations in the meeting.

Vote of Thanks by Hon Nanaia Mahuta, Minister for Youth Affairs and Customs, New Zealand

Following the President’s address, a vote of thanks was given by Hon Nanaia Mahuta, Minister for Youth Affairs and Customs, New Zealand. Indicating that she was speaking on behalf of all Ministers and delegates attending 8WAMM, and specially mentioning the recognition of the Pacific region where 7WAMM had been hosted, Hon Mahuta thanked the President and the people of Uganda for hosting the event and for their warm and gracious hospitality. She also proffered thanks to the Hon Syda Bbumba, the National Organising

Committee and all those involved in preparing for 8WAMM and to the Commonwealth Secretary-General and his team. She said that she wanted to take the opportunity to task President Museveni with the responsibility of taking 8WAMM conclusions to fellow Heads of Government at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, to be held in Kampala in November 2007.

TUESDAY, 12 JUNE

SESSION I: OPENING PLENARY

Election of Chair and Adoption of Agenda

The Commonwealth Secretary-General, Rt Hon Don McKinnon, welcomed those present and recognised the Prime Minister of Mozambique, the host Minister and Ministers from across the Commonwealth and their delegations. He noted the significance of the Eighth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (8WAMM) in the context of the upcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) and in the theme being addressed: 'Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy'. He then invited Hon Syda Bbumba, Uganda's Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, in her capacity as Head of the host country delegation, to chair the meeting.

The Chair welcomed colleagues and delegation members and thanked them warmly. Drawing the meeting's attention to the agenda and programme, she moved a motion for its adoption, which was accepted. She then asked the Prime Minister of Mozambique, H E Luísa Dias Diogo, to give the keynote address, highlighting the fact that Prime Minister Diogo was a former Finance Minister and co-chair of the United Nations High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in areas of development, humanitarian assistance and the environment, which has recommended the establishment of one dynamic UN entity focused on gender equality and women's empowerment.

Keynote Address by H E Luísa Dias Diogo, Prime Minister of Mozambique²

Prime Minister Diogo thanked the host Minister for the country's warm hospitality and the Secretariat for the invitation to deliver the keynote address. Noting that financing gender equality was fundamental to achieving democracy and development, she commended the meeting for selecting this theme for 8WAMM. She pointed out that it was also timely in view of preparations for the review of progress on implementing the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness to be held in Accra, Ghana, in 2008.

Prime Minister Diogo stressed the importance of allocating resources for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) from the UN Fourth World Conference on Women and other international commitments. She also pointed to the relevance of regional declarations such as the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Gender and Development Declaration and noted that these were crucial to the achievement of gender equality.

In emphasising that the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 was forward looking and recognised the inter-linkages between priority areas, Prime Minister Diogo underlined the significance of employing gender-responsive budgets as a tool for monitoring progress on financing for gender equality and thereby for the achievement of democracy and development. She highlighted the fact that these initiatives facilitated appropriate policy and programmatic responses to both women's practical needs and their strategic gender interests. However, she also made the point that gender budgets should not

² See Appendix 2.

be adopted in isolation but should be part of wider strategies for women's empowerment that addressed the structural causes of female poverty, inequality and subordination, such as discriminatory laws, cultural norms and patriarchal models.

Prime Minister Diogo shared some thoughts and lessons learned on the other areas covered by the meeting's agenda: the new aid modalities, gender-responsive budgets, access to finance for women, gender and trade, and the role of national machineries and the public sector in mainstreaming gender equality. She made special mention of the implications of financing gender equality for addressing HIV and AIDS, given how the spread of infection was affecting national productivities. In addition, she referred to the positive steps taken in her own country to encourage women's active participation in democracy, leading to 36 per cent representation in parliament and 26 per cent in Cabinet.

Turning to the creation of a single agency for women within the UN system, Prime Minister Diogo told participants that the recommendations of the High Level Panel had been comprehensive, and she expected to see 'a UN gender entity entrusted with a mandate combining normative, analytical and monitoring functions with political advisory and targeted programming functions'.

Finally, Prime Minister Diogo said she was assured that the meeting would engage in intensive deliberations over the following few days, and that she looked forward to recommendations and conclusions that would help women play their role in the political, economic and social development of their countries.

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Thanking the Prime Minister for her presentation, Hon Bbumba reminded those present that the timing of 8WAMM before CHOGM in November and the fifty-second meeting of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in early 2008 – both of which would be looking at issues of finance – offered strategic opportunities for finalising recommendations for action by multilateral and bilateral organisations, governments and civil society organisations. She also noted that the 2008 High Level Forum in Accra to review the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness would be another strategic platform where decisions and recommendations from 8WAMM could be submitted for consideration.

SESSION II: DEFINING 8WAMM CONTEXT

Chair: Hon Syda Bbumba, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda

Overview

The Chair reiterated the objectives of 8WAMM and outlined the expected outcomes. She noted that all sessions would be in plenary except for the roundtables. She requested delegations to submit written statements. In highlighting the rules for speaking, she noted that the one in six rule for intervention by civil society organisations would be followed.

The Chair called for the Report of the Senior Officials Meeting and the Report on the Commonwealth Secretariat Work Programme on the Implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 to be tabled for discussion.

1. Report of the Senior Officials Meeting³

Ms Christine Guwatudde Kintu, Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda, who had chaired the Senior Officials Meeting held the previous day, presented the main points from the report of that meeting. She said that the meeting had reviewed the conference arrangements and set up a Communiqué Drafting Committee, which other interested countries were welcome to join if they so wished. It had also received and discussed the Report on the Commonwealth Secretariat Work Programme, which would be presented subsequently.

In addition, the Senior Officials Meeting had received the Report on the Work of the Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group (CGPMG).⁴ The three main areas covered by this report were its principles of membership and current composition; the establishment of a Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security; and the setting up of a Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework to enhance rapid implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015.

Membership and Composition of the CGPMG

It had been agreed at the Preparatory Meeting of Commonwealth Heads of National Women's Machineries to Plan 8WAMM (February 2006, New York) that the CGPMG should consist of 20 members, with each region (Africa/Europe, Asia, Caribbean/Canada and the Pacific) having four members from government and one from a civil society organisation. Current members of the CGPMG were Australia, Bangladesh, Botswana, Brunei Darussalam, Cameroon, India, Jamaica, Kiribati, Sri Lanka, St Kitts and Nevis, Uganda and the United Kingdom. Four other countries invited to join had not yet confirmed their membership. Each member would have a two-year term, with two members from each region rotated out annually. The Commonwealth Foundation had also identified the following civil society organisations for membership: Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF) Ghana, Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), Participatory Research in India (PRIA) and the Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Women (PACFAW).

³ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

⁴ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security

The Terms of Reference for establishing a Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security had been finalised at the February meeting in New York and unanimously accepted by all 32 countries that had been represented at that meeting. The Working Group was intended to provide an institutional mechanism to monitor and promote gender in peace and security situations and ensure accountability to agreed commitments; to ensure effective coordination and avoid duplication of efforts as well as maximise limited resources; and to increase women's role and contributions in peace operations and post-conflict processes to ensure women's issues were addressed. The Chair noted that the Senior Officials Meeting had approved the Terms of Reference without amendments for recommendation to the ministerial meeting and subsequent endorsement by CHOGM, and she invited comments from the delegates. The meeting approved the recommendation for establishment of the Working Group.

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework

Ms Kintu reported that the core principles for the design and operation of the M&E Framework had been set out by the CGPMG during its meeting in February 2007. These included that the Framework should be simple, feasible and manageable as well as one that could be continually improved and updated, adjusting resources and action to those areas where most effort was needed. The aim was to evaluate in 2010 (the mid-term review) the outcome/results and measures that indicated progress towards achieving the aims of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015. The following list of indicators had been selected:

Critical Area 1: Gender, Democracy, Peace and Conflict

- Women fully and equally participating in leadership in all sectors and levels.
- Effective participation of women in conflict resolution, peace processes and reconstruction, with all human rights for women and children protected.

Critical Area 2: Gender and Human Rights and Law

- Violence against women and girls eliminated.
- Women's rights are protected, not only in the existence of laws, but in the effective implementation of these laws.

Critical Area 3: Gender, Poverty Eradication and Economic Empowerment

- All women have access to the fundamental resources essential for economic well-being.
- Women are empowered through a systematic system of resourcing and planning that ensures resources are allocated to them.
- Maternal mortality reduced by three quarters by 2015.
- Gender disparity in primary and secondary education eliminated, preferably by 2015, and in all levels of education no later than 2015.

Critical Area 4: Gender and HIV/AIDS

- Women and those who care for those with HIV/AIDS, receive appropriate, accessible and quality services for HIV/AIDS, including preventive services.

Plenary discussion

Participants' comments related mainly to two issues in terms of the M&E Framework: the maternal mortality indicator and sources of data. The Secretariat was also urged to look at how evaluation would be carried out and to keep time scales in mind for revision.

Maternal mortality: An additional indicator was proposed and received general agreement: the number of functional health facilities/ units for emergency obstetric services per 100,000 of population. However, given the varying populations of States, it was also proposed that each country should decide on relevant numbers and the phrase 'and with appropriate targets for smaller populations' was added.

Data sources: There was considerable discussion concerning the data to be used for reporting. In general, while there was a view that for harmonisation purposes there was a need to rely on international sources for consistency, the majority of participants felt that the primary data sources should be national – both National Women's Machineries (NWMs) and national statistical offices. It was suggested that data systems would need to be strengthened. UNIFEM was also suggested as a source of data.

The Chair's proposal that the M&E Framework with minor amendments could be adopted was agreed to. Countries were advised to have a national plan of action to report against the programme of action in the areas specified in the Framework.

2. Report by the Commonwealth Secretariat on the Implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015⁵

An introduction to and overview of the report was presented by Mr Ransford Smith, Deputy Secretary-General of the Commonwealth Secretariat. He began by providing some gender statistics, including that women make up 30 per cent of parliamentarians in only 4 out of 53 Commonwealth countries; 70 per cent of the poor are women; the majority of the 77 million out-of-school children are girls, and most are in the Commonwealth; 60 per cent of HIV and AIDS cases globally are in the Commonwealth, with women the majority of infected cases in Africa; and the countries with the highest infant and maternal mortality rates are in the Commonwealth.

Mr Smith said that the mandates for the Commonwealth Secretariat's work on gender were the Commonwealth Plan of Action (PoA) for Gender Equality 2005-2015; the Secretariat's Strategic Plan (2004-2008), as well as the new one being prepared; and the Operational Plan. He emphasised the Secretariat's twin track approach – gender mainstreaming as well as specific interventions in the four critical areas of the PoA:

- Gender, democracy, peace and conflict;
- Gender, human rights and the law;
- Gender, poverty eradication and economic empowerment; and
- Gender and HIV/AIDS.

Mr Smith reminded the meeting that the Secretariat worked in partnership with the member States – whose support was critical – as well as with Commonwealth organisations such as

⁵ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

the Commonwealth Foundation and the Commonwealth Business Women's Network, with civil society organisations and with bilateral, regional and multilateral bodies and advocacy networks. In highlighting the efforts of the Gender Section's work, he noted its collaboration with the Health and Education Sections, together with which it comprised the Social Transformation Programmes Division (STPD).

Ms Ann Keeling, Conference Secretary and Director of STPD, then provided more details on the work of the Gender Section in the four key critical areas of the PoA. Under Critical Area 1: Gender, democracy, peace and conflict, she highlighted workshops held to build capacity for enhanced political participation of women in the Caribbean, Maldives, Nigeria and Pakistan; advocacy on United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security; collaboration with the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations to raise awareness in respect to women among peace-keeping troops; and the publication of *Gender Mainstreaming in Conflict Transformation*. Under Critical Area 2: Gender, human rights and the law, key activities mentioned by Ms Keeling were regional colloquia on Gender, Culture and the Law held in West Africa (July 2006) and Asia (forthcoming in late 2007) and a pan-Commonwealth workshop on Gender and Indigenous Women's Rights. She said that advocacy had also been carried out through papers on migration, violence against women and trafficking, and two publications: *Gender and Human Rights* and *Case Law Book on International Women's Rights*.

Turning to Critical Area 3: Gender, poverty eradication and economic empowerment, Ms Keeling discussed four different areas: trade policy and enterprise development, gender-responsive budgets, gender and education, and health. Under the first of these, she highlighted capacity building regional workshops on gender and trade held in East Africa, the Caribbean and South Asia, and in-country work that had started in India; advocacy events on gender and trade at the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) Public Forum; and support to the Commonwealth Business Women's Network through workshops and the development of a website (www.cbwn.net). She said that a number of resources had also been developed, including another website (www.genderandtrade.org) and e-newsletter to be launched during 8WAMM and publication of a *Gender and Trade Action Guide: A Training Resource*. A second publication in this area was *Chains of Fortune: Linking Women Workers and Producers with Global Markets*.

Ms Keeling highlighted the fact that the importance of gender-responsive budget initiatives was more widely recognised, and that the Secretariat now reported every two years to the Finance Ministers Meetings on progress. She noted that initiatives were being extended to the revenue side of the budget through studies in India and Uganda, and a sectoral approach was being piloted in Pakistan looking at education. She also said that capacity building and dissemination workshops had been held in the Caribbean, India and Uganda (July 2007), while the publications produced in this area were *Mainstreaming Informal Employment and Gender in Poverty Reduction* and *Mainstreaming Gender in Debt and Development Resource Management*. A third publication, *Mainstreaming Gender in Social Protection for the Informal Economy*, was forthcoming.

Under the heading of gender and education, Ms Keeling mentioned capacity building through micro/pilot projects – including a social learning package in India – and the promotion of good practice in girls' education at regional and pan Commonwealth level. She also referred to three publications that had been produced: *Boys Underachievement in Education*, *Annotated Bibliography of Gender and Secondary Education* and *Gender Equality in*

Education Index in Africa. Under health, she pointed to capacity building for health workers to improve health care for women and children, including training more midwives; institutionalising maternal death audits in key countries; advocacy with parliamentarians to discuss issues of maternal health and sexual and reproductive rights; and the development of dissemination materials for women's health.

In terms of Critical Area 4: Gender and HIV/AIDS, Ms Keeling highlighted capacity building carried out as a Caribbean inter-agency initiative at regional, sub-regional and national levels; institutional strengthening of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM); policy reviews on gender and HIV/AIDS in seven Commonwealth countries in Asia; and sharing of lessons learnt in Africa with other regions.

Ms Keeling then informed the meeting about the findings of the gender audit undertaken of the gender work at the Secretariat. She said that this had revealed that there was a high level of commitment, evidenced in gender mainstreaming into Strategic Plan objectives, but also that progress in gender mainstreaming was patchy and not uniform across the Secretariat. It had recommended the development of a gender policy and systematic gender training of staff. In looking forward, the Conference Secretary referred to the positive possibilities offered by the proposed new UN agency for women, as well as to the need to improve and enhance aid for gender equality and to scale up action to meet the Millennium Development Goals. She emphasised that future work had an agenda that spanned global, Commonwealth and PoA concerns.

After thanking the presenters, the Chair invited comments from participants.

Plenary discussion

The representative of Kenya called for strengthening and supporting the forward-looking agenda. She urged the Secretariat to put its efforts into ensuring that the United Nations agency for women was scaled up.

The representative of Nigeria asked how the Secretariat could help NWMs scale up their own efforts, including on gender-responsive budgeting, and was advised that work was planned with that country.

The representative of Bangladesh asked for an elaboration of the work being done on migration and trafficking, given the scale of migration in the region. Ms Keeling indicated that efforts included a protocol for teachers and a code of recruitment for health workers as well as proposed work with UNESCAP on trafficking.

In response to a request for more information on the Secretariat's work on gender and HIV/AIDS from the representative of Zambia, Ms Keeling elaborated on this work in Southern Africa. The representative of Uganda urged that best practices be shared, a view seconded by the representative of Ghana, who also called for more communication between the Secretariat and NWMs.

With reference to capacity building on gender and trade, the representative of Bangladesh asked what was being done on knowledge generation. Ms Keeling referred to the gender and trade training module produced by the Secretariat. The representative of Nigeria asked if this could be made available, as well as resources on other issues such as HIV and AIDS, and was

advised that the Secretariat would be compiling best practices in several areas, including women's political participation.

In response to a question from the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania as to whether climate change was going to be addressed, the Secretariat representatives clarified that the Finance Ministers Meeting in Guyana was going to address this issue, which would also be raised at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

Commenting on the report's content, the representative of South Africa indicated that five countries not four had reached the target of 30 per cent political participation. The representative of New Zealand endorsed the summary of gender statistics presented by the Secretariat but stated that other facts had to be incorporated, such as the low participation rate of women in education; the severity and impacts of violence against women; and issues of migration and digital divides.

Other remarks from the floor came from the representative of Canada, who shared good practices in the judiciary and the fact that first nations chiefs now included women, and the representative of Pakistan, who wanted to know whether CEDAW reporting could be two days instead of one.

3. Statement by Ms Rachel Mayanja, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women

Ms Mayanja expressed her great pleasure in addressing the meeting, saying that the day represented 'something of a double homecoming' for her: to her home county, Uganda, and to her second home, the Commonwealth, to both of which she had inseparable ties. She noted that both were strong backers of the United Nations and gender equality and had been among the pioneers in meeting the challenges of mainstreaming gender perspectives in the national budget process. She also highlighted the fact that the meeting had the opportunity to provide substantive inputs to ECOSOC's Development Cooperation Forum the following month, the High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development in September 2007, the 2008 Review Meeting on the Implementation of the Paris Declaration in Ghana and the 2008 Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, in Qatar. In addition, she noted that the 52nd session of the Commission on the Status of Women would devote its priority theme for 2008 to 'Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women'.

Stating that the UN had been at the forefront for setting policies and strategies as well as generating commitments for gender equality and financing for development, Ms Mayanja reminded delegates that the Beijing Platform for Action had emphasised the need for funding to be identified and mobilised from all sources and across all sectors. It had further requested that a gender perspective be mainstreamed in budgetary decisions on policies and programmes and adequate financing for specific gender equality programmes be secured. Subsequent agreements and commitments had reflected the consensus that gender equality was not only important in itself but also an essential element for the achievement of other international development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In particular, the 2002 Monterrey Consensus had recognised gender equality as one of the essential elements of good governance and the empowerment of women as a priority in economic development.

Ms Mayanja stressed that eliminating gender discrimination would not be possible without predictable and sufficient resources. She asked delegates to bear in mind seven points of linkage between Beijing and Monterrey. The first of these was that quantifying national needs for gender equality was a good starting point in determining the amount of support from all sources of funding. She therefore urged all developing countries to include their gender-related needs assessments in national development strategies requested by the 2005 World Summit and poverty reduction strategies.

Secondly, Ms Mayanja said that an ambitious and significant scaling up of the share of gender-related allocations, particularly overseas development assistance (ODA), was required if there was to be progress towards the MDGs. Thirdly, she outlined the need for a major improvement in governance, saying that a broad framework of reference – including the rule of law, sound economic policies, protection of human rights, effective democratic institutions and gender equality – had been agreed on at a high level meeting of ECOSOC with the Bretton Woods institutions earlier in the year. She noted that the new aid modalities provided important opportunities for donors to work with recipient governments to broaden and strengthen their accountability to women.

Ms Mayanja's fourth point was that promoting inclusive financial systems would contribute to the mobilisation of domestic financial resources for development. This meant not only providing more poor families, especially women, with micro-credit but also assisting women to access mainstream financial services, particularly in rural areas and informal sectors. Fifth, she emphasised the need to take into account the different impact that trade liberalisation had on women and men, providing opportunities but also potentially exacerbating existing gender inequalities and thus worsening women's economic and social status. Sixth, she said that social protection spending should be viewed as an investment in human capital and social cohesion, key factors for economic development.

Ms Mayanja's seventh and final point was that streamlining the international aid system and giving voice to women would improve coherence and gender orientation. She also highlighted the need for women to have the opportunity to participate in international economic decision-making as well as in national consultations on ODA and poverty reduction to ensure that gender perspectives were fully incorporated. She said that implementation of agreements and commitment of the Monterrey Consensus held the promise of international cooperation to find new ways to generate the resources needed in order to meet the most pressing development goals.

Expressing her hope that the meeting would be a further step in women's progress towards empowerment and would issue a call for firm, resolute and specific action on financing for gender equality, Ms Mayanja wished those present successful deliberations.

SESSION III: TRACKING THE MONEY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Overview

As Hon Syda Bbumba pointed out, this was the first substantive session of 8 WAMM that linked directly to the theme of the meeting: ‘Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy’. She noted that its purpose was to outline and identify the core mechanisms available for financing gender equality for development and democracy and to assess the extent to which gender dimensions were being addressed within those mechanisms. It would be structured in three, interlinked parts. The first part was a plenary, during which substantive papers that had been prepared by experts would be presented. The second part would feature Ministerial Roundtables. Finally, the third part would consist of a report back from the roundtables and discussions on the various issues being presented.

The Chair indicated that the following papers, which participants had already received, were those related to the session:

- 1 ‘Financing for Development: Aid Effectiveness and Gender Responsive Budgets’;
- 2 ‘Micro-finance and Innovative Financing for Gender Equality: Approaches, Challenges and Strategies’; and
- 3 ‘Gender and Trade: Impacts and Implications for Financial Resources for Gender Equality’.

She noted that the author of the second paper had unfortunately been unable to attend due to ill health, but that a substitute would present on his behalf. She introduced each expert and invited them to speak in turn. The chief points of their presentations are summarised below.

1. Presentation: ‘Financing for Development: Aid Effectiveness and Gender-Responsive Budgets’⁶

Author/presenter: Ms Debbie Budlender, Community Agency for Social Enquiry, Cape Town, South Africa

At the outset of her presentation, Ms Budlender highlighted 2005 as a landmark year for development in view of specific events – the Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness, the Gleneagles G8 meeting and the Commission on Africa – but also the year in which the target for Millennium Development Goal 3 (to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education) was missed. She examined the implications for gender of the new aid modalities, and defined the key and potential importance of gender-responsive budget initiatives in the context of the Paris Declaration and its emphasis on country-owned systems, the current performance-oriented approach to budgets and the growth in multi-year budgeting. She suggested that these initiatives were particularly important to tackle the “‘evaporation”, “invisibilisation” and resistance’ that could make gender disappear from the agenda.

Ms Budlender noted that there had been limited discussion of what the new aid modalities meant for civil society organisations, even though civil society was often one of the strongest sources of support for gender equality, including gender expertise, and evidence suggested

⁶ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

that gender-responsive budgets were not sustainable without its active engagement. She suggested that national machineries and other gender advocates should learn about the opportunities and challenges posed by direct budget and sector support.

Recommendations of the paper focused on the importance of staff in finance and planning ministries gaining skills and knowledge in the 'softer' social areas and the staff in women's machineries gaining at least basic numeracy and literacy in respect of financing and budgets; of countries ensuring that their MDG indicators were sex-disaggregated; of linking women's machineries with national development plans and bringing coherence between these plans and national gender plans; of monitoring the new aid modalities for gender equality; of enhancing capacities for gender-responsive budgeting; and of strengthening the gender-sensitivity of administrative data alongside survey and census data.

2. Presentation: 'Micro-finance and Innovative Financing for Gender Equality: Approaches, Challenges and Strategies'⁷

Author: Ramesh Arunachalam, Independent Consultant, Chennai, India; Presenter: Janaki Ramesh, Independent Consultant

The paper began with a brief outline of the history of micro-finance, stating that it had its roots in women's/gender equality movements but suggesting that it was currently more about finance than about gender and needed to regain some of its gender-sensitive and gender-responsive focus. It provided a very comprehensive assessment using a life-cycle approach of the unmet needs of women for credit. Further, it analysed the nature of the impact of micro-finance on women, highlighting positive gains such as enabling women to have a collective bargaining mechanism, building women's relationships outside the household, giving them a platform to deal with some forms of social oppression and leading to some empowerment through their involvement in groups. However, noting that things were 'perhaps not so rosy at a deeper level', it questioned whether financial access had translated into control of assets for women, enhanced access to domestic and other resources and increased power for decision-making.

The paper went on to analyse the various gender challenges that existed for micro-finance – including enabling greater access, addressing its negative potential to increase debt and place the poverty burden on women, enhancing women's access to larger loans required for establishing small and medium-sized enterprises, increasing the number of women in micro-finance institutions and reaching the poorest – and stressed that micro-finance should recover its original mandate of empowering women in particular. It also examined some innovative private sector financing mechanisms such as the UK Department for International Development's Financial Deepening Challenge Fund (FDCF), which provided incentives to the financial sector to try new ways of extending financial services to the poor. The paper recommended the establishment of a Global/Commonwealth Gender Innovation Challenge Fund, coordinated by the Secretariat. Other recommendations were creating an enabling environment; supporting demonstration pilots on financing gender equality; facilitating the global micro-finance industry to adopt gender-sensitive practices; and undertaking more research in developing gender-sensitive instruments for micro-finance.

⁷ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

3. Presentation: ‘Gender and Trade: Impacts and Implications for Financial Resources for Gender Equality’⁸

Author/Presenter: Dr Mariama Williams, Adjunct Associate, Centre of Concern, Washington DC and Research Adviser for the International Gender and Trade Network

Dr Williams started by saying that the financing of gender equality interventions must come from three sources – individual household contributions, government allocations and external resources – that all depended on national economic performance as well as international dynamics in finance and trade. She described these interventions as both specific, such as educational programmes, and non-specific, such as the construction of water services. She then pointed out that while traditionally the multilateral trading system had focused on the international trade of goods, trade agreements had broadened to include services and trade-related intellectual property rights, which affected the availability of food, health care and access to education and hence had serious implications for women’s and girls’ capability, functioning and overall sense of personal security. She said that trade protection had been eroded in favour of import liberalisation on a wide scale, with direct impacts on employment, incomes and prices.

Dr Williams went on to suggest that it was critical to understand how trade and trade-related measures could offset or mitigate the funds available to finance gender equality. Her recommendations included that each country should develop a framework for engendering its trade-related capacity building and aid-for-trade programmes; that studies focusing on promoting trade readiness and market entry should include gender analysis and pay specific attention to the needs of women-owned small and medium-sized enterprises as well as to the sectors in the economy most likely to be adversely affected by changing trade policy; that trade negotiation mandates should include a gender-sensitive framework for each of the sectoral areas under negotiation; and that gender-sensitive measures should be introduced to deal with the negative outcomes of trade reform underlying the implementation of trade agreements.

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After an explanation regarding the process for the Ministerial Roundtables, the plenary then broke for issue-based discussion in the roundtables.

⁸ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

SESSION IV: MINISTERIAL ROUNDTABLES AND REPORT BACK ON 'TRACKING THE MONEY FOR GENDER EQUALITY'

ROUNDTABLE ONE: AID EFFECTIVENESS

Chair: Hon Sophya Simba, Minister for Community Development, Gender and Children, United Republic of Tanzania

Facilitator: Ms Mayra Buvinic, Sector Director, Gender and Development Group, World Bank

Rapporteur: Ms Sarojini Ganju Thakur, Acting Head, Gender Section, Commonwealth Secretariat

Overview

After welcoming the participants to the roundtable, the Chair introduced the subject by focusing on the critical importance of enhancing aid effectiveness for development and gender equality outcomes. She elaborated on the Tanzanian initiative for establishing country ownership and harmonisation of donors in the determination of priorities for enhanced and effective aid delivery. Referring to the *Mkukuta*, the National Development Plan for Growth and Reduction of Poverty finalised in July 2005, she indicated that its priority goals had mainstreamed gender. The language also did not refer to the poor in generic categories but as women and men, and the *Mkukuta* even included within its goals the reduction of domestic violence. A gender group had been formed to mainstream gender into the strategy.

The Facilitator made a few opening remarks about the process to be followed in the roundtable and highlighted as a key question for discussion the issue of how aid could be used to advance the achievement of MDG 3 on gender equality and women's empowerment. She also highlighted the importance of gender equality in enhancing the effectiveness of aid, and the critical importance of tracking the amount of aid that was allocated for gender equality objectives. She asked the participants to share their own experiences and strategies.

Discussion

The discussion focused on the following issues:

Paris Declaration for Aid Effectiveness. It was noted that the Paris Declaration only made a passing reference to gender, but that it afforded through the five principles a real opportunity to ensure that gender was mainstreamed in aid delivery. Examples were cited of the United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia, where the processes of developing national strategies had mainstreamed gender, although data on the specific impacts of enhancement in terms of allocations were not available. It was felt that countries should be working at the national level to 'engender' processes, and also seek proactively to influence processes at the High Level Review for Gender Equality in Accra, Ghana in September 2008.

Role of National Women's Machineries (NWMs). Several participants highlighted the marginalisation of the NWMs from the national planning process. Examples were cited where they were excluded and special efforts had to be made for inclusion. Examples were also cited of second generation Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs), where special groups had been formed to 'engender' the process of developing the strategy but even then there was often a tension between a mainstreaming approach and a sectoral approach. It was

agreed that there was a need to enhance the voice of NWMs and civil society organisations that worked to support women to make aid more effective.

Enhancing accountability for gender outcomes. The discussion centred on the need for accountability for MDG achievement and gender outcomes to be more explicit within governments, and also stressed the vital importance for two kinds of capacity building: for NWMs to participate effectively at national level in discussions on national development strategies, trade policy and budget formulation; and for officials in other ministries to become more gender-sensitive and gender-responsive.

Tracking the money. A substantial part of the discussion focused on the key importance of gender-responsive budgets in the context of the new aid modalities. With the enhanced emphasis on budget support and sector-wide approaches, this was the most effective way at national level to track the money that was being allocated to gender. At donor level, it was pointed out that the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) had developed a gender equality policy marker that would help to track the flow of resources for gender. There was some discussion regarding the role of donors in the determination of priorities, and whether – given country ownership – they could or should play a pro-active role. Some participants indicated that the pressure of the international community through instruments such as the Beijing Platform for Action and world conferences had actually triggered processes within countries.

Role of civil society. The point was made that civil society had played and could play an important role in enhancing the accountability of government and donors to gender outcomes. It was suggested that there was a danger that, with the focus on budget support etc., the resources that flowed to them could diminish. It was felt to be key that aid allocations should consciously support resources to civil society organisations that supported the women's movement.

Recommendations

1. It is critical for aid and development effectiveness to use a gender lens in monitoring the impact of the implementation of aid modalities. The money that is being used by donors and governments for gender equality and women's empowerment needs to be tracked. Suggested mechanisms for doing this are the gender equality policy marker developed by OECD-DAC for donors and budgets for national level tracking.
2. The capacity and resources of NWMs in developed and developing countries should be strengthened. This will enable effective participation in consultations on national development strategies and new aid modalities such as general budget support.
3. Ministries of Finance must be sensitised to gender issues.
4. At the High Level Review of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in September 2008, there should be a Roundtable for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. The principles of the Declaration should underpin work at national level so that we can review and analyse the extent to which implementation of the Declaration is being used towards the achievement of MDG 3.
5. Civil society should be strengthened pro-actively to enhance accountability

ROUNDTABLE TWO: GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETS

Chair: Ms Renuka Chowdhury, Minister of State for Women and Child Development, India

Facilitator: Ms Debbie Budlender, Independent Consultant

Rapporteur: Ms Fatimah Kelleher, Commonwealth Secretariat

Overview

The Facilitator outlined the main issues and questions for participants to try and answer in the course of the discussion:

- What have been the good and bad lessons learnt so far in terms of gender-responsive budgets at the national, regional and Commonwealth levels?
- What is the role of the Women's Ministry in gender-responsive budgets? Should the lead responsibility be in the Ministry of Finance?
- What is the role of civil society and at what stage of the process should it be engaged?

The Chair noted that the importance of gender budgeting and mainstreaming was growing in India. An accounting exercise had been established, there had been an impact analysis and policy was being formulated from a gender perspective. Additionally, a minimum of 30 per cent from each Ministry had to be allocated to gender-responsive budgeting, and one-to-one review with ministries was taking place. The environment also came into gender budgeting, and this needed a multi-pronged strategy. Initiatives that were underway included advocacy, training, strengthening partnerships, various states and the central governments. Chief Ministers have been asked to come back with gender-responsive budgets. Training manuals were also being developed for empowering, educating and employing women.

Discussion

The representative of Uganda said that an institutional framework had been set up there in the early 1990s for gender-responsive budget initiatives with non-governmental foundations. Two manuals had been created as a result. Essential aspects in developing these initiatives had been support teams, gender advocates, three to five years of capacity building and the development of disaggregated indicators for services and outcomes.

The representative of Nigeria stated that gender-responsive budgeting could not be achieved without strong political will, and all personnel needed to be introduced to basic gender training and gender mainstreaming. The country had therefore embarked on gender-sensitivity training with accounting officers. There was also collaboration with civil society. These efforts had been well received by the desk officers of the relevant ministries. However, the buck kept on being passed back to the Women's Ministry. Top-level training was therefore also needed in other sectors.

A key factor in Mozambique's work in gender-responsive budgeting, the country's representative said, was civil society training and capacity building. The PRSP was put together by civil society and stakeholders defined the issues. Special interest groups had been formed, but this had led to piloting in only two sectors. It was important to have the tracking tools in place once the money had been allocated.

The representative of Tonga suggested that the Ministry of Finance, and preferably the Minister of Finance him/herself, should be brought in from the start.

The representative of Barbados mentioned that a pilot had been started in the Caribbean but had been abandoned. Challenges included inflexibility in public sector financing, while the region's Ministries of Finance saw the whole process as being cumbersome.

The representative of Malawi said that there was a need to first engender the Treasury Guidelines. In terms of challenges, there was the problem of high public sector turnover; therefore continuous sensitisation needed to be built into any training strategy. Additionally, the Ministry of Finance was not forthcoming. The focus, however, had to be to work with economists, while also taking forward any advocacy through the economic justice network. This would entail tracking the budget then publicising what the impacts would be to the public.

According to the representative of South Africa, the fact that women were often not visible in major issues that impacted on them was a problem when wider political issues influenced the budget process. She said that several workshops had been held on gender budgeting. A committee had also been set-up on gender, youth and people with disabilities that had its own budget. Ministry budgets that did not take these groupings into account were rejected.

The representative of Maldives stated that there had been a gender-disaggregated census in 2006, highlighting areas that needed focus. She suggested that only when a gender audit was completed would the mechanisms and methodologies for utilising this data be understood.

The representative of the United Kingdom referred to a new law in that country: the public sector duty to promote gender equality. Under this, every department had a duty to demonstrate that they had mainstreamed gender and had to consult with stakeholders as part of the process. Every new policy underwent a gender equality impact assessment, and equality commissions could sue if gender equality was not implemented. There were also Public Service Agreements that were effectively agreements by Government to make progress in certain areas.

The representative from Botswana said that there was a need to assist civil society organisations directly by supporting them in their advocacy. However, the concept of gender-responsive budgeting itself was still a major challenge within many ministries.

According to the representative of Australia, it was very helpful to have Women's Affairs as part of the cabinet process, while the Office of Women was required to consult with other sectors on their policies.

In conclusion, participants observed that:

- There was no recipe in gender-responsive budgeting, and countries clearly needed

to adapt according to country contexts and specificities.

- Gender-responsive budgeting was a continuous process that could not happen immediately but needed to be built steadily over time.
- Gender-disaggregated data were often not unavailable, but simply difficult to find. Stakeholders had to be proactive in finding, improving and utilising them effectively.

Recommendations:

1. Finance Ministries must play a lead role in gender-responsive budgeting, and Women's Ministries should play the support role.
2. Gender audits must be completed and an outcome budget must be taken.
3. Budgets should facilitate civil society participation.

ROUNDTABLE THREE: GENDER AND TRADE

Chair: Ms Meg Munn, Deputy Minister for Women and Equality, United Kingdom

Facilitator: Dr Mariama Williams, Independent Consultant

Rapporteur: Ms Peggy Vidot, Commonwealth Secretariat

Overview

Ms Munn welcomed everyone attending the roundtable and explained how it would be conducted. She gave a short outline of what had been the UK's significant steps in mainstreaming gender in the public service. She mentioned the new public sector duty to promote gender equality, introduced in April 2007, as the biggest advances in this area since the 1975 Sex Discrimination Act. The gender equality duty made it statutory to promote equality between women and men as opposed to only eliminate discrimination and harassment. Before inviting the participants to share experiences on gender and trade, she asked the Facilitator to make an input.

The Facilitator referred to the paper that had been circulated on 'Gender and Trade: Impacts and Implications for Financial Resources for Gender Equality' and invited questions from the floor. These were around the following main areas of concern:

- the impact of trade on social reproduction;
- trade agreements – Agreement on Agriculture, General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) and Trade-related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS);
- property rights and land ownership;
- women entrepreneurs' access to finance; and
- mainstreaming a gender perspective in trade negotiation and agreements.

Discussion

Participants presented their experiences on the strategies and innovations at national level that benefited women in trade. These included a strong NWM; a gender focal point attached to the Ministry of Trade and Industry; special quotas for women entrepreneurs; access by women to

micro-financing schemes; capacity building for women in business administration; national gender policies; and free zone agreements.

Participants also highlighted the constraints that women faced in trade. These included that women entrepreneurs were still mainly in the informal sector; women's lack of access to information and communications technologies and to export market for small to medium enterprises; the constraints women faced in scaling up businesses and/or the need for their husband to offer security as collateral; that gender was not sufficiently mainstreamed in trade and women were not involved in negotiating trade agreements; that women had to combine their business with family responsibilities; and women's lack of empowerment.

Recommendations

1. Institutions need to make sure that women can access finance on their own merit and enjoy fair rates.
2. Women's ability to engage in trade should be enhanced through development of skills in the areas of market access, market entry, market readiness and product development.
3. An enabling environment should be created for women to scale up their business and enter global markets through appropriate fiscal, monetary and exchange rate and trade policies.
4. Policies should enable women to maintain family responsibilities while successfully running businesses.
5. There should be stronger participation of women in negotiating trade agreements.
6. Trade agreements and policies should be beneficial to both women and men.

ROUNDTABLE FOUR: MICRO-FINANCE AND INNOVATIVE FINANCING

Chair: Hon Alima Mahama, Minister for Women and Children's Affairs, Ghana

Facilitator: Ms Janaki Ramesh, Independent Consultant

Rapporteur: Ms Jyotsna Jha, Commonwealth Secretariat

Overview

The Facilitator started the session by outlining what she said were five key issues:

- access vs. control – whether access to micro-finance necessarily meant control;
- access to micro-finance was usually limited to credit, and within credit to small loans, whereas bigger loans and other services were needed;
- limited outreach: how to widen the net of access to micro-finance services;
- limited representation of women in the management of micro-finance services; and
- limited involvement of women in designing product and delivery mechanisms.

Other issues identified by participants were that micro-finance services must reach the lowest strata of women; the need for funds for social protection (including emergency issues); high interest rates; and stringent modalities in some cases.

Discussion

The representative of Bangladesh stated that 1.8 million women accessed micro-finance – with average family size being 5, this meant that nearly 9 million people had benefited. A recent evaluation suggested that 48 per cent of the households had risen over the poverty level as a result of access to micro-finance services. She said that the Grameen Bank and BRAC Bank (both non-governmental organisations) were the two main institutions. The Government was involved in training (agriculture, food processing, etc.) Evaluations had shown that this had translated into empowerment in terms of expanding the decision-making role of women, so that 68 per cent of the women took decisions in sending their daughters to schools, engaged themselves in buying and selling property, took decisions relating to children's marriages, and participated in the control of bursaries. The representative said that about 30-40 per cent of the micro-credit borrowers in Bangladesh graduated to longer medium-term business plans. In order to help these beneficiaries graduate to bigger loans, the Government had introduced a number of initiatives: allotting plots to women in industrial areas; providing collateral-free large loans at low rates of interest; and providing small and medium enterprise funds at zero interest. The SME Foundation also had representation from the Women's Chamber.

The representative of Mauritius said that a project had been launched there in 2001, with the support of the International Fund for Agricultural Development, as part of a poverty alleviation programme for the poorest of the poor. However, she said that the experience had not been a very good one. Loans had been provided without collateral. The disbursement rate had been low, and the repayment rate still lower. An evaluation suggested that implementation mechanisms had been weak. The low repayment rate was partly attributed to a view that government money did not need to be repaid. However, it was also shown that those who successfully participated in the project had an income increase.

According to the representative of Barbados, there were several schemes in that country but they were not engendered as they were not meant exclusively for women. They were part of the poverty reduction strategies. One important scheme was the Youth Enterprise Scheme aimed at those under 25. There were also other general programmes under Urban Development and Rural Development Schemes. She noted that a person had to be below the poverty line to be able to access these schemes, which in general had worked well. However, sometimes there was a similar experience to that of Mauritius, where people felt that since the money had come from the government it did not need to be repaid.

The representative of Nigeria said that most micro-finance schemes were gender blind, except for a specific scheme for women run by the NWM. Loans were provided at the low interest rate of 10 per cent as against the prevalent rate of 35 per cent. This was being piloted in certain states in partnership with the Agricultural Bank and had a repayment rate of about 60 per cent. Normally, non-governmental organisations were engaged for capacity building before the money was disbursed. The NWM was starting a second fund targeted at small and medium enterprises.

The representative of Zambia said that the country had no women's fund at the moment but was in the process of establishing one. She was interested in finding out from Nigeria what role the NWM played after the loan was disbursed.

The Chair stated that the Government in Ghana played an important role. The funds were disbursed through banks/ financial institutions but the Ministry for Women and Children's Affairs supported training.

According to the representatives of both Kenya and Mauritius, it was preferable if the government did not disperse the money but that it should be involved in training.

The representative of Botswana noted that there were many different types of micro-finance schemes, and that training of women was important so that they could then access the funds available.

The representative of Maldives said that her country has a special scheme for single mothers (of whom there were many due to the high divorce rate). This was very successful and the repayment rate was high.

The Facilitator clarified the importance of using savings generated by women themselves as a base for creating the revolving fund as it created ownership and helped resolve problems with repayment.

Recommendations:

1. A micro finance fund should be created, with the government providing the seed funding but financial institutions administering and managing it.
2. Another fund should be created for those who have been successful and are ready to graduate to establish small and medium enterprises.
3. Women should have a greater role in management of these funds at all levels.
4. The Commonwealth should lobby with other institutions to provide funding for the countries that need money to establish these funds.
5. Existing funding mechanisms should be made more gender sensitive.
6. There should be capacity building for women in enterprise skills, confidence and in the capacity to take risk.
7. The involvement of women in designing product and delivery mechanisms should be ensured.
8. Good practices, experiences and models should be shared through the creation of a database, publications and other forms of documentation.
9. An exchange programme should be established by the Commonwealth, which can lobby other agencies to invest in this.
10. Public-private partnerships should be promoted in providing financial services to low-income women.
11. Production loans for consumption should be distinguished from emergency loans (to finance family needs). Social protection strategies should be linked up with micro-financing strategies.
12. A global gender innovation challenge fund should be established to help the micro-finance industry and private sector to innovate and develop models, methodologies and products for financial intermediation.

Report Back from Ministerial Roundtables

The four Ministers presented back on the discussions that had occurred during and the recommendations that had emerged from their respective roundtables. The Chair then summarised the common issues emanating from the roundtables as follows:

- Raising the profile of NWMs;
- Monitoring;
- Working with civil society and other partnerships;
- Creating dedicated funds for gender equality;
- Gender sensitising Finance Ministries;
- Sharing best practices; and
- Supporting policies locally and internationally.

The representative of Kenya further noted that a major challenge would be developing appropriate methods of putting the recommendations from the roundtables into action.

The Commonwealth Secretariat reiterated the commitment of the Commonwealth Gender Plan of Action Monitoring Group (CGPMG) as a mechanism for monitoring, and also reminded the meeting that the Commonwealth Finance Ministers Meeting had mandated the Gender Section to report every two years on gender-responsive budgeting across the Commonwealth membership.

The representative of Uganda noted that it was important to lobby for a more identifiable presence by NWMs in the Finance Ministers Meeting. This was seconded by the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania, who also emphasised the point that sensitising Finance Ministries was the first step. The representatives of India and Malawi both concurred with this.

The Commonwealth Secretariat stressed that the language that would go forward to CHOGM in the Kampala statement should highlight the need for gender issues to be mainstreamed, and efforts should be made to ensure that representatives from Women's Ministries were on their country's CHOGM delegations.

WEDNESDAY, 13 JUNE

SESSION V: DIALOGUE WITH PARTNERS' FORUM IN PLENARY

Overview

This session aimed to highlight the recommendations from the Partners' Forum, held on 8-10 June, and facilitate interaction between representatives of civil society organisations (CSOs) and Ministers. The convening of the Forum had been coordinated by the Commonwealth Foundation, which has a membership of 46 governments and aims to strengthen civil society in the achievement of Commonwealth priorities: democracy and good governance; respect for human rights and gender equality; poverty eradication and sustainable, people-centred development; and the promotion of arts and culture.

Mr Vijay Krishnarayan, Deputy Director of the Foundation, said that the Forum had been a resounding success. It had been attended by 300 participants drawn from 200 organisations, and 11 workshops had been convened where CSO representatives had raised issues and discussed key aspects of financing for gender equality. It had also issued a communiqué on progress in the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015 (see Appendix 3).

Mr Krishnarayan highlighted the fact that since 7WAMM, the support for NGO involvement in the WAMM process had made CSO engagement easier. He thanked the Government of Uganda and the Commonwealth Secretariat for their co-operation and for ensuring that the analyses and recommendations from the Partners' Forum were being conveyed directly to 8WAMM through calling on CSO representatives to be the 6th speaker (1 in 6 innovation) and for the current dedicated session during the meeting.

The presentations by CSOs were divided into sectoral representations and issue-based responses. A final presentation focused on cross-cutting themes.

CSO Presentations

The representative of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) expressed the Association's concerns over parliamentarians being grouped under CSOs. She reported that CPA's tracking of governments' commitments on women's representation showed that countries had failed to meet their commitments; it planned to issue a statement on this during CHOGM. She then read a statement from the workshop on Women and Leadership in a Democracy, which urged leaders to take four key actions: establish a Commonwealth Women's Leadership Fund; develop accountability mechanisms such as gender audits; encourage political party reforms; and commit resources to promoting partnerships among parliamentarians, NWMs and civil society.

The representatives of ActionAid Uganda and the Commonwealth Education Fund presented issues raised at and recommendations from the Young Peoples' Forum and the workshop on Financing Gender Equality in Education. A key point was that inadequate financing for business, vocational and technical education for young women had led to a paucity of successful young women entrepreneurs, with most businesses started by young women stagnating and dying. CSOs had recommended that governments fund the placement of female youth in entrepreneurial training institutions, the start-up of businesses by female

youth and continuous capacity-building and technical support. The establishment of youth ministries in all countries, headed by young ministers, was also urged. There was a call for the inclusion of young women in the convening of a youth parliament.

The representative of the Commonwealth Business Women's Network (CBWN) said that women now owned almost 50 per cent of new businesses in some Commonwealth countries; however, they still faced numerous challenges such as limited access to assets and gender-blind financial institutions. The workshop on Commonwealth Women's Business had emphasised partnerships to achieve gender equality. It had recommended the establishment of a Task Force on Access to Finance for women comprised of financial institutions, policy makers and women entrepreneurs. Other recommendations included legislation to protect women's property rights, tax breaks for small and medium enterprises and collection and monitoring of gender-disaggregated data. The workshop had also called for gender-responsive budgeting to be discussed in the 2008 review of the Paris Declaration and for increased funding to CSOs.

Ministerial Responses

The representative of Botswana supported the proposal on funding and development for youth and said that there was a need for sensitising the public for bringing about constitutional reform on the role of youth.

Stating that Bangladesh had separate ministries of women and youth, the country's representative also highlighted that fact that the Central Bank had a special fund that offered loans to women at lower rates of interest, and there were specific policies for women and for youth in the development of small and medium enterprises.

The representative of South Africa acknowledged that youth were generally excluded in decision-making. South Africa had a youth committee within the Presidency that served as a watchdog for commitments on youth. A fund had been established for the development of youth entrepreneurs.

The representative of New Zealand, whose delegation was led by the Youth Affairs Minister, indicated that the Ministry focused on the 12-24 age group in its programmes. Links had been established with small and medium enterprises, which had access to funds for covering research and technology. Indigenous women also had access to funds. There was a need for international agreement on the age that defined 'youth'.

The representative of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association flagged the need for gender auditing of political representation.

Supporting the proposal for funds for youth development and a gender audit of political representation, the representative of Nigeria also said that under programmes of the Ministry of Youth, youth had access to small and medium enterprise development and enjoyed lower interest rates on loans. Sex-disaggregated data was extremely important.

The representative of Sri Lanka said that the Commonwealth Youth Programme Asia office was working with the government for youth development. Youth had access to large and medium enterprises and were able to access credit; however, access to technical knowledge and marketing skills was required. In terms of defining the age of youth, the Convention on

the Rights of the Child classified children as being below 18 years, so youth were necessarily over 18 years.

The representative of Kenya said that in the National Budget of June 2006, one billion Kenya shillings had been set aside for a Youth Enterprise Fund. It was run by a youth; and the Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Youth was also young.

CSO Presentations (cont'd.)

The representative of the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) expressed the concerns raised during the Civil Society Meeting (for CSOs) concerning the impact of the Paris Declaration on development aid, especially given that more than 50 per cent of these funds would flow through governments. This made the adoption of gender-responsive budgets even more important, and these should be multiplied, mainstreamed and well resourced. Recommendations included the need for investment in capacity building, promotion of sex-disaggregated data and partnerships between governments and CSOs in order to deliver on commitments. The representative of Participatory Research in India (PRIA) then described the experience of gender-responsive budgets in India, where almost 50 Departments had set up gender budget cells and the Government was committed to monitor performance budgets as well as expenditure budgets for gender responsiveness. She noted that CSOs needed to be more involved in the process, especially in terms of monitoring.

The representative of Isis-WICCE presented the recommendations of the workshop on Democracy, Peace and Conflict. After pointing to the need for international and regional commitments to be implemented, these emphasised action to end all forms of violence against women; increased resources for NWMs and sectoral ministries dealing with women's issues; direct funding to CSOs; targeted funding for gender units in peace support missions; engendered peace-keeping missions; and a multidisciplinary mechanism to deal with conflicts before they became violent and to seek sustainable solutions. The recommendations ended with a call for the perpetrators of violence against women to be brought to justice.

According to the presenter on the workshop on HIV/AIDS and Reproductive Health, it had highlighted the fact that gender equality was not mainstreamed into prevention, treatment and care. The workshop had also stressed the need for female-controlled prevention methods; more funds for research on prevention methods such as microbicides and vaccines; capacity building for gender mainstreaming in HIV interventions; and social research.

The representative of the Commonwealth Women's Network (CWN) then gave a short presentation on cross-cutting themes and summarised the recommendations from the Partners' Forum. She said that in the area of aid effectiveness and gender-responsive budgets, the Forum had called for prioritising gender concerns in all development programmes in order to address the socio-economic, cultural and biological vulnerability of women and girls and using gender analyses to inform aid modalities, civil society participation and measurement of impact. Gender-sensitive research, and audits and analyses by civil society and other organisations, were also required to assess the impact of privatisation, debt and trade liberalization on women's rights to inform trade agreements and negotiations.

The Forum had also recommended that NWMs be repositioned from the margins to the centre, to allow for better opportunities for them to interact with other government bodies and civil society. NWMS should be multi-sectoral, representative and accountable. In the area of

peace and democracy, the Forum called on governments to adopt, accede to and ratify relevant international and regional instruments on gender, governance, peace and security and to emphasise leadership development in Commonwealth countries. Elected leaders and civil societies should take advantage of existing leadership programmes that promote partnering for transformation.

To address HIV/AIDS, the Forum recommended support for and investment in research in order to identify socio-cultural issues related to the acceptability and eventual uptake of new HIV prevention technologies. Funds should be used for a comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS prevention, care, support and treatment, and new and emerging technologies (particularly those that women could use and control) should be adopted. To address maternal mortality, the Forum recommended that governments meet their pledges of allocating 15 per cent of national budgets to health, and strengthen staff recruitment and retention strategies. To ensure gender equality in education, the recommendation was that governments should guarantee adequate financing, effective and efficient use of resources, transparency and accountability, monitoring and evaluation.

Finally, in the area of enterprise development and private sector financing, the Forum recommended the enactment of legislation to protect women's property rights, backed up by government guaranteed programmes that enabled financial institutions to support business incubation.

Ministerial Responses

The representative of Nigeria said that there was a need for gender-responsive budget tools to be disseminated and for best practices to be shared. It should be recognised that access to HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment methods was limited by their availability and affordability.

The representative of Singapore stressed that governments could not carry all the responsibilities alone but rather that there was a need for 'PPP' (public, private, people) partnerships. The Singapore Council of Women's Organisations (SCWO) was compiling a women's register.

The representative of Uganda reported on the experience of resolving conflicts and emphasised the use of traditional systems of conflict resolution and women's role in conflict resolution and peace building. Family-friendly policy were in place and it was recognised that capacity building for women in decision-making was needed, as well as addressing the needs of women with disabilities in conflict.

The representative of St Kitts emphasised the implementation of legislation and training and highlighted the cultural dimensions of poverty and hardship.

The representative of Mauritius reported on the increase in the percentage of women in decision-making positions.

The representative of Zambia spoke on youth programmes, including a special school for women dealing with agriculture and land issues. Education and training for women were vital.

In conclusion, the Chair noted that Ministers supported the CSOs contributions and recommendations and noted that they were generally asking governments to expedite the delivery of commitments that had already been made.

SESSION VI: NATIONAL WOMEN'S MACHINERIES AND PUBLIC SECTOR: ROLE IN FINANCING GENDER EQUALITY

Overview

This session addressed the role of National Women's Machineries (NWMs) and the public sector in financing for gender equality. The first presentation, by Ms Gladys Mutukwa, looked at the constraints and opportunities that NWMs have in financing gender equality and raised points for discussion on the role, functions and positioning of women's machineries. Two other presentations – by Ms Mayra Buvenic, Sector Director for Gender and Development Group, World Bank, and Dr Shimwaayi Munemba, Office of the Director, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, World Bank – focused on the critical importance of allocating resources to ensure gender mainstreaming and development effectiveness.

1. Presentation: 'What Role for National Women's Machineries in Financing?'

Ms Gladys N Mutukwa, Independent Consultant

Ms Mutukwa pointed out that many instruments, policies and programmes had been adopted over the last decades in relation to the empowerment of women, gender equality and gender mainstreaming that depended on or expected NWMs to play a critical role in bringing them to life. Financing of gender equality would be another such policy. She said that the central issue was whether NWMs were equipped conceptually, operationally and otherwise to fulfil these high levels of expectations. While they were seen as the 'conscience of the government on women's rights', their status, role and mandate continued to be of major concern.

According to Ms Mutukwa, this made it very important for a number of questions to be debated at national and regional levels in looking at the role of NWMs in financing gender equality: What was the role of the NWM in pushing forward the gender equality agenda and ensuring that this process was adequately funded? What comprised a NWM? What was expected of such an institution? What were the successes and what were the constraints? What was the added value or advantage of NWMs in the face of so much expectation and change with regard to issues of gender and women's issues? Were NWMs able to influence the financing of gender equality?

Turning to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), Ms Mutukwa argued that gender equality must be the lens through which all the goals were viewed – not just MDG3. A gender perspective therefore needed to be incorporated into and operationalised through all the targets. She reminded participants that the MDGs had been adopted by UN member countries in 2000 as a platform for fighting inequality and poverty. She noted that it was significant and could be used to great advantage that the target for the MDGs was 2015 – the same year as the end of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015.

For NWMs to achieve the mainstreaming of gender and financing gender equality, Ms Mutukwa emphasised that their mandates, positions, resources and roles were critical so that they were able to oversee the profound transformation of the structures and systems that created, maintained and perpetuated inequality. She concluded by saying that the fact that gender inequality was a source of and a driver for poverty underscored the need to finance gender equality for sustainable development and democracy.

2. Presentation: ‘Gender as Smart Economics’

Ms Mayra Buvinic, Sector Director for Gender and Development, World Bank

Ms Buvinic said that the World Bank had launched an action plan and strategy entitled ‘Gender as Smart Economics’. She noted that a paper describing its salient features had been circulated (as well as published in *Financing Gender Equality: Commonwealth Perspectives*), and that it highlighted the correlation between gender equality and poverty reduction and the links between women’s economic empowerment and development. In order to illustrate some of these points – and since the film focused on Uganda, the host country – she showed a video (‘Gender as Smart Economics’) that showed work done by the World Bank in empowering women economically. Ms Buvinic then led a brief discussion. She acknowledged that while women’s health and education had to some extent been recognised as key, very little had been done in the area of women’s economic empowerment in terms of ensuring that women generated income for themselves and their families.

3. Presentation: ‘Investing in Women for Gender Equality and Poverty Reduction’⁹

Dr Shimwaayi Muntemba, Office of the Director, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management, World Bank

Dr Muntemba examined how cost benefit analysis (CBA) could be used in building the case for financing gender equality and mainstreaming gender in the public sector. She said that gender experts, development economists and social scientists argued that gender inequalities impeded economic growth and frustrated efforts to reduce poverty. Eradicating or reducing gender disparities was seen, in this scenario, as an important means of achieving economic growth, reducing poverty, securing livelihoods at the household level and generally attaining development effectiveness.

According to Dr Muntemba, CBA could be applied to show the economic and poverty-reducing gains of reducing gender inequality by making development programmes/ projects more gender-responsive. She showed how giving special attention to women/girls from poor families, including orphans, would not only improve their position in society but would also have a major impact on the overall effectiveness of development interventions.

Dr Muntemba went on to explore the costs of gender inequality and the benefits of shifts toward gender equality in three areas: education and literacy; access to/control over productive resources and assets with special reference to the agricultural sector; and participation in decision-making and public office. These three areas had been chosen to demonstrate the outcomes of investing in women because (i) education and literacy offered both direct and indirect benefits to the family/household – including reduced fertility rates and good nutrition – and to national economies through contributions to growth; (ii) capacity enhancement and facilitation of women’s access to and control of productive resources directly benefited development effectiveness through increased incomes at household level that women controlled and hence national economic growth; and (iii) women’s participation in public office, when they achieved a critical mass, would lead to benefits due to their tendency to fight for legislation and programmes that benefited women, children and families and to shy away from corruption, thus encouraging good governance.

⁹ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

Dr Muntemba argued that despite the fact that CBA was hampered by limited data and unpredictable situations, there were scenarios that showed the benefits of investing in girls and women for development effectiveness and economic growth. CBAs had been employed to communicate, inform and lobby for gender-responsive policies and interventions because investing in girls and women would in the long run far outweigh costs, seen as inputs into any empowerment strategy. After presenting a summary of some of the identified costs and benefits, Dr Muntemba concluded that while there were many stakeholders in the promotion of women's empowerment and gender equality, it was the public sector represented by a national government with its many organs that must shoulder the greatest responsibility.

Plenary Discussion

As the discussion concluded in summary the issues raised confirmed the findings of the Presenter (Ms. G Mutukwa) that a number of NWMs need capacity building to be able to mainstream gender in government policies and programmes. Many of the representatives who spoke bemoaned the fact that their NWMs are lumped with many portfolios and responsibilities other than mainstreaming gender. Many struggle with their mainstreaming role that has to compete with implementation of programmes in other departments of the same NWM. They are further placed at par with other Ministries in the structure (organogram) of government and usually do not have authority to monitor other Ministries.

As questions and clarifications were sought from the Presenter on the Role of Public Sector in Financing Gender Equality it emerged that NWMs have to work with other Ministries and Departments in government in order to mainstream gender. Mainstreaming gender has to happen in every government department and the role of the NWMs is to coordinate and must not be seen as the sole responsibility of NWMs.

Ministers therefore called for strengthening of NWMs with enough resources, capacity building and authority to mainstream gender within the public sector.

SESSION VII: FINANCING HIV AND AIDS INTERVENTIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR GENDER EQUALITY

Overview

The session aimed to examine financing for HIV and AIDS and identify the implications for gender equality. It assessed the extent to which gender dimensions were being addressed in national plans and programmes and in donor policy, and showed how the prevalence of gender inequalities would prevent the achievement of Millennium Development Goal 6.

In the first part of the session, Dr Robert Carr from the Caribbean Centre of Communication for Development, University of West Indies, Jamaica, presented a paper that looked at the gender dimensions of HIV and the development and policy implications of HIV and AIDS; financing for gender equality in HIV interventions; and lessons learned for equitable responses and financing. The discussant, Dr Anit Nath Mukherjee of the National Institute of Public Policy and Finance, New Delhi, India then raised key points and questions for consideration by Ministers during a plenary discussion. The First Lady of Uganda, Member of Parliament Hon Janet K Museveni, next addressed the meeting, followed by another short plenary.

1. Presentation: ‘Financing HIV and AIDS Interventions: Implications for Gender Equality’,¹⁰

Dr Robert Carr, Caribbean Centre of Communication for Development, University of West Indies, Jamaica

Dr Carr emphasised that increased infection rates among women were reflective of HIV and AIDS thriving in the context of inequalities. The drivers of HIV and AIDS included poverty, gender discrimination, social exclusion and inadequate health services. These and other factors placed a disproportionate burden on women as they were at risk of becoming infected and continued to bear the costs of care. Dr Carr’s recommendations called for embedding programmes for women’s empowerment in both poverty reduction strategies and HIV prevention and support. He said that the need for gender transformative indicators was critical to assess programmes in order to effectively inform policy. Accountability for funding and programme delivery was also seen as key to addressing the gender implications of HIV and AIDS financing.

Analysing the funding for HIV and AIDS, Dr Carr pointed out that interventions were failing women because they were gender blind. While the four largest donors on HIV and AIDS – the United States Agency for International Development/President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (USAID/PEPFAR); UK Department for International Development (DFID); World Bank and Global Fund to fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFATM) – expressed their commitment to gender issues through substantial resource allocations, in some cases the conditionalities attached to interventions prevented the comprehensive addressing of gender realities.

Dr Carr stated that although all major donors emphasised interventions targeting women, gender roles stereotyping continued to be the basis of certain interventions. For example,

¹⁰ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

many prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) programmes focused primarily on the child, and PMTCT was generally not considered part of care and support for women living with HIV. In the case of the ABC strategy (Abstinence, Being faithful and Condom use), the implicit assumption was that individuals had autonomy over their sexual lives. This was not the case with many women for whom poverty, lack of negotiating power, social expectations and cultural and personal factors played a significant part in the decisions they made about sexual relationships. He pointed out that under these conditions, the use of ABC as a strategy, while necessary, was not sufficient. In addition, he stressed that stigma and discrimination also drove the epidemic. Women's pre-existing vulnerabilities were intensified by the ill-treatment, stigma and discrimination they encountered when they became sero-positive or when a family member became infected.

While donor exigencies sometimes limited the gender transformative potential of interventions, Dr Carr suggested that the analysis raised an important question on national realities that might also limit the approach of interventions. These included political and other concerns that might prevent interventions from addressing prevailing gender inequalities in a direct manner, given the national implications. He said that an examination of national strategies revealed that while there had been progress in advancing gender issues through programmes, the gender-transformative potential of interventions had generally not been fully exploited.

However, Dr Carr also referred to a number of examples of innovative approaches to addressing gender equality in HIV and AIDS interventions in the Commonwealth. These included efforts to transform women's access to resources in India and South Africa; the strategy to incorporate community outreach in HIV programming as demonstrated in Botswana, Guyana and Uganda; and provision of integrated community support mechanisms in Botswana and India.

2. Discussant: 'Financing HIV and AIDS Interventions: Implications for Gender Equality'

Dr Anit Nath Mukherjee, National Institute of Public Policy and Finance, New Delhi, India

Dr Mukherjee raised further questions on financing for HIV and AIDS and the extent to which financing actually addressed gender issues. He put forward an alternative ABC approach – Accountability, Behaviours and attitudes, and Coverage – and identified the following questions as key to understanding the gender dimensions of funding and programming patterns and shape appropriate responses:

- **Accountability:** How far are donor-driven programmes sustainable? Is a review/course correction necessary given that infections are rising? Should prevention programmes be re-oriented towards gender empowerment and social mobilisation strategies? When will a gender accounting of HIV/AIDS financing take place?
- **Behaviours and attitudes:** How far have behaviours and attitudes changed? Why are women more stigmatised and discriminated? Is the funding of services for women adequate?

- Coverage: Does increased funding translate into increased coverage? How far are prevention messages reaching men and women? Has treatment expanded and is it addressing the feminisation of the epidemic?

Plenary discussion

Ministers expressed the view that women's powerlessness exacerbated their vulnerabilities and placed them at risk. Inequalities, women's subordination and the expectations of entrenched gender roles placed a greater burden on women for HIV care and support. It was noted that although considerable headway had been made in developing programmes, improving coordination for multi-sectoral planning and implementation for HIV policy and programming and stepping up service delivery, more needed to be done to put in place women-centred prevention strategies. These included the development of microbicides and an AIDS vaccine, wider coverage of PMTCT programmes and building women's negotiating skills for safe sexual practices.

The stigma and discrimination faced by women, men and communities affected by HIV and AIDS was seen as both a policy and programmatic challenge, since it both created barriers to accessing treatment and further burdened families and individuals as they experienced social exclusion and moral censure.

3: Address by the First Lady of Uganda, Member of Parliament Hon Janet K Museveni

Hon Janet Museveni spoke about the situation of HIV and AIDS in Uganda and highlighted the importance of allocating resources for developing female-controlled prevention methods. She raised questions as to whether adequate resources were being invested to address increasing rates of infection among women and how much resources were being spent on protecting young people and developing female-controlled prevention methods.

The First Lady pointed out that while Uganda has been successful with the ABC strategy (Abstinence, Being faithful and Condom use), young, married women remained at greatest risk of contracting HIV. She also identified women's limited power to negotiate safe sex and the lack of female-controlled prevention methods other than the female condom as factors contributing to women's vulnerability. She called for the acceleration of vaccine research and development of microbicides, and underscored the need for resources for the efforts. Hon Janet Museveni also highlighted the need to address the challenges of conflict on women as it deepened gender inequalities and intensified poverty, the two main drivers of HIV.

Plenary discussion

Delegates expressed their appreciation of the analysis in the presentations and the range of issues covered. They provided information on their efforts to address the gender dimension of the epidemic and emphasised prevention programmes. They also called for support to the development of women-controlled prevention methods and stressed the urgent need for gender mainstreaming of national strategic plans for addressing HIV. A civil society representative highlighted the need for policies and programmes to be responsive to women's needs and interests. There was also a plea from civil society to increase services for positive women and children and allocate adequate funds for strengthening reproductive health services.

SESSION VIII: INVESTING IN GENDER EQUALITY: PROMOTING PEACE AND DEMOCRACY

Overview

This session looked at women's political participation, focussing on representative democratic government and sustainable development. In addition, it explored the impact of conflict on women and girls in the Commonwealth. In the first part of the session, Mr Vasu Gounden, Executive Director of the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes (ACCORD), presented a background paper prepared by Dr Khabele Matlosa, Research Director at the Electoral Institute of Southern Africa (EISA). In the second part, three case studies were presented on experiences of conflict in Uganda, West Africa and the Pacific.

1. Presentation: 'Promoting Democracy, Peace and Development in the Commonwealth',¹¹

Author: Dr Khabele Matlosa (EISA); Presenter: Mr Vasu Gounden (ACCORD)

Mr Gounden presented the background paper and served as a discussant during the session. He began by noting that, as outlined in the background paper, there could be no democracy and development without lasting peace. Unfortunately, in many regions of the Commonwealth and beyond, peace was lacking or fragile. Building sustainable peace was a challenge to various actors and stakeholders, including the international community and governments. In this regard, he stressed that since the inception of the Commonwealth, Heads of Government had recognised the fundamental significance of pursuing democracy, development and peace for the enhancement of socio-economic well-being.

Mr Gounden went on to say that without gender equality, democracy might not be institutionalised sufficiently, sustainable human development might not be realised and peace and human security might continue to elude many Commonwealth member countries. Thus, investment in gender equality and promoting democracy required adequate provision and mobilisation of resources to ensure the participation and benefits of all citizens, as well as specific action by all governments to increase access and resources for women's participation and representation at all levels and, in particular, in government and decision-making processes. Heads of Government had urged countries to push for a minimum target of at least 30 per cent of women's representation (something achieved at that point by only five Commonwealth countries). Funding was therefore needed for voter and civic education, training and capacity building for women candidates, and institutional and policy reforms including electoral and affirmative policies. Without economic support, women continued to face huge barriers in having an equal voice in decision-making or attaining the minimum target.

Mr Gounden highlighted the fact that to ensure the promotion and achievement of sustainable democracy, development and lasting peace, Heads of Government had developed a framework for action that was clearly set out in the 1991 Harare Declaration and subsequent communiqués. This outlined the commitment of Commonwealth member States to the

¹¹ Available at www.thecommonwealth.org/Internal/164331/papers/

principles of democracy, development, peace, just and honest government, rule of law, independence of the judiciary and gender equality.

In discussing the nature of conflicts around the Commonwealth, Mr Gounden noted that this had changed significantly in that most of them now targeted civilians, especially women and children. In addition, the impact and implications of armed and other forms of conflict continued to record differences that required gender analysis. For instance, while women were often reported as victims, who bore the brunt of conflicts, women had also participated as combatants and played active roles and contributed to rebuilding peace and remained in the majority of eligible voters, especially in the aftermath of conflicts, with huge loss of men's lives.

The Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015, adopted at 7WAMM, had highlighted the critical importance of ensuring equal and full access to women in all peace negotiations and conflict management, in particular post-conflict reconstruction. In furtherance of these objectives, the Ministers had urged governments and the Secretariat to promote women's equal and full participation in peace negotiations, democratic and post-conflict reconstruction processes through agreed commitments and mechanisms such as the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR 1325) on women, peace and security. The presenter pointed to the fact that, despite these commitments, women were still confronted with several challenges. These included the lack of a database of skilled and experienced women to serve as mediators and envoys for peace; inadequate capacity of available women to participate in peace negotiations; lack of resources for potential women mediators and activists; and lack of political will from governments and donors to implement agreed commitments.

Mr Gounden stressed the critical importance of transforming power relations between women and men in such a manner that gender equality and equity were promoted in terms of increased women's participation and representation in governance and development processes. He noted that while this goal remained a challenge for stable democracies, it was more daunting for conflict-ridden and post-conflict societies. He then elaborated the reasons behind the slow progress towards the 30 per cent target as including: the existing patriarchal culture within most Commonwealth societies, which tended to exclude women from decision-making positions; societal stereotyping of politics to be a man's realm, thus marginalising women's participation and representation; social divisions of gender roles often legitimised by religious doctrinal practices, which had implications for women's participation and contribution; lack of access to financial and other resources needed for women to participate, for instance, lack of funding for electoral campaigns; political and electoral systems, which were not women friendly (proportional representation versus first past the post); unfair party nomination processes and the role of political parties; gender-blind budgets and overburden of work, including unpaid work, on women; and the impact of HIV and AIDS on women, especially in relation to their participation in government and politics.

To address these challenges, Mr Gounden outlined several strategies and efforts employed by various actors and stakeholders to promote increased women's participation and representation. These included:

1. Awareness raising campaigns to change the mindsets of both women and men;
2. Capacity building and leadership training for women at all levels and sectors;

3. Institutional frameworks and structures including legislation through reforms to provide specific measures (quotas/affirmative action) for women's representation; and
4. Engaging political parties and the media to promote women's participation.

2. Sharing Experiences of Conflict: Case Studies and Testimonies from Commonwealth Countries

The second part of the session involved the sharing of experiences of conflict with the presentation of case studies on Uganda, West Africa and the Pacific. It was facilitated by Ms Grace Akello from Uganda.

Uganda

Ms Stella Adongo, Uganda Child Rights NGO Network

Ms Adongo reviewed the impact of the northern Uganda conflict on women and girls. She stated that the 20-year conflict had resulted in a weakening of the social fabric, a breakdown in social norms and an erosion of cultural values that continued to affect women, men and young persons differently. It had targeted civilians with extreme brutality, with women and girls bearing the brunt of this. In her view, the militarism connected with the conflict had exacerbated the challenge of sexism and violation, through extreme use of violence as a weapon against women and girls by men and boys. Rape and other forms of sexual violence were commonly used to intimidate and dehumanise.

For a detailed understanding of the impact of conflict on women and girls, Ms. Adongo outlined three broad perspectives: (i) women and girls were active participants in conflict, including as combatants who ought to be rehabilitated at the end of the conflict under the disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration programmes; (ii) women and girls were victims of conflict, including the violence and violation by various actors; and (iii) women and girls were key contributors and agents for peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction yet excluded from peace negotiations.

In reviewing the impact and implications of the Ugandan conflict, Ms Adongo noted that it had exacerbated the poverty of women in northern Uganda. Some of the ongoing challenges in the region included not only gender-based violence but also the emergence of female-headed households, with no access to land, property or resources for their family; loss of livelihoods; early marriage and emergence of 'child mothers' with babies, who were often ostracised by the community; high drop-out rates in schools, particularly of girls; and the high prevalence rates of HIV and AIDS.

Despite these challenges, however, women and girls were making significant contributions to holding the social fabric of northern Uganda together and to rebuilding their society to secure lasting peace. Thus, donors and stakeholders had to provide women with the resources that would enable them to continue to contribute to these processes. Ms Adongo reminded Ministers that efforts being made to hold peace talks in Juba, Sudan, provided an opportunity to ensure that women and girls' concerns were taken into account during negotiations.

Concluding, Ms Adongo noted that, 'if women and girls have borne the brunt of the conflict and have been at the centre of action during the heat when guns are roaring, they should not

be forgotten in the search for a solution because their sufferings and endurance has lessons for sustainable peace in the region’.

West Africa

Ms Leymah Gbowee, Women, Peace, and Security Network Africa (WIPSEN), Ghana

In reviewing the situation of women in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Ms Gbowee pointed out that the impact and implications of the conflict in West Africa had remained largely unaddressed. In this regard, the situation in the region remained very fragile with overwhelming challenges. Overall, Ms Gbowee noted that the patriarchal culture and traditions of most West African societies had indirectly fuelled the conflict and exacerbated the vulnerability of women and girls, who continued to be subjected to all forms of inhuman treatment and systematic violations, including rape, sexual assault, mutilation, forced prostitution and loss of livelihoods, in particular land and property.

Despite the grim picture, Ms Gbowee noted the efforts and contributions of three distinct groups to rebuild peace in Sierra Leone. These were the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), through the deployment of troops (ECOMOG); bilateral efforts of neighbouring countries such as Ghana, Nigeria and Senegal; and national groups including women’s groups, religious and traditional rulers and other stakeholders. Notable among women’s groups was the Mano River Women Peace Network (MAWOPNET), a regional grouping that had secured the talks between the three rebel groups under the auspices of the King of Morocco.

Ms Gbowee highlighted three specific areas of challenges confronting women in the West Africa conflict and in post-conflict reconstruction: (i) lack of essential funding and resources to sustain positive contributions by women; (ii) lack of collaboration among the groups, and the danger of duplicating efforts; and (iii) lack of political will on the part of the international and national communities to implement agreed frameworks such as UNSCR 1325 on women, peace and security.

Ms Gbowee reminded Ministers that though ‘UNSCR 1325 has been lauded globally as a unanimous resolution, which is also the United Nation’s answer to women’s call for equality in peace and security matters, yet, women are still excluded from negotiation tables’. Finally, Ms Gbowee stated that there could be no sustainable democracy or development in the absence of lasting peace or while women, who formed at least 50 per cent of the population of most societies, were excluded from decision-making processes. She quoted the first female President of Africa, Ms Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Liberia), who had stated that ‘women’s equal participation in the political life of their countries is a prerequisite for their empowerment and overall advancement. Women need to a seat at the decision-making table, not one relegated to the sidelines or one represented by proxy – but a full and equal voice in national, regional and international agenda setting process...’.

The Pacific

Ms Sherrill Whittington, former UN/UNICEF Gender Adviser, currently Independent Consultant, Australia

Before presenting the conflict and post-conflict experiences of Commonwealth countries in the Pacific, Ms Whittington reminded participants that periods of transition to sustainable peace could serve as a unique ‘window of opportunity’ to establish new norms and rules, engage new leaders and build new institutions with a focus on women’s rights and women’s invaluable contribution to their nation’s rebuilding. On investments in post-conflict situations, she noted that despite the window of opportunity and commitments to gender equality, the percentages of donor funding as well as national allocation of resources to women’s socio-economic and political empowerment remained miniscule in comparison with the huge outlays. She therefore urged Commonwealth Ministers to consider ‘gender audits’ in select post-conflict countries at various stages of re-development. In her opinion, such audits were likely to reveal of a pattern of ‘neglect and/or inadequate allocation of resources and investment’ in women’s concerns.

Ms Whittington presented some of the experiences of women from Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea. In the case of Solomon Islands, it was reported that women were instrumental to the suspension of violence between the Malaitan settlers and the indigenous people of Guadalcanal, which resulted in the issuance of a ‘Women’s Communiqué for Peace’ in May 2000. Yet, this crucial role did not translate into a greater role for women in the formal peace or reconciliation process. In most cases, women lacked access and resources (including funding) to participate in such formal processes. Thus, Ms Whittington outlined that supportive mechanisms, targeted interventions as well as adequate funding had to be created for women’s direct involvement in the process of rebuilding.

In the case of Papua New Guinea, the presenter narrated how women’s groups organised a Women’s Summit in Bougainville in August 2001. Funded by the New Zealand Government, this aimed to consolidate women’s efforts at peace building. The summit also provided a forum for women to articulate their concerns and strategies towards the socio-economic and political development of Bougainville. A major outcome of the summit was the ‘blueprint’ with vision and guidelines for the Bougainville government, which resulted in the establishment of a ‘women’s body’ and the constitutional provision to reserve a seat for a woman in each of the island’s three districts. Without economic and political support, women continue to be confronted by huge challenges, in particular, inadequate resources. She said that efforts should therefore be made to build strong and viable women’s groups, and gender gaps should be addressed in post-conflict countries.

In summing up, Ms Whittington posited that ‘post-conflict gender gaps can only be redressed if an inclusive, rights-based transformational approach is adopted. Such an approach is likely to ensure constructive change, i.e. moving war-torn populations from extreme vulnerability and dependency to one of self-sufficiency and well-being’.

Concluding remarks

Following the presentations, the Facilitator said that she aligned herself with nearly all the issues, challenges and situations described by the three presenters. In her former capacity as the Minister of State for rehabilitation of northern Uganda, she had noted the invaluable

contributions and sacrifices made by women and girls to rebuild their families. Ms Akello urged the Ministers to forge closer links with civil society to ensure that women's plight was accurately captured in post-conflict environments. She reiterated the importance of providing adequate resources and funding to address issues such as food security, education of girls, rehabilitation of girl soldiers and assistance to young mothers in northern Uganda.

In conclusion, it was agreed by all the presenters that in order to advance gender equality, investments had to be made to ensure women's participation and representation in democratic, peace-building and post-conflict reconstruction processes. The slow and uneven progress that had been recorded in women's representation in government and decision-making processes around the Commonwealth meant that women continued to be marginalised and denied access to needed resources. Such resources had to be allocated to promote women's representation and participation at all levels.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made by the presenters and discussion during this session:

- 1 Specific and adequate resources must be provided to promote women's participation and the achievement of gender equality at all levels of government and decision-making processes, to ensure the achievement of 50/50 gender balance.
- 2 Women must be provided with access and resources to participate and be represented in peace-building and reconstruction processes, including through specific measures.
- 3 Gender audits (assessments) of reconstruction interventions need to be undertaken in countries at various stages of recovery and rehabilitation.
- 4 Capacity training should be provided for NWMs so they can monitor peace-building and post-conflict interventions.
- 5 Multilateral and bilateral donors need to develop and ensure inclusive budgetary frameworks and models for rebuilding societies, and women must be part of the process of developing such frameworks; and
- 6 Along with the Working Group on Gender, Peace and Security already agreed to, Ministers should consider an assessment of the cost of implementing UNSCR 1325.

SESSION IX: THE WAY FORWARD

In this session, Ms Ann Keeling, Conference Secretary and Director of STPD, presented a summary of the issues that had been addressed during the meeting and the recommendations made in order to inform the next steps that Ministers would take in ‘financing gender equality’ in member countries.

Ms Keeling began by saying that with the Millennium Development Goals already off track, it was clear that achieving the overarching Commonwealth democracy and development objectives would not be possible unless domestic and international funding for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls was scaled up significantly. Participants had indicated that not only was increased funding necessary, but also greater accountability for the gender impact of existing expenditure. They had called for the twin-track approach of gender mainstreaming plus gender-specific interventions to be followed. Ms Keeling underlined the fact that while gender equality was smart economics, it was also a human right.

In referring to the meeting’s consensus on the importance of gender-responsive budgets, Ms Keeling highlighted the recommendation that Finance Ministries must play a lead role while National Women’s Machineries (NWMs) needed the capacity to support them. While the Commonwealth had considerable experience of gender-responsive budgets, she said that these were not yet 100 per cent effective anywhere. Gender-disaggregated data was essential for the evidence base and to track budgets’ impacts. Civil society also needed to be engaged in the budget process

Turning to the issue of gender and aid effectiveness, Ms Keeling emphasised the general agreement that aid could not be effective without gender equality. Gender analysis was needed to track the gender impact of aid resources (including post-conflict aid). She pointed to the critical need to engender the High Level Review of the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in September 2008, at which participants had recommended there be a Round Table for Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment. It had also been recommended that the capacity and resources of NWMs be strengthened for them to participate in national development strategies and new aid modalities such as budget support. Donors should fund women’s organisations and other members of civil society to increase accountability and country ownership.

On the issue of gender and trade, Ms Keeling referred to the consensus that while aid was important, trade empowered women economically. Women’s capacity to compete in markets and gain market access needed to be strengthened. In addition, NWMs and Ministries of Trade needed the capacity to engender trade negotiations, and women had to be included in these negotiations. The meeting had recommended that governments create an enabling environment for women to scale up their businesses and go global through appropriate fiscal, monetary and exchange rate and trade policies.

Moving on to the issue of micro-finance and innovative financing, Ms Keeling said that women needed equal access to affordable finance. Policy interventions were required to make markets work for women. There had been calls for the creation of national funds for micro-finance and to enable women to graduate to small and medium enterprises, and for women to have a greater role in management of these funds at all levels. She said that there had also been recommendations concerning the documentation of good practices, experiences and

models of innovative financing in the Commonwealth and for the establishment of a Commonwealth exchange programme.

On the implications for gender equality of financing HIV and AIDS interventions, Ms Keeling stressed that gender inequality was a driver of the epidemic. The current ABC approach assumed that women and men had the same level of control or autonomy, which was not the case. This made female-controlled protection methods critical. Girls and women were particularly vulnerable to infection, faced stigma and discrimination, and bore the major burden of care-giving. Recommendations to address this included strengthening property rights and ensuring other rights. Donor funding needed to be flexible and gender sensitive and to set gender-transformative indicators (not only sex-disaggregated ones).

Ms Keeling said that the meeting had looked at some of the constraints to women's participation in politics – which was still seen as 'man's domain' so that women lacked campaign funds and party nominations – and had concluded that affirmative action was needed. It had suggested that CHOGM should review Commonwealth progress towards the 30 per cent target. In terms of conflict situations, girls and women often experienced violence and abuse not only from both sides of the conflict but also from peacekeeping forces. While UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 on women, peace and security was groundbreaking, it was widely ignored. There were no gender audits of how post-conflict funds were spent or the cost of implementing UNSCR 1325. Ms Keeling stressed the point that the resolution of a conflict offered the opportunity for social transformation. Funds were needed for NWM capacity building to monitor peace and post conflict interventions.

Ms Keeling concluded by talking about the need to strengthen the gender architecture. At the international level, the meeting supported a new, independent, properly resourced UN agency for women as well as increased funds to strengthen the Office of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) to implement UNSCR 1325. At the national level, it had been agreed that NWMs should be placed at the highest political levels of government, headed by a Cabinet Minister, and adequately funded. Capacity building was needed for NWMs to engage with other ministries and reach out to lower levels of society, and good Commonwealth models of effective NWMs should be documented.

SESSION X: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Following negotiations, the Ministers approved the Kampala Communiqué and the Kampala Statement to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting 2007. They also warmly welcomed the offer of the Government of Barbados to host the Ninth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting (9WAMM) in 2010. Hon Syda Bbumba, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda, and Chair of 8WAMM, then declared the meeting closed.

FIELD TRIP

After lunch, delegates had the option of visiting either the Mildmay Centre for HIV/AIDS patients or the Watoto Children's Village.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND PROGRAMME

FRIDAY, 8 JUNE – SUNDAY, 10 JUNE

Partners' Forum

SUNDAY, 10 JUNE

0900-2100 **8WAMM Registration**

MONDAY, 11 JUNE

0900-2100 **8WAMM Registration** (cont'd)

1000-1630 **Senior Officials Meeting**

- Adoption of 8WAMM Agenda
- Update on the Commonwealth Secretariat's work programme in support of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015
- Establish Communiqué Drafting Committee

1800-2000 **Official Opening Ceremony**

Note: All delegates, including partner agencies and Partners' Forum participants, are invited to attend the 8WAMM Opening Ceremony

- Welcome by *Hon Syda Bbumba*, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda
- Address by *Rt Hon Don McKinnon*, Commonwealth Secretary-General
- Official Opening by *HE Yoweri Kaguta Museveni*, President of the Republic of Uganda
- Vote of Thanks

- **Heads of Delegation Group Photograph** (immediately following Opening Ceremony)

2000- **RECEPTION** for all Delegates

2000- **DINNER** for Ministers and Heads of Delegation hosted by *Hon Syda Bbumba*, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development, Republic of Uganda

TUESDAY, 12 JUNE

0730-0830 **Breakfast meeting for Ministers, hosted by Commonwealth Secretary-General** (by invitation)

0900-1015 **SESSION I: Opening Plenary**

- Welcome by Commonwealth Secretary-General
- Election of Chair
- Adoption of Agenda
- Keynote Address
- Ministerial response to Keynote Address

1015-1045 **Refreshment Break**

1045-1230 **SESSION II: *Defining 8WAMM Context***

- Report of the Senior Officials Meeting
- Report by the Commonwealth Secretariat on the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005-2015
- Statement on Financing Gender Equality and the United Nations

1230-1345 ***Lunch***

1345-1500 **SESSION III: “*Tracking the Money for Gender Equality*”**

Presentations on:

- Aid Effectiveness and Gender-Responsive Budgets
- Gender and Trade
- Micro-finance and Innovative Financing for Gender Equality

1500-1615 **SESSION IV: “*Tracking the Money for Gender Equality*”**

Ministerial Roundtables:

- Aid Effectiveness
- Gender-Responsive Budgets
- Gender and Trade
- Financing Enterprise Development

1615-1630 ***Refreshment Break***

1630-1730 **SESSION IV (cont'd) : “*Tracking the Money for Gender Equality*”**

In plenary:

- Report Back from Ministerial Roundtables

1830-2030 **RECEPTION** hosted by Rt Hon Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General (by invitation)

WEDNESDAY, 13 JUNE

0900-1030 **SESSION V: *Dialogue with Partners’ Forum in Plenary***

1030-1100 ***Refreshment Break***

1100-1215 **SESSION VI: “*National Women’s Machineries and Public Sector: Role in Financing Gender Equality*”**

- Presentations
- Plenary Discussion

1215-1330 **SESSION VII: “*Financing HIV/AIDS Interventions: Implications for Gender Equality*”**

- Presentation
- Plenary Discussion

1330-1445 ***Lunch***

1445-1545 **SESSION VIII: “Investing in Gender Equality: Promoting Peace and Democracy”**

- Presentation
- Plenary Discussion

1545-1615 **Refreshment Break**

1615-1730 **SESSION VIII (cont’d.): “Investing in Gender Equality: Promoting Peace and Democracy”**

- Three Case Studies: Sharing Experiences on Conflict
- Plenary Discussion

2000- **Partners’ Forum Evening Event**

THURSDAY, 14 JUNE

0900-1030 **SESSION IX: “The Way Forward”**

- Summary of Issues
- Next Steps

1030-1100 **Refreshment Break**

1100-1300 **SESSION X: Conclusions and Recommendations**

Approval of:

- Communiqué
- Message to CHOGM
- Venue for 9WAMM

Any other business

8WAMM CONCLUDES

PRESS CONFERENCE

1300-1415 **Lunch**

1430-1730 **Field Trip:**

- Mildmay Centre for HIV/AIDS patients
- Watoto Children’s Village

**KEYNOTE ADDRESS BY
H E LUÍSA DIAS DIOGO, PRIME MINISTER OF MOZAMBIQUE**

Honourable, Syda Bbumba, Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development of the Republic of Uganda, Chairperson of the 8WAMM,

Honourable, Don McKinnon, Commonwealth Secretary-General,

H E the Vice-President of Gambia,

Honourable Ministers Responsible for Gender Affairs,

Excellencies, Heads of Delegations,

Distinguished Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps and International Organisations,

Distinguished Delegates, Partners and Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Let me first of all, on behalf of my delegation and my own behalf, express our profound gratitude to the Government and People of the Republic of Uganda for the warm hospitality accorded to us since our arrival in this beautiful city of Kampala.

I am delighted to be present today with all distinguished participants of the Eighth Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting and I would like to thank the Commonwealth Secretariat for the kind invitation extended to us to give the Keynote Address at this August assembly, on the topic Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy.

In fact, placing this topic at the centre of our work portrays the commitment in the way our Governments intend to face the need to invest more in the various aspects of gender equality in our societies. The meeting will focus on key strategies with the view of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the implementation of the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005–2015.

The initiative to integrate women and gender issues for deliberation of the Commonwealth Heads of State and Government Summit that will take place in this year is a proof of the commitment and engagement on women's cause of the Commonwealth leadership.

The theme for this important meeting, Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy, is fundamental to the achievement of democracy and development. Thus, resources must be allocated for gender equality and women's rights if real progress is to be made in achieving the MDGs, comply with the Convention for Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and other equally important development commitments such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Cairo Programme for Action, the Copenhagen Declaration and the Protocol to the African Charter on Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa and the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality 2005–2015.

At the SADC region, we adopted, in 1997, the SADC Gender Declaration, and in the following year the addendum to the Declaration on Prevention of Violence Against Women and Children.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Commonwealth Plan of Action is a forward-looking plan, which considers all development commitments. In this regards, as a result of a common vision shared by the Member States the Commonwealth Plan of Action indicates clearly four critical areas based on a rights-based approach, grounded in the framework of international and regional human rights conventions and other instruments, namely: (i) Gender, democracy, peace and conflict; (ii) Gender, human rights and law; (iii) Gender, poverty eradication and economic empowerment; (iv) Gender and HIV/AIDS.

I would like to highlight that the Commonwealth Plan of Action recognises poverty eradication, the protection and promotion of human rights, the strengthening of democracy and gender equality as intrinsically related. This Plan emphasises also that women empowerment through gender budgeting constitutes one of the ways to ensure that women and men enjoy an equitable benefit from economic rights, equal rights, treatment and access to resources in a climate of freedom that can allow a response to their specific practical and strategic needs.

During this struggle for gender equality and its financing, I have learnt some important lessons that I would like to share with the distinguished participants regarding gender equality and women's empowerment in the areas that are covered by the agenda of this important meeting: New Aid Modalities and Effectiveness; Gender-responsive Budgets; Access to Finance for Women; Gender and Trade; National Machineries for Mainstreaming Gender Equality; and the Role of the Public Sector.

Although it is important that strategies leading to access women's to economic resources, education and employment are developed, the strategies for women's empowerment should also go towards the combat against the structural causes that lead to female poverty, the inequality and subordination, such as the discriminatory laws, cultural norms and patriarchal models that exist in our societies. Therefore, the adoption of the different solutions such as gender budgeting should not be isolated, but should be part of an integrated and comprehensive gender strategy.

We look at **gender equality** as an issue pertaining to moral and human rights dimension with an intrinsic value in the context of social justice. However, there is need to recognise that it has to be founded on economic and social pillars and instrumental aspects like access to economic assets, access to education, health, potable water, sanitation, etc. When the policies are correct, it is possible to strike the right balance between gender equality and the female face of poverty. Deliberations in the next few days will build on these issues but it is clear that numerous studies link investments in education and health to economic growth. The growth assessment studies show how GDP would be enhanced and sustained with greater inclusion of the people in the process of development.

Both women and men enjoy wealth when there is a broader based growth. It is only when we make a difference in women's lives at the everyday level that we can truly say we have made progress on the MDGs and other international development commitments.

Therefore, the discussion on this theme is timely – there is an international recognition and understanding that gender equality and women’s rights is a cross cutting issue and requires financial resources – domestic and foreign. The domestic resources should come from our own budget and foreign ones should come from our international cooperation partners given their long experience in addressing gender issues and in mainstreaming it in our development plan. The improvement of the with G8 commitments scaling up aid in 2005 so that over a period of time this reaches the 0.7 per cent of GNP for official development assistance (ODA), the Paris Declaration of Aid Effectiveness to improve and enhance aid delivery can be used to pursue this important objective to ensure that investment takes place to narrow gender gaps in access to resources.

The experience of the **new aid modality** demonstrates that the Joint Assistance strategies, Direct Budget Support have shifted the focus to country ownership, harmonisation, alignment envisaged in the Rome Declaration and now the issue is how we measure that enough resources are allocated for gender equality. It is important to introduce gender-sensitive performance indicators in our development cooperation. Gender networks are working to build a voice around this, and sincerely hope that they will be able to influence the expected High Level Meeting next year in Accra to review the Paris Declaration.

Gender-responsive budgets have gained momentum in some parts of the Commonwealth but still need to be more systematically and persistently adopted by the member States. While some countries have already started to work in this area, many others still need capacity building and awareness raised on the necessity and on how to implement gender-responsive budgets. Effective capacity building at the national and sub-national levels is a challenge, as it is sustaining any successes made so far. Excellent examples are those shown by our brother countries, Uganda and Tanzania, but we all have to acknowledge that much more needs to be done. Finance Ministries need to adopt a gender mainstreaming approach and work as much as possible in collaboration with the Ministries Responsible for Gender.

Considering the fact that in many countries very few technicians and managers have gender budgeting knowledge and skills, which is a severe constraint in the gender budgeting process, we need to ensure training on gender-sensitive budgeting, adopt budgeting systems and processes that the introduction of a gender perspective is possible, consistent and consolidated.

As part of our efforts towards gender equality, Mozambique has adopted a gender-sensitive budget in 1998 focused on inputs and results in women’s empowerment and gender equality.

The gender budget strategy in Mozambique is planned based on the Poverty Reduction Strategy. It goes through collective and inclusive planning process whereby specific needs of different segments of the society are included, and above all those pertaining to women and vulnerable children.

Dear Participants,

Access to finance for women is a great challenge in our societies. While the success of some initiatives in some regions – such as microfinance – are well known, access to finance for enterprise development is still a barrier for many women in the Commonwealth, particularly in Africa. National and cultural barriers to access to finance, e.g. land rights and loans, are

still prevalent in many countries. These are deep-rooted and often difficult to break, with financial systems as yet unresponsive to these issues. Integral to this, financial institutions need to focus on the development of innovative financing mechanisms for women entrepreneurs, and the relaxing and combating of prohibitive norms and practices that hinder women from equal access to finance. In this regard, we must acknowledge and promote the increasing role played by the private sector, businessmen and women development of our countries.

Looking into **gender and trade**, the impacts of gender on trade have yet to be fully explored and understood at the policy level. Macroeconomic growth through trade has yet to be effectively tied with the discrepancies of micro level inequities and so the building of capacity within Trade Ministries and other relevant sectoral ministries (e.g. agriculture, manufacturing) towards an understanding of the gender impacts of international trade.

When we speak about trade, we must be clear that this is an area where we women are national and international experts. Tons and tons of goods are traded by the informal sector and here in Africa where women are the dominant work force. In fact, we have countries where millions of women cross the border and trade goods from one country to another. We need to recognise this situation and to simplify procedures in order to help women and men to formalise their businesses and move from survival to growth and development.

Dear Participants,

One important question is: **What role can the National Women's Machinery (NWM) play in financing gender equality?**

Despite the strength of African women, in many cases the role, resources, location, position and mandates of many Commonwealth NWMs are not strong enough to ensure gender mainstreaming. But they have had an important advocacy role in conjunction with civil society that has led to enhanced awareness and sensitivity to gender issues.

The process of women's empowerment cannot be successful if we do not take into consideration the need for equity between men and women in the access, management and control of resources with particular emphasis to financial resources. In this process, we have to recognise that the Public Sector plays an important role.

In terms of **the role of the public sector**, in fact, it is not just the NWM that has a role to play in financing gender equality for development and democracy but the public sector as a whole. The way public sector finances its programmes of education, health, agriculture and other sectors will show whether gender is at the core or not. Several studies have shown the benefit of investing in women and girls not just in terms of economic growth and empowerment but in development from a social and well-being angle. The public sector is responsible for most of the programmes that have to eradicate poverty. In our societies we must continue investing more in the education of the women and girls. Thus, they can better contribute to the process of eradicating poverty and build long-term sustainable development.

Another very interesting question arises: **When we finance gender equity, are we financing only women's issues?**

Definitely not, we are financing a development pattern that does not exclude disadvantaged people: the poorer strata of society of which women often form a disproportionately large part. Financing gender equity means reducing social and economic development biases concerning economic well-being, social equity and environmental protection, the ability to participate and interact effectively in the public sphere.

In this process, I would like to take this opportunity to make **special mention of the need to invest in gender and HIV/AIDS** given that HIV affects all aspects of the global economic frameworks and national priorities. Today, more than ever, is the time to finance gender equality in HIV/AIDS interventions. Women's carry a double burden, given their roles as primary caregivers, and their role in assisting the state with the burden of caring for people living with HIV/AIDS have to be recognised. Adequate financial allocations that consider the way in which gender relations operate in women's daily lives will go a long way in ensuring that national productivity in all sectors is not devastated by the epidemic.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

One of the main objectives of 8WAMM is to share and exchange experiences between our countries regarding efforts, accomplishments and challenges relevant to women empowerment as well as their active participation in **democracy**.

The democratic experience of my country shows that positive steps can be taken for the active involvement and participation of women in all process of gender equality and democracy. As a result, the decisions made by the Government, Mozambican women are contributing more and more to the national development and are playing strong role in political, economic and social spheres.

Presently, for instance, in the political sphere the level of participation of women has registered progress. In Parliament the level of women's representation is 36 per cent, one of the Deputy Speakers is a lady; 26 per cent of Cabinet members are women including the Prime Minister. Of the 10 Provinces, we have 2 ladies as Provincial Governors; of the 128 Districts, 21 ladies are District Administrators. Also, we have a considerable number of women in the judiciary system in Mozambique. We are moving to the right direction but still there is a long way to go.

It is a real challenge for the women to engage and actively participate in the process of emancipation in my country, because the major constrains that the Mozambicans face have gender dimension: our illiteracy rates from 51.9 per cent in the country, 66.4 per cent are women; and in terms of HIV/AIDS from 16.2 per cent infected, 58 per cent are women.

The mobilisation and political leadership helped to move forward. We created a Ministry responsible for Gender and Social Affairs; the Cabinet established the National Council for the Advancement of Women and a formal and clear gender policy have been designed and approved. The main objective is to provide monitoring and implementation tools of our programmes approved by the Government in the areas of women and gender.

The Parliament created a Parliamentary Woman's Office with the objective of building a space so that the link with women organisations can be established and accommodated and so that gender issues and the fight against poverty may be integrated in the deliberations of

Parliament as well as in the Social, Gender and Environmental Issues Portfolio, with the responsibility to integrate the issues of environmental protection and gender equity.

The launching of the Women Ministers and Parliamentarians Network, an inclusive forum without any political party, religious or racial nature, where women holding or who held ministerial and parliamentary positions can share ideas and draw strategies that ensure a larger participation of women at decision-making level and in the development processes in our country.

The political will of the Mozambican Government towards the promotion of the women's rights and equal opportunities for men and women is demonstrated in several ways. The democratic context and the pluralism of ideas in the country create a conducive environment for the exercising of such rights. It is stated in the Constitution of the Republic of Mozambique, the principle of equal rights between men and women.

The commitment regarding gender issues is also expressed in the Government's 2005-2009 Five Year Programme that has among its priorities the coordination, insurance and motivation of a gender based approach in the design, planning and implementation, monitoring, evaluation and reporting of all the sector's development programmes.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We have verified that despite these remarkable progresses for women, in several parts of the world and particularly in Africa, still there is a lot to be done to materialise the dream of building a society based on equality between men and women. One of the great challenges today is to ensure that the gains already obtained are efficiently maintained and brought forward.

In order to achieve that, it is necessary to concentrate more efforts in the implementation of the Agreements, Protocols, Conventions, Laws and Plans that we have adopted. Thus, it is with satisfaction that I see in your agenda the plan to monitor and evaluate the Commonwealth Plan of Action and it is a positive step and action of the Ministers Responsible for Gender Affairs.

The core aspect of the policies towards gender equity is that women should be part of the policy dialogue. This refers not only to the drafting of the poverty reduction strategies, and consultation processes at sub-national levels in the context of decentralisation but also on monitoring and evaluation and on reporting progress made.

With this meeting we hope that the bases are reinforced in order to ensure an integrated development of women and, with particular emphasis on their participation in the political and economic life, as well as the definition of policies that promote gender equality, so that equality of opportunities is ensured in all political, social and economic spheres.

Before I conclude my remarks, let me underline that at global level, the High-level Panel on UN System-wide Coherence in the Areas of Development, Humanitarian Assistance and the Environment which I had the privilege to Co-Chair with the Prime Ministers Jens Stoltenberg of Norway and Shaukat Aziz of Pakistan, recommends in its report that the UN needs a strong and dynamic entity focused on gender equality and women's empowerment aiming at

mobilising forces of change at global level and inspire enhanced results at the country level. The promotion of gender equality must remain the mandate of all UN entities.

This recommendation came up by the fact that and I quote: “while the UN remains a key actor in supporting countries to achieve gender equality and women’s empowerment, there is a strong sense that the UN system’s contribution has been incoherent, under-resourced and fragmented”, end of quote.

We expect a UN gender entity entrusted with a mandate combining normative, analytical and monitoring functions with political advisory and targeted programming functions.

Finally, our expectation is that the conclusions and recommendations from this important meeting will be a great contribution to our joint efforts for the promotion and implementation of women’s rights and empowerment. We expect contributions and deliberations and recommendations aiming to help the women to play their role in the political, economic and social development of our countries as a result of a better *Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy*.

Thank you for your kind attention!

STATEMENT FROM THE COMMONWEALTH PARTNERS' FORUM

**8TH WOMEN'S AFFAIRS MINISTERS MEETING
FINANCING GENDER EQUALITY FOR DEVELOPMENT AND DEMOCRACY
Munyonyo, Kampala, Uganda, 8-10 June 2007**

PREAMBLE

We the representatives of Commonwealth organisations, professional associations and civil society organisations, convened at the Speke Resort and Conference Centre, Munyonyo, Uganda from 8-10 June 2007 at the Partners' Forum to deliberate on the special theme: *Financing Gender Equality for Democracy and Development* for the 8th Commonwealth Women's Affairs Ministers' Meeting (8WAMM);

Noting that 8WAMM is the first meeting since the Commonwealth Plan of Action for Gender Equality (CPoA) 2005–2015 was agreed in Fiji in 2004 and adopted in Malta CHOGM 2005;

Considering that although most countries have National Women's Machineries, policies for women and plans of action, and state budgets, overall development plans and implementation have not reflected these same priorities;

Recognising that the challenge of promoting gender equality can only be addressed effectively through coordinated action, genuine partnerships, and increased accountability; and

Emphasising that the Partners are a valuable source of human, financial and technical capital as well as policy knowledge that could be mobilised by governments;

We call upon the Commonwealth Women Affairs Ministers to consider the following key issues and recommendations emerging from the Partners' Forum:

Tracking the Money for Gender Equality

The effective participation and involvement of different stakeholders in priority setting in budgeting processes is still limited at both the national and local government levels.

Capacity building within governments and other stakeholders for effecting gender responsive budgeting and tracking is needed to ensure increased accountability for resources committed to gender equality programmes.

Centralising and narrowing the scope of dialogue on aid by the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness in its current form, which may reduce funding available for promoting gender equality.

National Women Machineries (NWMs)

Are constrained in meeting their obligation of supporting other sectors in mainstreaming gender, making linkages with civil society, conducting gender-focused research and analysis, and informing policy through advocacy.

Capacity building is needed to enable NWMs to plan strategically, communicate effectively and identify priorities.

Financing HIV/AIDS interventions

HIV/AIDS affects women and men differently, with women being more vulnerable. The vulnerability of women to HIV/AIDS is due to gender subordination, gender-based violence, and discrimination in access to health care services. A gender and rights-based analysis of the causes and consequences of HIV/AIDS would better inform policy and planning.

Inadequate accountability for resources committed to the fight against HIV/AIDS and limited use of new technologies and research.

Limited use of a gender and rights-based approach to combat the effects of the HIV/AIDS pandemic.

Financing for Maternal Healthcare

Poverty is still the root cause of maternal mortality, which remains excessively high in the majority of Commonwealth countries. Service delivery for maternal health care remains under-resourced.

Financing Gender Equality in Education

Failure to recognise education as a continuum has resulted in inadequate strategies for supporting education for all. Recognising this would contribute to achieving gender equality. The limited availability and utilisation of sex disaggregated data for planning and budgeting in education sectors affects the mainstreaming of gender in education and the capacity to meet the MDGs and Education- for-All targets.

Investing in Gender Equality, Promoting Peace and Democracy

Violence is a feature of many women's daily lives. Stronger legislative frameworks and support services are needed to address this situation. The consequences of armed conflict on women extend to communities and this has had a critical impact on the social, economic and political development in Commonwealth countries. It is also important that the Commonwealth member states provide targeted resources and implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security.

There are not enough women in leadership, policy and decision making, which is not in line with the commitment made to achieve the 30 per cent target provided in the Commonwealth Plan of Action (2005-2015). In addition, there are limited opportunities for leaders in the Commonwealth to reflect on the effects and impact of their decisions and programs in achieving gender equality targets.

We therefore recommend that Commonwealth Governments:

Aid Effectiveness and Gender Responsive Budgets

Prioritise gender concerns in all development programmes in order to address the socio-economic, cultural and biological vulnerability of women and girls.

Use gender analyses to inform aid modalities, civil society participation and measurement of impact.

Gender and Trade

Utilise gender-sensitive research, and audits and analyses by civil society and other organisations to assess the impact of privatisation, debt and trade liberalisation on women's rights to inform trade agreements and negotiations.

Women's National Machinery

Reposition NWMs from the margins to the centre, to allow for better opportunities for them to interact with other government bodies and civil society.

Ensure that these are multi-sectoral, representative and accountable.

Peace and Democracy

Adopt, accede and ratify relevant international and regional instruments on gender, governance, peace and security.

Emphasise leadership development in Commonwealth countries. Elected leaders and civil societies should take advantage of existing leadership programs that promote partnering for transformation.

HIV/AIDS

Support and invest in research in order to identify socio-cultural issues related to the acceptability and eventual uptake of new HIV prevention technologies.

Fund a comprehensive approach to HIV/AIDS prevention, care, support and treatment.

Adopt new and emerging technologies such as vaccines and microbicides, particularly those which women can use and control.

Maternal Mortality

Meet pledges of allocating 15 per cent of national budgets to health, and strengthen staff recruitment and retention strategies.

Financing Education

Guarantee adequate financing, effective and efficient use of resources, transparency and accountability, monitoring and evaluation, which are all vitally important in ensuring gender equality in education.

Enterprise Development and Private Sector Financing

Enact legislation to protect women's property rights supported by government guaranteed programmes that enable financial institutions to support business incubation.

**PRE-WAMM ACTIVITIES: COMMONWEALTH PARTNERS' FORUM
WORKSHOPS AND OTHER EVENTS**

List of Workshops at the Commonwealth Partners' Forum

- 1 **Financing Gender Equality for Development and Democracy** (8–10 June) – organised by the Commonwealth Foundation to critically examine how new aid initiatives have been successful in transforming Commonwealth societies to achieve gender equality.
- 2 **Young People's Forum** (8–10 June) – organised by Action Aid International Uganda.
- 3 **Workshop for Women and Gender Practitioners** (8–10 June) – organised by Makerere University Gender-mainstreaming Division and Association of Commonwealth Universities.
- 4 **Parliamentarians Forum on Women and Leadership in a Democracy** (8–9 June) – organised by Commonwealth Secretariat in partnership with Commonwealth Parliamentary Association, and Uganda Women Parliamentarians.
- 5 **Maternal Death Audits – Costs and Benefits** (8–9 June) organised by the Health Section, STPD in collaboration with East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community and WHO.
- 6 **Money Matters: Challenges of Financing Gender Equality in Education** (9 June) – organised by the Commonwealth Secretariat in partnership with the United Nations Girls' Education Initiative (UNGEI) and School Fee Abolition Initiative (SFAI) to focus on financial constraints that affect girls' education, relevance of school fees abolition and gender resource budgeting in education.
- 7 **Access to Finance for Women Entrepreneurs** (9–10 June) – organised by the Commonwealth Business Women's Network together with the Uganda Investment Authority to create a platform to discuss issues of access to finance for women entrepreneurs.
- 8 **Gender in Social Transformation: Democracy, Peace and Conflict in the Commonwealth** (9–10 June) – organised by Isis-WICCE in partnership with the Commonwealth Foundation and UNIFEM Uganda to provide an overview of the current realities of women in armed conflict situations in Commonwealth countries; to demonstrate the impact women have made in peace building and democratic change; to engage women leaders to influence change and political agendas; and to urge Commonwealth governments to prioritise gender mainstreaming and its financing in peace building and development work.
- 9 **Developing a Community of Practice on Gender and HIV/AIDS: the Caribbean Experience** (10 June) – organised by UNIFEM Caribbean office in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat Gender Section to highlight approaches and share best practices in gender mainstreaming in HIV/AIDS programmes.
- 10 **Interaction Leadership Programme** (10 June) – organised by the British Council to enable participants to engage with the challenges that their countries face by learning from what has worked and is working in Africa and other parts of the world.

Informal Consultation for Commonwealth Ministers (11 June)

The objectives of the consultation were for Ministers to share and learn from each other in a facilitated process, about their experiences as policy practitioners for women's empowerment and gender equality.

About 20 Ministers attended the event, along with a number of Ugandan women MPs. It took place as a preliminary to the official opening of 8WAMM and was facilitated by Rosalind Eyben of the Institute of Development Studies, University of Sussex and convenor of the global programme of the Research Programme Consortium on Pathways of Women's Empowerment.

LIST OF DELEGATES

Antigua and Barbuda

Ms Sheila Roseau
Director of Gender Affairs

Australia

Ms Glenys Beauchamp
Deputy Secretary, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Ms Anne O'Rourke
Assistant Section Manager, Department of Families, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs

Bangladesh

Hon Geeteara Safiya Choudhury
Adviser, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

Mr Mohammad Ali Khan
Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women and Children Affairs

Ms Salma Ali
Executive Director, Bangladesh National Women's Lawyers Association

Barbados

Hon. Trevor Prescod
Minister of Social Transformation

Ms Ruth Blackman,
Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Social Transformation

Ms Nalita Gajadhar
Acting Director, Bureau of Gender Affairs

Ms Marilyn Sealy
Communications Specialist, National HIV/AIDS Commission

Botswana

Hon Gaotlhaetse Matlhabaphiri
Assistant Minister for Labour and Home Affairs

Mr Victor Rantshabeng
Deputy Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs

Ms Caroline Davids
Acting Deputy Director, Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs

Dr Maude M Dikobe

Member, Botswana National Council on Women

Ms Lorato Ruth Sakufiwa
Director – Women’s Shelter Project

Mrs Lebogang Diteko
First Secretary, High Commission, London

Brunei Darussalam

H E Haji Muharram bin Haji Piah
Ambassador

Ms Misnah Bolhassan
Deputy Director, Department of Community Development

Ms Noryani Abdul Rani
Community Development Officer

Cameroon

Mr Emmanuel Ateba
Chief of Service

Ms Immaculate Nkong Nkemngu
Bureau Head

Ms Yvette Epouse Diallo Touanga
Chief of Service for Social Co-operation, Commonwealth Department

Canada

Hon Ms Helena Guergis
Secretary of State, Foreign Affairs and International Trade; Sport

Hon Maria Minna
Member of Parliament

Ms Irene Mathysen
Member of Parliament

Ms Stephanie Machel
Chief of Staff to the Secretary of State

Ms Axelle Pellerin
Special Assistant to the Secretary of State

Ms Marianne Fofonoff
Senior Official, International Relations, Status of Women Canada

Ms Duy Ai Kien
Senior Policy Advisor and Assistant Director, Canadian International Development Agency

Mr Ian Mckinley
Counsellor (Political), Canadian High Commission, Nairobi
The Gambia

H E Mrs Isatou Njie-Saidy
Vice President and Secretary of State for Women's Affairs

Ms Fatou Jasseh-Kayateh
Permanent Secretary, Office of the Vice President

Ms Kassa Kanteh-Sanneh
Chairperson, National Women's Council

Ghana

Hon Alima Mahama
Minister for Women and Children's Affairs

Ms Marian Tackie
Director, International Women's Desk

Ms Francesca Pobee-Hayford
Acting Director, Department of Women

Ms Eva Mends
Head, Budget Development Unit

Ms Doris Dugble
Gender and HIV/AIDS Expert

Mrs Rosemary Ardayfio
Editor, Women's Page, Daily Graphic

India

Ms Renuka Chowdhury
Minister of State for Women and Child Development

Ms Nachiketa Kapoor
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of State for Women and Child Development

Ms R Savithri
Director, Ministry of State for Women and Child Development

Kenya

Hon Alicen Chelaite
Assistant Minister for Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services

Ms Rachel Bessie Dzombo, CBS
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Gender, Sports, Culture and Social Services

Dr Laboso Abonyo
Gender and Development Commissioner

Ms Anne Ambwere, MBS
Commissioner for Gender and Social Services

Ms Mary Cheptoo Wambua
Assistant Commissioner for Gender and Social Services

Ms Jeliioth W. Karuri
National Vice-Chairperson, Maendeleo Ya Wanawake

Kiribati

Ms Aren Ueara Teannaki
Acting Director, Women and Child Development Services, Ministry of Internal & Social Affairs

Malawi

Hon Kate Kainja Kaluluma
Minister for Women and Children Development

Ms Chritabel Chawkana
Director

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Hon Datin Paduka Chew Mei Fun
Parliamentary Secretary of the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development

Ms Chua Fong Ling
Private Secretary to Parliamentary Secretary

Datin Nur Kamarul Rashidah Haji Saidan
Director of Capacity Development

Ms Zuraidah Amiruddin
Deputy Under Secretary

Ms Nor Hasnah Badroddin
Principal Assistant Secretary

Ms Daisy Selvaranee Naesarajoo
Principal Assistant Secretary, Prime Minister's Department

Mr Mohd Shahrizal Mohd Nor
Senior Assistant Director, Ministry of Finance

Madan Faridah Khalid
National Council of Women's Organisations

Maldives

Hon Aishath Mohamed Didi
Minister of Gender and Family

Ms Rasheeda Ali
Deputy Minister, Ministry of Planning and National Development

Ms Maana Raafiu
Director General, Ministry of Gender and Family

Mr Mohamed Mihad
Assistant Director-General, Ministry of Finance and Treasury

Ms Fathmath Niusha
Desk Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mauritius

Ms How Cheey Lan How Fok Cheung
Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare and Consumer Protection

Mozambique

Hon Virgilia Dos Santos Matabele
Minister of Woman and Social Action

Ms Josefa V L Langa
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Ms Celia S B Armando
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Mr Fortunato Albrinho
Diplomatic Advisor to the Prime Minister

Ms Isabel Filipe
Assistant to the Prime Minister

Ms Maimuna Ibraimo
Member, National Council for the Advancement of Women, representing Ministry of Planning and Development

Ms Lurdes Afonso Mabunda
Member, National Council for the Advancement of Women, representing Ministry of Home Affairs

Ms Christina Americo Dimande
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Ms Arlete Jeque
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Ms Veronica Pioris
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Ms Sirkka Ausiku
Permanent Secretary

Mr Herbert Chili Ntema
Development Planner

Hon Elia Kaiyamo
Member of Parliament

New Zealand

Hon Nanaia Mahuta
Minister for Youth Affairs and Customs, and Associate Minister for Environmental Affairs

Ms Shenagh Gleisner
Chief Executive, Ministry of Women's Affairs

Ms Cherie Engelbrecht
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Ms Kirstie Marsh
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Dr Safiya I. Muhammad
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Dr Habiba Lawal
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Ms Oladipo Funke
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Mr Mahmood Salim Kahrood
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St Lucia

Senator The Hon Charlotte Tessa Mangal
Minister in the Ministry of Social Transformation, Human Services, Family Affairs, Youth and Sports - responsible for Human Services and Family Affairs

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Chairperson, Commission on Gender Equality

Sri Lanka

Hon Sumedha Gunawathie Jayasena
Minister of Child Development and Women's Empowerment

Ms Indrani Sugathadasa
Secretary, Ministry of Child Development and Women's Empowerment

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Mr Shongwe Meshack
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Minister of State for Defence

Hon Syda Bbumba

Minister of Gender, Labour and Social Development

Hon Dora Byamukama

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Ms Christine Guwatudde Kintu

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Hon Safia Nalule, MP

Female Representative of People with Disabilities

Hon Mariam Nalubega, MP

National Female Youth Representative

Hon Ssentongo Nabulya Teopista, MP

Workers' Representative/Chairperson Sessional Committee of Gender, Labour and Social Development

Her Worship Winnie Makumbi

Mayor of Lubaga Division, Kampala

Hon Bintu Jalia Lukumu Abwoli, MP

Masindi District Woman Representative/Chairperson, Equal Opportunities Committee of Parliament

Hon Masiko Winifred Komuhangi, MP

Rukungiri District Woman Representative/Chairperson Uganda Women's Parliamentary Association

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Ms Meg Munn, MP
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Ms Charlene Gordon
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Ms Angela Mason, OBE
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Mr Leo Thomas
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Ms Mitra Deliri Sabet
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Mrs Renee B C Nglazi
Permanent Secretary, Ministry for Gender and Women in Development

Mr Joe Kapembwa
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Ms Munyinda Mariam
NGO Representative

Ms Evelyn Change Mwenye
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Mr Seth Lartey
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Ms Zawadi Nyong'o
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Ms Linnette Vassell
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Ms Doris Bingley
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Ms Fatma Alloo
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Dr Jasbir Kaur Singh
Consultant, ACU Women's Programme

Commonwealth Business Council (CBC)

Ms Laureen Katiyo
Commonwealth Women's Business Network

Commonwealth Countries League (CCL)

Ms Majorie Rennie
Chairman

Commonwealth Local Government Forum

Mr John Wycliffe Karazaarwe
President, Uganda Local Government Association

Mr Raphael Magyezi
Secretary-General, Uganda Local Government Association

Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA)

Hon Lindiwe Maseko, WGE, MPL

Chairperson, Commonwealth Women Parliamentarians

Hon Dame Jennifer Smith, DBE, JP, D.Huml, MP
Deputy Speaker, Parliament of Bermuda

Senator the Hon Joanne M. Massiah, MP
Minister of State, Ministry of Agriculture, Lands, Environment, Marine Resources and Agro Industry, Antigua & Barbuda

Ms Meenakshi Dhar
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Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

Ms Aminatta Dibba
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Ms Patti O'Neill*
Principal Administrator, DAC Network for Gender Equality

SADC Parliamentary Forum

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Senior Programme Officer

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Ms Rachel Mayanja
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Ms Joanne Sandler
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Dr Hilda Tadria
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