



# GenderNet

NO. 2, 2000

A Newsletter of the African Centre for Women - Economic Commission for Africa No. 2, 2000

## Beijing + 5: What does it mean for Africa?

### Progress assessed during the Sixth Regional Conference on Women and Beijing +5

**“I think delegates forget that words such as “forced marriages, female genital mutilation, marital rape and incest, which are disputed in the document, are at the very centre of people’s lives.”**

*Delegate from Togo*

It is not surprising that the issues raising hot debate during the Sixth African Regional Conference on Women held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in November 1999, were as varied and emotive as the totality of women’s lives. Participants called for debt conversions by African States to allow more expenditure on social sectors, especially poverty reduction. They appealed to all African governments to support peace and take measures against the exploitation and trafficking of

women and children. A continent-wide march against poverty, and application of the 20/20 initiative, were mooted. Governments were urged to reduce their military spending and promote a culture of peace, while promoting respect for the United Nations Charter on Territorial Sovereignty. A solidarity movement of high-level women was called for, to carry out sensitisation in countries at war and in countries producing arms. Countries were urged to train health workers and equip health centres with the necessary equipment for handling obstetrical emergencies, in order to reduce material infant mortality. The need for capacity building for women’s economic empowerment and implementation of a quota system of 50 per cent to enhance representation of

women in decision-making positions were underlined.

Delegates wanted UNIFEM and ACW to be strengthened with human, material and financial resources, given the quality and the quantity of the work that the two organizations perform. ECA, OAU and UNICEF were called on to support the fight against drugs in all forms, and derivatives “that put our boys and girls at risk.” Countries requested support from ACW in establishing mechanisms for collecting reliable gender-desegregated data and encouraging private, independent radio stations to foster production of special programmes, particularly for women. The Centre was also asked to strengthen co-ordination mechanisms among United Nations Agencies and establish institutional mechanisms for follow-up of national implementation of the Platforms for Action.

On a global level, progress made in the advancement of women was reviewed during the United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly, held from 5 to 9 June 2000, in New York. “NGOs had little opportunity” and, “there was little me-

#### Inside

- Beijing + 5: What does it mean for Africa?
- CEDAW Update
- Updates and Announcements
- Conflict in the Great Lakes Region; Key Impediment to Women’s Progress
- All-Party Burundian Women’s Peace Conference

To Page 2

From page 15

economic networking, product quality, patenting of authentic African products and access to information technology.

Among the information provided was a list of relevant websites, including:

[www.aib-world.org](http://www.aib-world.org)  
offering useful information without membership charges.

offering information in English, French and Spanish.

[www.iacc.com](http://www.iacc.com)  
is a website for the International Anti Counterfeiting Coalition.

[www.inta.org](http://www.inta.org) is the website for the International Trade Mark Association.

[www.wto.org](http://www.wto.org) is the website for the World Trade Organization

[www.globalwomen.com](http://www.globalwomen.com) is the website for Global Women in Business

### Women as Partners for Peace Kigali

In June, the international Women as Partners for Peace conference was held in Kigali. The conference was organized against a backdrop of cross-border conflict and internal strife because of the serious consequences of war on the lives of women and children. Women from different parts of Africa, as well as other conflict-ridden areas of the world, deliberated on strategies to include women in more substantive ways in peace building processes. The

conference aimed to produce a tenable blueprint for the active involvement of women as partners in the entire peace process, from the local level to the decision-making of international negotiations, and to equip women with the requisite skills and tools to mobilize for lasting peace in their respective countries.

The keynote speakers at the opening plenary were UNIFEM's Regional Programme Director, Laketch Dirasse; UN High Commissioner for Refugees, HE. Sagato Ogata and Ambassador Swanee Hunt of Women Waging Peace.

For more information, please contact Laketch Dirasse, UNIFEM RPD for Eastern Africa at [laketch.dirasse@unifem.unon.org](mailto:laketch.dirasse@unifem.unon.org)

The African Centre for Women is one of the divisions of the Economic Commission for Africa. Its main areas of work are: Policy, gender mainstreaming, follow-up to the Platforms for Action adopted in Beijing and Dakar.

We are trying to make this newsletter more regular, timely and of relevance to the reader. We would appreciate feedback from you, including suggestions on of the kind of topics that you would like us to cover.

#### Write to:

The Editor:  
GenderNet, ACW,  
P.O Box 3001,  
Addis Ababa, Ethiopia  
Tel: 251-1-511263  
Fax: 251-1512785  
Email: [ecainfo@un.org](mailto:ecainfo@un.org)

GenderNet is also available at  
<http://www.uneca.org>