

Distr.  
LIMITED  
E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/9  
7 October 2003  
ENGLISH  
ORIGINAL: ARABIC

**ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR WESTERN ASIA**

**REPORT**  
**OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN ON ITS FIRST SESSION**  
**BEIRUT, 4-5 DECEMBER 2003**

**Summary**

During its first session, the Committee on Women considered the items on the agenda. This report contains a summary of the discussion of each item and the recommendations made at the session. The Committee adopted the report at its concluding session held on 5 December 2003.

This session aimed to (a) review and assess achievements with regard to the advancement of Arab women ten years after Beijing; (b) review the tasks before the Committee on Women within ESCWA and the programme of work of the Centre for Women in the light of these; (c) identify country needs with regard to the empowerment of women through the contributions and proposals put forward by countries to the secretariat for consideration in the preparation of the strategic framework for the Centre for Women for the period 2006-2007.

Discussions focused on (a) review and assessment of achievements with regard to the advancement of Arab women ten years after the Beijing Conference; (b) review of the tasks before the Committee on Women within ESCWA and the programme of work of the Centre for Women in the light of those; (c) identification of country needs with regard to the empowerment of women through the contributions and proposals put forward by countries for consideration in the preparation for the strategic framework and programme of work of the Centre for Women 2006-2007, scheduled for summer 2004.

The discussions resulted in a set of recommendations that were sent to Governments and ESCWA. The recommendations focused on commitment to the formulation of a comprehensive programme for Beijing +10, the provision of technical assistance to Arab countries in the preparation of national reports and the review, revision and testing of an indicator for measurement of the status of Arab women.

## CONTENTS

|   | <i>Paragraph</i> | <i>Page</i> |
|---|------------------|-------------|
| Introduction.....   | 1                | 3           |
| <i>Chapter</i>  |                  |             |
| <b>I. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AT ITS FIRST SESSION.....</b> | 2-4              | 3           |
| A. Recommendations to Governments.....  | 3                | 3           |
| B. Recommendations to ESCWA.....  | 4                | 3           |
| <b>II. TOPICS OF RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION.....</b>                             | 5-19             | 4           |
| A. General discus sion.....   | 5-6              | 4           |
| B. Ten years after Beijing .....  | 7-16             | 5           |
| C. Tasks of the Committee on Women.....                                       | 17-18            | 8           |
| D. Other matters.....   | 19               | 8           |
| <b>III. ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE REPORT ON ITS FIRST SESSION.....</b> | 20               | 9           |
| <b>IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION.....</b>                                   | 21-37            | 9           |
| A. Venue and date of the session .....  | 21               | 9           |
| B. Opening.....   | 22-28            | 9           |
| C. Participants.....  | 29-33            | 11          |
| D. Election of officers.....  | 34               | 11          |
| E. Agenda and proposed organization of work.....                              | 35-36            | 12          |
| F. Documents.....   | 37               | 12          |

## ANNEXES

|                               |    |
|-------------------------------|----|
| I. List of participants ..... | 13 |
| II. List of documents.....    | 22 |

## INTRODUCTION

1. The Committee on Women held its first session pursuant to Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) resolution 240 (XXII) of 17 April 2003 on the establishment within ESCWA of a committee on women that was adopted by the Economic and Social Council with its resolution 2003/9 of 18 July 2003.

### I. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN AT ITS FIRST SESSION

2. Participants in the session made the following recommendations to Governments and ESCWA.

#### A. RECOMMENDATIONS TO GOVERNMENTS

3. The following recommendations were made to Governments:

(a) Member countries should be called on to adhere to the time frame set for the submission of their responses to the questionnaire sent to Governments by a date not later than April 2004;

(b) Arab States should be encouraged to present their needs for technical assistance and research for the advancement of women at the national level to the ESCWA Centre for Women in order for ESCWA to consider them during consolidation of the medium-term plan and programme of work for the biennium 2006-2007.

#### B. RECOMMENDATIONS TO ESCWA

4. The following recommendations were made to ESCWA:

(a) The ESCWA Centre for Women should be required to formulate a comprehensive preparatory programme for Beijing +10, including the provision of technical assistance to the Arab States in the preparation of their national reports and organization of national, sub-regional and regional workshops for discussion of these reports in preparation for drafting the regional evaluation report for consideration at the regional meeting of the Arab States on Beijing +10 scheduled for July 2004, in line with the time frame for submission of the regional evaluation report to the United Nations in New York prior to the end of August 2004;

(b) The Committee should be called on to provide technical advice to the Arab States in the preparation of national reports related to implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);

(c) The indicator for measurement of the situation of Arab women should be reviewed, revised and tested, in consultation with all Arab States;

(d) The efforts being made by ESCWA should be evaluated and its call for increased commitment to cooperation and coordination with the Arab Women's Organization (AWO), the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) Arab States Regional Office and the Center of Arab Women for Training and Research (CAWTAR) in all evaluation and follow-up activities of the Beijing +10 conference and, in particular, with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States with regard to the preparation of national reports and organization of workshops in this regard and the provision of support and assistance to the leadership of the Arab Women's Summit in the performance of its tasks;

(e) The ESCWA secretariat should call for work on the construction of a gender-disaggregated database at the regional level and, moreover, provide technical assistance in this regard for the construction of databases in all Arab States;

(f) The sessions of the Committee on Women should be convened on an annual, rather than biennial, basis and this recommendation should be raised to the Ministerial Committee for consideration at its twenty-third session scheduled for 2005, views and experiences with regard to Arab women's issues should be exchanged, an annual prize should be awarded for the best pioneering activity with regard to women and men and women pioneers should be honoured in consultation with Committee members.

## II. TOPICS OF RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

### A. GENERAL DISCUSSION

5. The heads of delegations from Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Islamic Republic of Iran, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Oman, Palestine, Sudan, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen made contributions specific to their countries. A number of representatives from United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations also spoke.

6. The following are the most important points raised by participants during the discussion:

(a) The necessity of bringing to the fore the achievements realized with regard to the advancement of Arab women and avoid focusing only on negative aspects, in order to rectify the false image of Arab women that appears in the media;

(b) The importance of providing the secretariat of ESCWA with the texts of statutes, laws and recent reports issued by the Arab States with regard to women;

(c) The need to work on the modernization and reform of laws and legislation with the active participation of and contribution of ideas by Arab women, since legislation is a primary means of bringing about social change and closing the loopholes created by social restrictions between the text of legislation and its application;

(d) Emphasis on the existence in Islam of the principle of partnership and equality between women and men in all spheres, including political and commercial activity;

(e) Payment of attention to the role of religious institutions and the constructive and enlightening religious discourse on Arab women, as well as the role played by educational institutions in this regard;

(f) The need to raise awareness more intensively through training, orientation and guidance and the necessity of using the media as a tool in order to highlight women's developments and achievements rather than portraying them as commercial articles, since given that awareness begins in the home, then school and then the media;

(g) The necessity of addressing the new challenges that obstruct the development of women and improvement of their situation, including negative traditions, wars, disputes and violence in the region and, in particular, violence against women, avoiding the culture of violence promoted by the media and working to build a culture of dialogue and peace;

(h) Consideration of the ESCWA Committee on Women as a rearguard of the Arab Women's Committee of the League of Arab States, expending efforts to overcome common obstacles and establish mechanisms for dealing with such obstacles with emphasis on the importance of coordination, cooperation and exchange of experiences through these forums and taking into consideration the recommendations adopted by the Arab Women's Committee of the League of Arab States at its session held in October 2003;

(i) Call for authorities concerned with women in the Arab countries to amend and update the information and data contained in the country reports on the situation of women posted on the ESCWA web site by e-mail, fax or mail;

(j) Call for excellent preparation for the regional conference scheduled by ESCWA to be held in July 2004, in order to clarify positive aspects, challenges and areas of rapid change in view of changing global conditions for the ten-year review and assessment for the Beijing +10 review;

(k) Emphasis on the readiness of the ESCWA secretariat to provide technical assistance to member countries on request and, in particular, in the sphere of gender-disaggregated statistics and the formulation of sound bases and criteria in line with international criteria for the construction of statistics, the formulation of a plan for the preparation of national reports on the situation of women ten years after the Beijing Conference, the preparation of these reports and their submission to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW Committee) and the establishment of centres for poverty alleviation through small loans. The Commission has started work in three countries, namely, Egypt, Lebanon and the Syrian Arab Republic;

(l) Emphasis on the necessity to exploit the mass media in order to make public the proceedings and outcomes of the first session of the Committee on Women in order to raise awareness in this regard;

(m) Emphasis on strengthening partnership with civil society organizations including non-governmental and private sector organizations, in addition to official authorities, in connection with women's issues.

#### B. TEN YEARS AFTER BEIJING (Agenda item 5)

7. This agenda item included three parts.

##### 1. *First regional report on accomplishments, challenges and proposals*

8. A representative of the ESCWA secretariat introduced this item with reference to the document E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/4. She reviewed the accomplishments achieved by the Arab States with regard to the advancement of women during the past ten years following the Beijing Conference in addition to the remaining challenges that constitute obstacles to the advancement of Arab women and prevent their progress. She pointed out that the report identified the proposals and measures that could overcome the obstacles and challenges mentioned. She stated that despite the significant accomplishments that had been achieved in narrowing the gender gap in the spheres of education, health and economic and political participation for women, considerable challenges remained in the spheres of illiteracy eradication, combating poverty and ending discrimination against women. She pointed out that the existent challenges continued to underscore the necessity of intensifying work and efforts in order to close the gaps, eradicate illiteracy among women, improve the quality of education and open the horizons of the various scientific specializations to women, increase employment opportunities for women and incorporate them in the production and development process, increase their share in the decision-making process and political participation at all levels, work on the implementation of laws and legislation, bridge the gap between the text and application of legislation and eradicate all forms of discrimination against women.

9. The ESCWA representative made a visual presentation of the responses of countries to the questionnaire sent by ESCWA in February 2003 on accomplishments, challenges and proposals/measures to expedite the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Arab Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women up to the Year 2005. Moreover, she reviewed the national mechanisms concerned with women, enumerated the 16 Arab States that had ratified CEDAW and the dates for the submission of national reports to the CEDAW Committee, namely, the year in which the last report was submitted and the date of the forthcoming report. She explained that these tables contained the proposals put forward by the expert Committee and the Arab countries for implementation of the Convention and that these would serve as the basis for the formulation of proposals and initiatives for improving the situation of women. She emphasized the importance of using the Convention and the millennium development goals (MDGs) as a framework for monitoring and follow-up, in addition to the Beijing Platform for Action and the Arab Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2005.

10. During the ensuing discussion, the following points were raised:

(a) The need for the Commission to assume an active role in order to assist the Arab States in generalizing the implementation of CEDAW through legislative channels and use of the media. The number of countries that had signed the Convention was less important than the way in which it was applied so that it would have an actual impact on the situation of women;

(b) The necessity of preparing a specific sample in order to facilitate the preparation of national reports on the situation of women prior to their submission to ESCWA and the United Nations in New York and, moreover, prior to their submission to the CEDAW Committee;

(c) Emphasis on the need to rely first on official authorities as primary sources of information and data, then on secondary sources and subsequently on estimates, in addition to put emphasis on the fact that statistics contained in the report should be updated and made available to ESCWA at the earliest opportunity. The secretariat clarified that the report was based on responses to the questionnaire sent by ESCWA to Governments in February 2003. Primary data sources were official government sources. Where such data were not readily available, secondary sources had been used in order to calculate regional averages. However, these were subject to revision and could be updated when the data was issued from the Arab States;

(d) The necessity to formulate and develop indicators for the measurement of poverty and prepare studies on poverty among women in the region;

(e) The need to strengthen and develop the database on Arab women in order to make it accessible to all and benefit from it in the formulation of policies at the national level.

## *2. The questionnaire to Governments*

11. A representative of the ESCWA secretariat reviewed the items on the questionnaire sent by the Secretariat and distributed to the representatives of the participating Arab States during the first session of the Committee on Women. She explained the structure and content of the questionnaire and specified that responses should not exceed 20 pages in length. She requested that the questionnaire be completed by 30 April 2004, sent to ESCWA and copied to the Division for the Advancement of Women in the United Nations in New York by e-mail and regular mail. She emphasized the necessity of preparing national reports in conformity with the components and items contained in the questionnaire. She explained the role played by ESCWA in the preparation of the questionnaire and pointed to the coordination between the Division for the Advancement of Women in the United Nations in New York and the five regional commissions in its preparation in order to ensure that the questionnaire reflected regional specificities. She pointed to the role played by ESCWA in the translation of the questionnaire into Arabic in order to accommodate the Arab States and facilitate their task of preparing their responses. She added that the questionnaire had been prepared for the purpose of gathering information and data, with a view to consolidating the form, content and component elements of national reports so that these would form a sound basis for the preparation of the regional and international review and assessment. The Commission would use the various sources of information and statistics available in the national and regional reports submitted to women's committees at the national and regional levels, in addition to other sources such as the United Nations development work plans, national human development reports, MDGs and CEDAW, in addition to the statistics and information available from the Secretariat of the United Nations and other international agencies and bodies.

12. She requested that the deadline for response to the questionnaire should be respected so that preparation of the regional report could commence in order to implement the Beijing Platform for Action (Beijing +10). The regional report would be discussed at the regional meeting scheduled to be held at ESCWA headquarters in July 2004 and then raised to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session, scheduled to be held in March 2005. The regional report would reflect the regional specificities of Arab women in the international report.

13. The discussion of this item included the following points:

(a) The organization by ESCWA of national, sub-regional and regional workshops for the authorities responsible for completing the “questionnaire to Governments”. The allocation of a workshop was requested by Iraq, in view of its particular circumstances;

(b) The necessity for coordination between ESCWA and the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States was emphasized when asking the Arab States to respond to questionnaires or prepare national reports on women in order to unify efforts, eliminate duplication and facilitate the task for the Arab States;

(c) The necessity for unification of the information framework of the report with the objective of issuing a clear report that reflects the reality of the situation in the Arab countries, in addition to coordination between all parties concerned with women’s issues at governmental and non-governmental levels in order to obtain the required information;

(d) Emphasis on the assignment of focal points for the purpose of coordinating the work of non-governmental organizations at the Arab level, in the same manner as during preparation for the Beijing Conference.

### *3. Formulation of an indicator for measurement of the situation of Arab women*

14. A consultant expert to the ESCWA secretariat introduced this item with reference to the document E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/6. He explained that ESCWA, in the context of the development of indicators and criteria for measurement of changes in the status of Arab women, had undertaken the ambitious task of formulating a compound indicator of the status of women in the Arab countries that was based on previous studies and activities in this sphere and, in particular, that undertaken by ESCWA since 1998 with the Economic Commission for Africa, UNIFEM Regional Office for the Arab States and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) with regard to the formulation of indicators for the measurement of the status of women. He explained that the contribution of ESCWA to the process of development of the indicator was the addition of two new, subsidiary indicators to the basic package, which included an indicator composed of income, education and health. The two new indicators are legal and cultural indicators, which measure customs, traditions and conventions. The Commission had relied on a multi-disciplinary team in order to develop this indicator, which had been scientifically tested and evaluated in Lebanon. The indicator was still at the primary, experimental stage and had been discussed at a session that brought together experts from the Arab States. The representatives of member countries called for support for this effort and emphasized the importance of developing indicators and criteria that would allow for a more precise measurement of achievements and developments in the status of women and express the actual and cultural specificity of Arab society that makes it distinct from other societies.

15. The following are the most important points raised during discussion of this item:

(a) The need to adopt an integrated and comprehensive method in the sphere of indicators in view of their importance in the monitoring and follow-up on developments;

(b) The need to identify technical terms, concepts, indicators and cultural content for the quantitative measurement of customs and traditions and analysis of their impact on the situation of women and to identify the factors that contribute to their utilization for the measurement of the situation of women, so that the proposed indicator could be used as a tool for improvement of the status of women rather than simply a means of evaluation;

(c) The need to revise the indicator using an advanced scientific method and to test it in all the Arab countries using statistical means prior to its adoption;

(d) The need to harmonize the indicators adopted with the provisions of CEDAW.

16. The response of the secretariat to some of the questions raised emphasized the following points:

(a) The readiness of ESCWA to provide member countries with technical assistance in the formulation of a primary plan that would assist them in the preparation of their country reports on implementation ten years after the Beijing Conference and, also, their reports to the CEDAW Committee;

(b) The need to update data on a continuous basis, with emphasis on the importance of communication with the statistical bodies and authorities concerned with women in the member countries in order to provide the ESCWA secretariat with the most recent data and information.

#### C. TASKS OF THE COMMITTEE ON WOMEN (Agenda item 6)

17. A representative of the secretariat introduced this item with reference to document E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/7. She summarized the legal background to the establishment of the Committee on Women and the ESCWA Centre for Women and reviewed the tasks of the Committee as stipulated in ESCWA resolution 240 (XXII) of 17 April 2003 with regard to the establishment of a committee on women in ESCWA.

18. The following are the most important points raised during discussion of this item:

(a) The necessity of cooperation and coordination among ESCWA, the League of Arab States, UNIFEM, CAWTAR, non-governmental organizations and other authorities concerned with women's issues in preparation for the ten-year review and assessment for the Beijing Conference, support for the efforts of the Arab States in the implementation of the resolutions and recommendations made at international and regional conferences and, also, coordination of efforts and unification of positions in international forums and reports;

(b) The organization of training sessions at the national, sub-regional and regional level in order to build the capacities necessary for the preparation of national reports on implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Arab Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2005, with cooperation and coordination between national and regional partners and the various authorities concerned with women's issues;

(c) Emphasis on study of the implications of the negative impacts of globalization and privatization, including the shrinkage of public services and employment opportunities, which would lead to the exacerbation of unemployment and poverty among women;

(d) Emphasis on the fact that the formulation of policies for the advancement of women is primarily a matter of concern to the Arab countries and that the task of the Committee on Women is limited to the provision of technical assistance and advice in this regard;

(e) Emphasis on the importance of the coordination of action at the national and Arab level in order to adopt unified positions with regard to women's issues and provide the necessary support to the Arab countries for the implementation of their commitments made at international conventions on human rights concerned with women, eliminate duplication in this sphere between international and regional organizations and achieve full integration in the service of Arab countries.

#### D. OTHER MATTERS (Agenda item 7)

19. Under this item, the Committee established the time and venue of its second session, on a biennial basis. In view of the fact that the first session was tantamount to a founding meeting, the participants decided that the second session of the Committee on Women would be convened in Beirut in July 2004, the year prior to the convening of the twenty-third ministerial session of the Commission, scheduled for 2005, pursuant to ESCWA resolution 228 (XXI) of 11 May 2001 on change in the timing of the six subsidiary

bodies of ESCWA, which “decides that the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of ESCWA shall be held not later than the end of the year prior to the holding of the session of the Commission”.

### **III. ADOPTION BY THE COMMITTEE OF THE REPORT ON ITS FIRST SESSION**

20. The Committee adopted the draft report on its first session presented in the document E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/L.9, provided that the amendments agreed were introduced.

### **IV. ORGANIZATION OF THE SESSION**

#### **A. VENUE AND DATE OF THE SESSION**

21. The Committee on Women held its first session at the headquarters of ESCWA in United Nations House in Beirut, on 4 and 5 December 2003, in three sessions.

#### **B. OPENING**

22. The representative of the secretariat Ms. Fatima Sbaity Kassem, Director of the ESCWA Centre for Women, delivered an inaugural speech in which she welcomed the participants. She emphasized that the establishment of the Committee on Women within ESCWA indicated the importance accorded by member countries to women’s issues and that the new ESCWA Centre for Women would work in close cooperation with the recently established Arab Women’s Organization and in coordination with international and regional organizations, the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, specialized organizations and other authorities concerned with women’s issues.

23. Ms. Wariara Mbugua, Principal Social Affairs Officer for Gender Mainstreaming within the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women within the Secretariat, delivered the message of Ms. Angela King, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women. She congratulated the participants on the occasion of the opening of the first session of the Committee on Women. She said that the establishment of this Committee had come at an appropriate time, as the coming year would be critical for laying the foundation of the review and assessment of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 2005 and the Outcome Document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, Beijing +5. She added that the progress achieved remained slow when measured against the magnitude of the challenges confronting Arab women. Therefore, she considered that this Committee was the result of collective efforts to expedite development and was an important step towards increasing the capacity of women to have an impact on decisions made at the highest levels. The work of the Committee would strengthen the construction of channels of communication with the main initiatives that the member countries planned to adopt in 2005 with civil society and international organizations. The Committee was in a strategic position that qualified it to assume a pioneering role in strengthening women’s rights and establishing partnerships with United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations and to make the ratification and full implementation of CEDAW by all countries one of its fundamental tasks. She added that it was a source of pleasure for the United Nations to support the Committee and its work and that it sought cooperation with the Committee in three particular spheres, namely, expert consultations on issues of gender equality, strengthening national capacities for women’s rights and the signature, ratification and development of CEDAW, supporting the experience of women in the peace-building process and the exchange of such experiences, in particular during peace-building and reconstruction following wars.

24. Ms. Mervat Tallawy, Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Secretary of ESCWA, made a statement in which she welcomed the Patron of the meeting, Ms. Andrée Emile Lahoud, and the high-level Arab delegations and the Iranian delegation that had participated in the work of the first session of the Committee on Women. She said that this session witnessed the opening of the Centre for Women, established recently by ESCWA in order to serve as the secretariat of the Committee on Women and assume responsibility for follow-up on issues related to the empowerment of women in the Arab region and other regions confronting comparable issues. She added that this meeting represented an opportunity for

decision-makers and officials from the Arab States to respond to the media assumptions with regard to the situation of women in the Arab States by documenting that which had been achieved since the Beijing Conference 1995, through presenting the report of the Committee which contained statements that clarified the extent of the development and progress achieved in each Arab country and defined the obstacles, in order to find effective and practical solutions for them.

25. She indicated that this session was extremely important as it was tantamount to preparation for the Arab regional meeting scheduled for July 2004, which would have the status of a global meeting, albeit at the regional level. The appraisal report that would be issued from that meeting would be presented to the Commission on the Status of Women at its forty-ninth session, to be held in New York in March 2005. She indicated that Arab women had achieved valuable accomplishments and positive results but that they continued to confront numerous challenges and suffer from negative behaviours, attitudes and trends that undermined their status, role and image in society. She touched on the tasks before the Committee on Women, including the identification and review of programmes and plans of work of the ESCWA Centre for Women, follow-up on the situation of Arab women, monitoring accomplishments, familiarization with the obstacles and challenges confronting the process of the advancement of women and proposal of solutions and executive measures in order to overcome these. She added that ESCWA had worked on and continued to expend efforts in order to achieve full cooperation and coordination with numerous partners from Governments, international and regional organizations and non-governmental bodies with the objective of improving the situation of Arab women and increasing their participation in economic activities, political life and decision-making.

26. The First Lady of Lebanon Ms. Andrée Emile Lahoud, Patron of the meeting, congratulated ESCWA on its initiation of the actual work of the Committee on Women following its foundation in April 2003. She noted that the advancement of Arab women required considerable work, in view of the cultural and social specificities of the Arab countries. She emphasized the necessity of identifying achievements and pointed to the numerous cracks that women had been able to make in the wall of silence, neglect and marginalization that surrounded them. She added that the attendance of those present on that day was the greatest indicator of the significant steps that Arab women's issues had taken towards imposing themselves on the priorities of Government policies and media concern and at the heart of social, cultural and civilizational interaction in the Arab countries. She expressed the wish that the session would pave the way for joint Arab action that would lead to the advancement of the situation of Arab women towards greater effectiveness, progress and humaneness.

27. Ms. Fatima Sbaity Kassem, Director of the Centre for Women, then made a visual presentation on the plan and programme of work of ESCWA in the sphere of women. She explained that the message of the ESCWA Centre for Women centred on the incorporation of women's issues in order to achieve equality between the sexes and improve the situation of Arab women in social, political and economical terms through the promotion of partnership within the family, encouragement of the participation of women in decision-making and the removal of the burden of poverty from them. She enumerated the goals and challenges and the means that ESCWA would adopt in the implementation of its programme of work through the publication and distribution of reports, development of indicators, preparation of studies and research on women's issues, organization of field activities, provision of technical assistance and organization of regional preparatory and follow-up meetings on global conferences concerned with women. She emphasized the importance of cooperation and coordination with the Arab Women Organization, the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, UNIFEM Regional Office for the Arab States and CAWTAR. She added that the ESCWA Centre for Women would continue to implement the medium-term plan for the period 2002-2005, adopted by the Economic and Social Council in New York, in the formulation of which the MDGs with regard to the empowerment of women and the achievement of equality between the sexes had been taken into account and, also, the eight MDGs on the development of a global partnership for development among Governments and non-governmental organizations. She indicated that during the period 2004-2005, emphasis would be placed on follow-up on the Beijing Platform for Action, the Arab Plan for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2005 and the 1996 Unified Arab Programme of Action. National and regional workshops would be organized for the preparation of national reports on the review and assessment of implementation ten years after Beijing. In 2004, an Arab regional meeting would be organized, in collaboration with the General Secretariat of the League of Arab States, UNIFEM Regional Office for the

Arab States and CAWTAR, in order to review and assess accomplishments, identify obstacles, propose solutions and measures and work on the provision of assistance and support, with the objective of activating the strategy for Arab women issued at the Arab Women's Summit for the empowerment of women. Moreover, the Centre for Women would assume an expanded role in the provision of technical assistance to member countries with a view to building human and institutional capacities for national mechanisms and undertake technical and executive activities through calling for the use of technologies in the interests of the poor in order to alleviate poverty among women and bring information and communications technology to the fore in the provision of employment opportunities and eradication of unemployment among women.

28. She emphasized the role of the Centre as a forum for dialogue among all parties concerned, at the forefront of which were civil society organizations, including non-governmental and private sector organizations, in addition to Governments. During the coming two years, the Centre would provide member countries with the advice and technical assistance that they required in order to formulate integrated social policies that take into consideration gender issues. It would also assist Arab countries in strengthening institutions and building national and regional capacities and mechanisms and, also, undertaking needs-based developmental projects in the Arab countries and finding funding for such projects from extra-budgetary sources accredited to ESCWA. The representative of the secretariat called on member countries and national, regional and international donors to increase their financial support for the activities of the Centre in the sphere of consultative services and technical cooperation. She requested the participating countries to identify their needs with regard to the empowerment of women and present them in the form of proposals to be examined during preparation of the programme of work of the Centre for Women for the biennium 2006-2007, during summer 2004.

#### C. PARTICIPANTS

29. Representatives of 11 ESCWA members attended the session, namely, Bahrain, Egypt, Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Palestine, Qatar, Syrian Arab Republic and Yemen.

30. Representatives from the following United Nations member States and ESCWA non-member countries attended the session in their capacity as observers: Islamic Republic of Iran, Morocco and Sudan.

31. Representatives of national councils, bodies and committees and official organizations specialized in women's issues from Arab and other countries also attended the session.

32. Representatives from the following United Nations bodies also attended the session: UNDP, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Regional Office of the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights (UNHCHR), UNIFEM Regional Office for the Arab States, United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL).

33. Representatives from governmental and other international non-governmental organizations also attended the session as observers, including the International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA) and representatives from national and regional governmental and non-governmental organizations, research centres and institutes, in addition to experts on women's issues and donor representatives. The list of participants is attached as Annex I to this report.

#### D. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

34. Pursuant to rule 18 of the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the Economic and Social Commission, which stipulates that "Member countries shall assume the chairmanship of the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations", Ms. Rowaida al-Ma'aitah of Jordan served as Chairperson of the session. Sheikha al-Anoud Bint Khalifah Al Thani of Qatar and Ms. Raja al-Khuzai of Iraq were elected as Deputy Chairpersons and Ms. Zahira Kamel of Palestine as Rapporteur.

#### E. AGENDA AND PROPOSED ORGANIZATION OF WORK

35. The Committee on Women at its first session adopted the agenda for the session as laid out in the document E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/1, as follows:

- “1. Opening session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda.
4. Proposed organization of work.
5. Ten years after Beijing.
  - (a) Preliminary regional report on achievements, challenges and proposals;
  - (b) Development of an indicator for measurement of the situation of Arab women;
  - (c) Questionnaire to Governments.
6. Terms of reference of the Committee on Women.
7. Other business.
8. Adoption of recommendations and report of the first session of the Committee on Women.”

36. During the same session, the Committee agreed on the proposed organization of work laid out in the document E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/L.2.

#### F. DOCUMENTS

37. The documents presented to the Committee on Women at its first session are mentioned in annex II of this report.

## Annex I

### **LIST OF PARTICIPANTS**

#### A. ESCWA MEMBER COUNTRIES

##### Bahrain

Ms. Lulwah al-Awadhi  
Secretary-General  
Supreme Council for Women  
Royal Office

Ms. Wadad Muhammad al-Masqati  
Member of the Supreme Council for Women

Ms. Soha Hassan Flamarzi  
Director of the Office of the Secretary-General  
Supreme Council for Women

##### Egypt

Ms. Amal Othman  
Member of Parliament and Member of the  
National Council for Women  
Former Minister for Social Affairs

Mr. Hussein Darar  
Ambassador of Egypt to Lebanon

Ms. Haneya Ahmad El-Atraby  
President of the Agricultural Genetic Engineering  
Research Institute  
Member of the National Council for Women  
Coordinator of the Non-Governmental  
Organizations Committee

Ms. Heba al-Marasi  
Minister Plenipotentiary  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Nada Draz  
First Secretary, Office of the Deputy Assistant  
Foreign Minister for Human Rights  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Ms. Hoda Subhi  
Planning Adviser to the National Council for  
Women

Ms. Amirah Abdel Rahim  
Embassy of Egypt in Lebanon

Mr. Gamal Abdel Hafez  
Chief of the Department for Investigations  
National Council for Women

##### Iraq

Ms. Raja al-Khuzai  
Member of the Interim Governing Council

Ms. Maysoon al-Damluji  
President of the Iraqi Women's Assembly for the  
Future  
Ministry of Culture

Ms. Amal Shlash  
Director General  
Ministry of Planning

Ms. Zannah Muhammad Amin al-Rawanduzi  
Adviser to the Ministry of Municipalities and  
Public Works  
Office of the Minister

Ms. Iman Hussayn Alawan  
Third Secretary  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

##### Jordan

Ms. Rowaida al-Ma'aitah  
Member of the House of Notables  
Head of the Executive Committee for the Second  
Arab Women's Summit Conference

Ms. Asma Khader  
Minister of State/Government Spokesperson

Ms. Amal Sabbagh  
Secretary-General  
Jordanian National Commission for Women

Mr. Anmar al-Hammoud  
Ambassador of Jordan to Lebanon

##### Kuwait

Sheikha Hissah Saad al-Abdallah al-Salim  
al-Sabah  
Vice-President of the Women Affairs Committee

Ms. Sarah Ahmad al-Duwaisan  
Undersecretary, Ministry of Planning

Kuwait (continued)

Ms. Inaam al-Mutawa  
Director of Human Development, Ministry of  
Planning

Ms. Hissah Majid al-Shahin  
General Coordinator for Administrative and  
Financial Affairs  
Parliament, Women Affairs Commission

Ms. Anwar al-Ali  
Deputy Director of the Department of Women and  
Childhood  
Ministry of Social Affairs and Labour

Lebanon

Ms. Ghada Hamdan  
Member of the Executive Bureau  
National Commission for Lebanese Women

Ms. Joumana Abourousse Moufarrij  
Administrative Director  
National Commission for Lebanese Women

Ms. Moufida Ali al-Abed  
Director of Media  
National Commission for Lebanese Women  
Professor of Education assigned to UNESCO

Ms. Leyla Azouri Jamhoury  
National Commission for Lebanese Women

Ms. Abeer Abdel Samad  
Chief of Women's Affairs  
Ministry of Social Affairs

Ms. May Marun  
University Professor and Adviser on Education  
Adviser to the National Commission for Lebanese  
Women

Ms. Lamia As'ad Osseiran  
Lebanese Economic and Social Council

Oman

Ms. Muna bint Mahfouz al-Munthiry  
Head of the Coordination Committee for  
Women's Voluntary Work

Ms. Aida bint Salim al-Hujri  
Director of Studies and Research  
Ministry of Social Development

Ms. Aminah bint Hamdan bin Abdullah al-  
Hamdan  
Director of Human Resources Development  
Ministry of National Economy

Palestine

Ms. Zahira Kamal  
Minister of Women's Affairs

Qatar

Sheikha al-Anoud bint Khalifah Al Thani  
President of the Qatari Business Women Forum

Ms. Ibtihaj Muhammad al-Ahmadani  
Secretary-General and Member of the Forum

Ms. Huda Hassan al-Ansari  
Member of the Forum

Ms. Noor Abdulla al-Malki  
Women's Bureau in the Supreme Council for  
Family Affairs

Ms. Abir Abdallah al-Hussayni  
Women's Bureau in the Supreme Council for  
Family Affairs

Ms. Wadiyah Abd al-Rahman al-Musulmani  
Social Researcher  
The Planning Council, General Secretariat

Ms. Sahar Kiblawi  
Specialist in technical cooperation  
Technical Cooperation Department  
Planning Council

Syrian Arab Republic

Ms. Siham Dallo  
Minister for Social Affairs and Labour

Ms. Suad Bakkour  
President of the National Commission on Women  
President of the General Women Union

Ms. Mona Ghanem  
Expert

Ms. Ghaliyah Zuhur Addy  
Chief of Programmes and Orientation  
Ministry of Education

Yemen

Ms. Hooriya Mashhour Ahmed  
Deputy to the President of the Women National  
Committee

Ms. Maryam Abdullah al-Jawfi  
Chief of Section at the Municipality, Aden  
Yemen Women Union

B. STATES MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND NON-MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION

Islamic Republic of Iran

Ms. Zahra Shojaie  
Adviser to the President  
Head of the Centre for Women's Participation

Ms. Fatemeh Ashrafi Khatiblou  
Translator and Expert in International Relations

Ms. Farida Husni  
Expert on Women's Affairs  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Mr. Massoud Idrissi  
Ambassador of the Islamic Republic of Iran to  
Lebanon

Morocco

Ms. Naima Ben Yahya  
Studies Officer  
Secretary of State in charge of Family, Solidarity  
and Social Action

Ms. Naima Farrah  
Chief, Office of the Minister for Human Rights

Ms. Amal Barradah  
Administrative officer to the Secretary of State in  
charge of Family, Solidarity and Social Action

Ms. Fatmah al-Husni  
Head of a Chamber at the Supreme Council

Sudan

Ms. Samia Ahmed Mohammed  
Minister for Social Welfare and Development

Ms. Fatimah Ahmad Fadl  
Director of the Empowerment of Women and  
Gender Mainstreaming Project  
Department of Women and the Family  
Ministry of Social Welfare and Development

Ms. Su'ad Abu Kashwah  
Representative of the Sudanese Women General  
Union

C. EXPERTS AND CONSULTANTS

Ms. Suhayr al-Tal  
Director of Studies at the National Library  
Amman, Jordan  
Mr. Ahmad Hamudah  
Expert  
Amman, Jordan

Ms. Sandra Willis  
Sheikh Zayed University  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Ms. Munira Ahmad Fakhro  
Professor  
University of Bahrain  
Manama, Bahrain

Ms. Ebtihaj al-A'ali  
Assistant Professor  
College of Business Administration  
University of Bahrain  
Manama, Bahrain

Ms. Bahiya al-Jishi  
Adviser, Office of the Prime Minister  
Manama, Bahrain

Ms. Sameera Ibrahim Rajab  
Journalist  
Tasa'a Centre for the Support of Women  
Manama, Bahrain

Ms. Ghada al-Jabi  
Former Minister for Social Affairs  
Vice President of the International Council for  
Adult Education (Canada)  
President of the Arab Network for Literacy and  
Adult Education (Cairo)  
Syrian Arab Republic

Ms. Zuka' al-Jabi  
Observer  
Syrian Arab Republic

Ms. Daad Mousa  
Expert  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Ms. Eileen Kuttab  
Director of the Institute of Women Studies  
Birzeit University, Palestine

Ms. Nida Abu Awwad  
Researcher  
Institute of Women Studies  
Birzeit University, Palestine

Mr. Talal Atrisi  
Professor of Sociology  
Lebanese University  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Maha Fouad Samara  
Journalist and writer  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Nahawand Al-Kaderi Issa  
University Professor  
Lebanese University  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Sonya Atiyah  
Lawyer  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Alia Berti Zein  
Lawyer  
Université Saint Joseph  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Lin a Abou Habib  
Expert  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Mishka Mujabbir Mourani  
Senior Vice President  
International College  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Umiyyah al-Za'tari  
Professor  
Member of the Women's Movement Association  
for Social Awareness  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Muna Makram Ebeid  
President of the Association for the Advancement  
of Education  
Former Member of Parliament  
Cairo, Egypt

Ms. Shahida al-Baz  
Expert  
Cairo, Egypt

Ms. Samah Said  
Project Manager of Gender and Education (Cairo)  
Save The Children, United States of America  
Cairo, Egypt

Ms. Bari'ah Ibrahim al-Zubayri  
Journalist  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Ms. Monira El-Nahed  
Professor  
King Saud University  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Ms. Hind bint Majid al-Khuthaylah  
Professor  
King Saud University  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Ms. Samira Ibrahim Islam  
Professor of Pharmacology  
Head of Drug Monitoring Unit  
King Fahd Centre for Medical Research  
King Abdulaziz University  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Ms. Layla Sa'ud al-Dughaythar  
Lawyer  
Usam al-Salim and Ghassan al-Uwaji  
International Company for Legal Investments  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Mr. Saeed bin Muhammad al-Mullais  
Director General  
Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Mr. Abdulrahman bin Muhammad Al-Sheraimy  
Director General Office Manager  
Arab Bureau of Education for the Gulf States  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Ms. Urubah Abdallah Ibrahim al-Munif  
University Professor  
Saudi Arabia

Ms. Amal Suleiman Obeidi  
Assistant Professor, Political Sciences Department  
Garyounis University  
Benghazi, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Ms. Farida Al-Banani  
Professor of Law  
Morocco

Ms. Suheir Azzouni  
Expert  
Paris, France

D. UNITED NATIONS SECRETARIAT

Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues  
and the Advancement of Women

Ms. Wariara Mbugua  
Principal Social Affairs Officer for Gender  
Mainstreaming  
Department of Economic and Social Affairs

E. UNITED NATIONS PROGRAMMES AND BODIES

United Nations Development Programme

Mr. Ghaith Hamdi Fariz  
Regional Adviser  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Rohini Kohli  
Programme Management Officer  
Sustainable Human Development Unit  
Jerusalem, Palestine

United Nations Office of the High Commissioner  
for Human Rights

Mr. Amin Makki Madani  
Regional Representative  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Zahra Mirghani  
Senior Regional Community Services Officer  
Beirut, Lebanon

United Nations High Commission on Refugees

Ms. Carol el-Sayed  
Assistant Community Services Officer  
Beirut, Lebanon

United Nations Development Fund for Women

Ms. Haifa Abu Ghazaleh  
Regional Director  
Regional Office for the Arab States  
Amman, Jordan

Ms. Shirin Jabir Shukri  
Project Manager  
Amman, Jordan

Ms. Maya Morsi  
Coordinator Egypt  
Cairo, Egypt

Ms. Firyal Salman  
Project Assistant  
Amman, Jordan

Ms. Lina al-Ayli  
Trainer  
Beirut, Lebanon

United Nations Relief and Works Agency for  
Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Ms. Hala Muhammad Dayfallah  
Director, Women Programme  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Leila Kaissi  
Beirut, Lebanon

Mr. Suleiman Chemali  
Beirut, Lebanon

United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Ms. Beverly-Ann Agard  
Women's Affairs Officer  
Lebanon

F. UNITED NATIONS ORGANIZATIONS AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES

World Health Organization

Ms. Ghada El-Hafez  
Focal Point for Gender  
Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean  
Cairo, Egypt

## G. INTER-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

### League of Arab States

Ms. Hana' Srour  
Director of the Women Unit  
Department of Women, Family and Childhood  
Cairo, Egypt

### Arab Organization for Agricultural Development

Ms. Na'imah al-Rukbani  
Expert in Women Development  
Khartoum, Sudan

### Arab Labour Organization

Mr. Mahmoud Ibrahim  
Director of the Arab Institute of Occupational  
Health and Safety  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

Ms. May Dimachkieh Serhal  
Director of the Economic Research Department  
General Union of Chambers of Commerce,  
Industry and Agriculture for Arab Countries  
Beirut, Lebanon

### International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas

Mr. Michel Valat  
Director  
Aleppo, Syrian Arab Republic

## H. NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS

### 1. *National*

### Arab Women Organization of Jordan

Ms. Emily Naffa'a  
Director of the Advisory Board Committee  
Amman, Jordan

### General Union of Palestinian Women

Ms. Salwa Abu Khadra  
Secretary-General  
Amman, Jordan

Ms. Nihayat Mustafa Mohamed Taqla  
Member of the Secretariat in charge of Internal  
Relations  
Ramallah, Palestine

### Syrian Women's League

Ms. Sabah al-Hallaq  
Member of the Secretariat  
Damascus, Syrian Arab Republic

### Women Cultural and Social Society

Ms. Lulwa al-Mulla  
Secretary-General  
Kuwait City, Kuwait

### The Lebanese Council to Resist Violence Against Women

Ms. Nada el-Amin  
Beirut, Lebanon

### The Lebanese Cultural League Association

Ms. Afaf Hakim  
President  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Muna Hijazi  
Member of the Administrative Body  
Beirut, Lebanon

### The Lebanese Collective for the Protection of the Family

Ms. Suhayr al-Ghali  
Secretary-General  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Hanan Qarquti  
University Professor  
Beirut, Lebanon

### The Islamic Charitable Association for Guidance and Reform

Ms. Rand Saqr  
Deputy Officer of the Women Division  
Beirut, Lebanon

The Lebanese Women's Council

Ms. Ikbal Doughan  
Chairperson of the Council  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Hiyam Bizri Sharif  
Deputy Chairperson  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Fa'iqah Turkiyyah  
President of the Planning and Studies Committee  
Beirut, Lebanon

The National Congress for the Elimination of All  
Forms of Discrimination against Women

Ms. Azza Mroueh  
General Coordinator  
Beirut, Lebanon

Amel Association

Mr. Ahmad Abbud  
Director  
Beirut, Lebanon

Mr. Jamal George Hermez  
Director of Exterior Relations  
Beirut, Lebanon

The Will and Happiness Foundation

Mr. Mustapha Adib  
General Manager  
Tripoli, Lebanon  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Nevine Abbas  
Administrative Assistant  
Tripoli, Lebanon

Mr. Muhammad Baroudi  
Programmes Manager  
Tripoli, Lebanon

The Southern Lebanon House of Women

Ms. Su'ad Bahsun Sallum  
President  
Adviser to the Lebanese Women's Council

Lebanese Family Planning Association

Ms. Batoul Yahfoufi  
Member of the Administrative Committee  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Zaynab Haninah  
Officer for Women, Administration and Media  
Beirut, Lebanon

Collective of Non-governmental Organizations in  
Lebanon (Collectif des ONGs au Liban)

Mr. Kamil Mohanna  
General Coordinator  
Beirut, Lebanon

International Islamic Committee for Woman and  
Child

Ms. Amal Mahmoud Itani  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Rana Saadah  
Delegate  
Beirut, Lebanon

Committee for Lebanese Women's Rights

Ms. Linda Matar  
President  
Beirut, Lebanon

The Non-Governmental National Committee for  
the Follow-up of Women's Issues (post-Beijing)

Ms. Aman Kabarah Sha'arani  
President  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Muna Nuwayhed Ibrahim  
Fund Secretary  
Beirut, Lebanon

National Association for the Lebanese Child

Ms. Khanim Khaddaj  
Secretary-General  
Beirut, Lebanon

Imam Al-Sadr Foundation

Ms. Wafa' Taher  
Secretary-General  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Iman Ahmad Ezzeddine  
Specialist in Social Affairs  
Beirut, Lebanon

The Lebanese Women League

Ms. Lubna Kalot  
President  
Beirut, Lebanon

Zakat House

Mr. Fouad Houssein Agha  
President of the Employees Council and Member  
of the Governing Board  
Tripoli, Lebanon

Mr. Nabil Shandar  
Manager of Public Relations and Media  
Tripoli, Lebanon

The Lebanese University Graduate Women  
Association

Ms. Angele Khawand Ze'eni  
President  
Beirut, Lebanon

Centre for Research and Follow-up in Local  
Development

Mr. Akram Yahfoufi  
Executive Director  
Baalbek, Lebanon

AISHA (the Arab Women's Forum)

Ms. Hind Atweh  
Forum Coordinator  
Beirut, Lebanon

Choueifat Women's League

Ms. Linda Qays Saab  
President  
Beirut, Lebanon

Social Protection Institutions in Lebanon

Mr. Muhammad Barakat  
President  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Kawthar Itani  
Head of the Intellectual Development Sector  
Beirut, Lebanon

The Arab Network for Environment and  
Development

Mr. Abdallah Abd al-Qadir Nseir  
National Coordinator  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

Ms. Hiyam Afif Kraydiyeh  
National Coordinator  
Beirut, Lebanon

Egyptian Red Crescent Society

Ms. Hoda Barakat  
Director General  
Cairo, Egypt

King Khalid Charitable Foundation

Ms. Banderi bint Abdul Rahman al-Faisal  
Director General  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Charitable Association for the Advancement of  
Women

Ms. Raqiyyah al-Shu'aybi  
Director General  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

The Start Company for Trading and Industry  
Limited

Ms. Hessah Abdul Rahman al-Oun  
Chairperson of the Administrative Council  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

The Regional Centre on Agrarian Reform and  
Rural Development for the Near East

Mr. Khaldun Sbahi  
Director General  
Amman, Jordan

The Arab Organization for the Family

Ms. Sawsan Othman  
Vice President  
Cairo, Egypt

The Interreligious and International Federation for  
World Peace

Ms. Hermine Scheller  
Representative  
Beirut, Lebanon

The Sanad Association

Ms. Wafa' al-Munif  
President  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

The Businesswomen's Group in the Eastern  
Region

Ms. Aisha Almana  
Member of the Administrative Committee  
Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia

The Women's Organization for Development

Ms. Rashida Ahmed el-Khider  
Executive Secretary  
Khartoum, Sudan

The Democratic Association of Moroccan Women

Ms. Rashidah al-Tahiri  
President  
Casablanca, Morocco

2. *Regional*

The Arab Council for Childhood and Development

Ms. Ghada Ali Moussa  
Cairo, Egypt

3. *International*

Iraqi Women's Foundation

Ms. Hanaa Alasam  
DoctorInternet  
United Kingdom

Mr. Faisal Kufaishi  
Managing Director, DoctorInternet  
United Kingdom

Freedom House

Ms. Sameena Nazir Ford  
Senior Research Coordinator  
New York, United States of America

I. RESEARCH CENTRES, UNIVERSITIES AND INSTITUTES

Association of Humanistic Studies

Ms. Mouza Ghubash  
Director  
Dubai, United Arab Emirates

Woman's Research and Training Centre

Ms. Rokhsana A. Ismail  
Director  
University of Aden  
Aden, Yemen

Center of Arab Women for Training and Research

Ms. Sokeina Bouraoui  
Director  
Tunis, Tunisia

International Centre for Study and Research

Mr. Faisal Ahamed Muhammad Eid  
General Manager  
Khartoum, Sudan

J. DONOR

Arab Gulf Programme for United Nations  
Development Organizations

Mr. Zuhayr Mehio  
Consultant  
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

K. ORGANIZING BODY

Economic and Social Commission for Western  
Asia

Ms. Fatima Sbaity Kassem  
Director of the Centre for Women  
Beirut, Lebanon

Ms. Miranda Hawa  
Social Affairs Officer  
Beirut, Lebanon

Annex II

**LIST OF DOCUMENTS**

| Symbol                        | Agenda item | Title   |
|-------------------------------|-------------|---|
| E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/1       | 3           | Agenda  |
| E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/1/Add.1 | 3           | Annotated agenda  |
| E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/4       | 5a          | Ten years after Beijing: the first regional report on accomplishments, challenges and proposals |
| E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/6       | 5b          | Indicator on the situation of Arab women  |
| E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/7       | 6           | Tasks of the Committee on Women   |
| E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/8       |             | Programme of Work of the Centre for Women   |
| E/ESCWA/WOM/2003/IG.1/9       | 8           | Report of the Committee on Women on its first session   |