



**EIGHTEENTH SESSION OF THE  
CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE (CDCC)**  
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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN  
Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean

CARIBBEAN DEVELOPMENT AND COOPERATION COMMITTEE

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**REPORT ON ACTIVITIES AT THE  
CARIBBEAN SUBREGIONAL LEVEL RELATING TO  
THE BEIJING + 5 REVIEW PROCESS FOR THE CDCC MEETING**

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Among the recommendations on institutional arrangements, the Beijing Platform for Action specifically mandates the regional commissions to promote and assist the pertinent national institutions in monitoring and implementing the global Platform for Action. In fulfilling this mandate and in contributing to the Beijing +5 review process, the ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean developed a “Beijing Five-Year Review” project which aimed at providing technical assistance to the governments in the subregion; research into the progress made towards gender mainstreaming and convening the Third Subregional Conference on Women.

**1. Technical Assistance**

By resolution 52/231 the General Assembly decided to convene, from 5-9 June 2000 a special session on Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century. At this special session the General Assembly will undertake an appraisal of the progress made on the implementation of the Nairobi Forward Looking Strategies and the Beijing Platform for Action. The Assembly will also consider further actions and initiatives during the special session.

This review and appraisal process focuses on:

- (a) Good practices, positive actions, lessons learned, examples of the use of any qualitative and quantitative indicators for measuring progress, successful strategies and promising initiatives for the implementation of the Platform for Action;
- (b) Obstacles encountered and strategies for overcoming them;
- (c) Further actions and initiatives, within the overall goals of gender equality, development and peace, to accelerate implementation of the twelve critical areas of concern of the Platform for Action beyond the year 2000.

As part of the preparatory process and in providing technical assistance to ECLAC/CDCC member countries in the completion of national reports, the UNECLAC Sub-Regional office convened two meetings to assist government technical personnel in their task of completion of the national reports.

The first of these technical meetings was held in Jamaica on 13-14 May 1999 and representatives from Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, British Virgin Islands, Turks and Caicos and Jamaica attended this meeting. The second technical meeting was held on 20-21 May 1999 at ECLAC Subregional Headquarters for the Caribbean office, Trinidad and Tobago. Representatives in attendance came from Grenada, Guyana, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and Trinidad and Tobago.

Financial support for both technical meetings came from the Department for International Development (DFID) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

National reports appraising the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action have been received from Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, the British Virgin Islands, Cuba, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Netherlands Antilles, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago and the Turks and Caicos. It is noteworthy that of the countries, which attended the technical meetings, all but Montserrat have submitted their national reports.

These reports formed the basis of the preparation of the Caribbean Subregional Review and Appraisal report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (LC/CAR/G.583) which was presented at the Third Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Women held at the Trinidad Hilton Hotel, Trinidad and Tobago, 5– 7 October 1999.

## **2. Substantive Servicing of Intergovernmental meetings in relation to the Beijing + 5 Process**

### **A. ECLAC/CDCC Third Ministerial Conference on Women**

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean/Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (ECLAC/CDCC) Third Caribbean Ministerial Conference on Women: Review and Appraisal of the Fourth World Conference on Women – Platform for Action was held at the Hilton Hotel, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 5 – 7 October 1999. Fifteen members and four associate members of the Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC) attended the meeting. Other participants at the meeting included representatives from the United Nations specialized agencies, the Caribbean Community secretariat (CARICOM), the Commonwealth Secretariat and agencies/institutions from Trinidad and Tobago.

The main purpose of the meeting was to evaluate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) in three thematic areas: gender equity and poverty; gender equity and institutional arrangements for the advancement of women and human rights, peace and violence. Upon its conclusion, the Conference adopted the Port of Spain Consensus.

A report of this meeting has been prepared. (LC/CAR/ G. 584)

### **B. The Eighth Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean**

The Eighth Regional Conference was attended by delegations from the following CDCC member countries: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago. Only Suriname was represented at the ministerial level. CDCC associate

members Anguilla and the Netherlands Antilles were also in attendance. The Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos also sent delegations to observe the proceedings.

Continuous dialogue was maintained by the Caribbean delegations in attendance at the Conference as a result of which Caribbean delegations were able to achieve consensus on the areas of critical concern to the subregion. Chief among these concerns was the recognition and acknowledgement that in spite of the apparent and real advances made by women and girls in Latin America and the Caribbean, the fundamental structure of gender relations remains disadvantageous to the majority of girls and women. Other areas of concern include poverty; violence against women and women's access to and enjoyment of reproductive health and rights.

At this Eighth Regional Conference, a new Board of Presiding Officers were elected. From among the sixteen members of the new Board, Antigua and Barbuda, Cuba, the Netherlands Antilles and Suriname represent the Caribbean. The Board of Presiding Officers which meets twice a year serves as a liaison between the Governments and the secretariat of ECLAC with regard to the integration of women into development.

### **3. Research**

Gender mainstreaming was one of the strongest recommendations that came out of the Beijing Platform for Action. Governments in the subregion have attempted in various ways to advance gender equity through administrative reform and in so doing have confronted a range of conceptual and operational challenges. The mid term review provided a timely opportunity to assess how countries of the subregion have incorporated the gender perspective in national development planning and processes and to make recommendations for the way forward. In facilitating this review process, ECLAC conducted study on gender mainstreaming among ten countries, namely: Barbados, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. The study was funded and supported by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Gender Equity Fund.

The findings which are presented in a paper entitled "Gender Mainstreaming in the Caribbean" (LC/CAR/G.607) should be useful to governments in the region in their policy and programmatic efforts in the next five year period of the implementation of the Beijing platform for Action.

Arising out of this study an Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting was held on 13-14 January 2000. The participants in attendance reflected on the need to develop a standardized approach to gender mainstreaming in the region and specifically to the area of gender training. One of the recommendations arising from this Expert Group meeting was the establishment of an ongoing Ad Hoc Expert Group on Gender and Development. The suggested mandate of this group would be two-fold, namely:

- (1) To act as an advisory body to ECLAC'S technical assistance programme;
- and

(2) To monitor and evaluate gender and development goals and processes in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

#### **4. Other Activities**

In addition to the technical assistance given specific to the Beijing Plus Five review process, ECLAC also provided technical assistance to facilitate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action as follows:

(a) To the Government of Trinidad and Tobago in relation to its review of statistical needs for gender analysis and mainstreaming (October-November 1998);

(b) To the Government of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, in the conduct of a National Adolescent Fertility Workshop and assistance in the development of follow-up strategies and the conduct of adolescent fertility surveys in the preparation of the studies. June-August 1998;

(c) To the Government of Grenada in the area of early childbearing and adolescent motherhood. June- August 1998;

(d) To the Government of Suriname in the area of gender mainstreaming. October 1999; and

(e) To the Government of Antigua in the in the development of a National Action Plan for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.