



From the desk of the Focal Point

Dear Colleagues,

It is our pleasure to bring this issue of **network** to you. Chief among the items covered, and most fundamental to the mandate of this office, are the highlights of the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system. It indicates that progress has been less than optimal. It is our hope that this situation can steadily be turned around with the assistance of the new staff selection system. In this context, it will be vital to monitor the implementation of the system, with particular reference to gender targets set in the human resource action plans (HRAPs), instruments absolutely critical and complementary to the new staff selection system.

The present issue also brings to you highlights of the Secretary-General's report on reform, as well as aspects of the new staff selection system with bearing on General Service staff. We hope you will find the coverage useful. Information is power, as the cliché goes.

With this short introduction, I leave you to absorb what we are convinced is information vital to you and to the causes of gender equality and career development.

In solidarity,

Aparna Mehrotra

Secretary-General launches new round of United Nations reform Strengthening of the UN: an agenda for further change (A/57/387)

On 23 September 2002, Secretary-General Kofi Annan announced a plan to further strengthen the United Nations and improve its ability to meet the challenges placed before it by the Member States and the world's peoples.

The report sets out an "agenda for further change" that would affect the full spectrum of United Nations entities and activities. The objective was not to reduce the budget, or to respond to pressures or conditions imposed from outside. Rather, it was an initiative from within. "We must take a critical look at all our activities", wrote the Secretary-General, "and ask ourselves whether they are relevant to the implementation of the Millennium Declaration and whether they have the desired impact. And if the answer is no, we must be willing to let go."

The new effort was built on an earlier round of reform undertaken shortly after the Secretary-General took office in 1997. While much has been achieved in that effort, the United Nations faces the perpetual challenge of changing with the times, constantly adjusting to new conditions and new needs.

Highlights of the report

The report contains a wide-ranging package of pragmatic improvements affecting both substance and process, inter alia, in the following areas:

- A thorough review of the Organization's programme of work, to ensure that no time or money is wasted on out-of-date or irrelevant tasks;
- Detailed proposals for improving performance in the areas of human rights and public information;
- Reductions to avoid overlap and duplication in the number of meetings and reports produced by the Secretariat;
- Steps to improve coordination among United Nations entities at the country level;
- Changes in the budget and planning system;
- A review by an independent panel of relations between the United Nations and civil society;
- Proposals aimed at making work more rewarding for staff, as well as further improving their quality and

performance—notably by making it easier for them to move between locations, between functions and, indeed, between organizations;

- Achievement of a geographically diverse and gender-balanced workforce;
- Progress in efforts to increase the number of women among the Professional ranks, particularly at the senior levels;
- Steps to improve staff mobility and enhance career prospects for General Service staff;
- Introduction of flexible working arrangements in all Secretariat departments to increase opportunities for part-time employment and job-sharing, from 1 January 2003;
- Transformation of the Organization’s management culture—traditionally “hierarchical and rigid”—to one that stimulates new ideas, irrespective of grade, seniority and tenure;
- Better resolution of disputes to achieve a more streamlined, less litigious, system of conflict resolution;
- Achievement of a better balance in the professional and personal lives of staff members.

Next steps

The impact of these and other changes would vary from department to department, and from person to person. Many jobs would change; some functions would disappear. Some actions would take effect immediately, while others would be implemented over time. One key outcome is expected to be a programme budget proposal for 2004-2005 that incorporates the changes contained in this report and reflects some reallocation of resources to higher-priority activities.

“The need for an effective multilateral institution—one dedicated to the service of humanity as a whole—has never been more acutely felt than in the current era of globalization”, the Secretary-General says in the report. “This new age of interdependence and integration offers many opportunities to all the peoples of the world, but it also poses many dangers. The challenge ahead is to strengthen our capability for collective action and thus forge a common destiny in a time of accelerating global change.”

Highlights of the report of the Secretary-General on the improvement of the status of women in the United Nations system (A/57/447)

Overall status

The report provides information on the representation of women in the Secretariat and in other organizations of the

United Nations system covering the period 30 June 2001 to 30 June 2002. In the restricted category of staff on Professional appointments of one year or more on posts subject to geographical distribution, women account for over 41 per cent, an increase of 0.8 per cent over last year. However, overall, in the larger population of Professional staff with appointments of one year or more, women account for only 35 per cent (2,005 women out of 5,733 staff), an increase of 0.4 per cent over last year’s 34.6 per cent.

Comparative analysis of the overall representation of women in the UN Secretariat (as of 30 June 2001 and 30 June 2002)

Level	As of 30 June 2001	As of 30 June 2002	Percentages
USG	9.2	10.5	+1.3
ASG	9.6	10.2	+0.6
D-2	17.9	22.3	+4.4
D-1	30.1	28.9	1.2
P-5	29.5	29.5	Unchanged
P-4	31.4	31.4	Unchanged
P-3	31.4	31.4	Unchanged
P-2	48.0	48.8	+0.8
P-1	60.6	63.1	+2.5

Goal of 50 per cent gender balance

The overall gender balance goal of 50 per cent was met by 4 out of 24 departments and offices: the Office of Human Resources Management; the Department of Management; the Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts; and the Department of Public Information. In another 4 bodies—the Economic Commission for Europe; the Office of Central Support Services; the Department of Peacekeeping Operations/Field Administration and Logistics Division; and the United Nations Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission—women constituted less than 30 per cent.

Appointments

Appointments of women to Professional and higher-level posts declined by 7.5 per cent. Women constituted 33.2 per cent of all appointments this year as compared to 40.7 per cent last year. At the USG and ASG levels, women comprise 10.5 and 10.2 per cent, respectively.

Gender distribution of Professional and higher category of staff appointed to the UN Secretariat

Level	From 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001			From 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002			Comparative percentages increase/decrease between the two years
	Men	Women	Per cent women	Men	Women	Per cent women	
USG	4	1	20.0	10	1	9.1	-10.9
ASG	5	—	—	9	1	10.0	+10.0
D-2	5	—	—	11	3	21.4	+21.4
D-1	16	4	20.0	21	5	19.2	-0.8
P-5	35	6	14.6	51	7	12.1	-2.5
P-4	38	18	32.1	116	34	22.7	-9.4
P-3b	68	57	45.6	157	84	34.9	-10.7
P-2b	53	67	55.8	63	82	56.6	+0.8
P-1a	—	1	100.0	1	1	50.0	-50.0
Total	224	154	40.7	439	218	33.2	

Source: The Human Resources Management and Management Information System Service.

^aRecruitment at this level all but insignificant.

^bFigures at the P-2 and P-3 levels include staff recruited through the national competitive and language examinations.

Promotions

Women accounted for 44.1 per cent of all promotions, a decline of 3 per cent since last year. Only at the P-2 level was the goal of 50 per cent promotions achieved.

Gender distribution of Professional and higher category of staff promoted in the UN Secretariat between 1 July 2001 and 30 June 2002

Level	From 1 July 2000 to 30 June 2001			From 1 July 2001 to 30 June 2002			Comparative percentages increase/decrease between the two years
	Men	Women	Per cent women	Men	Women	Per cent women	
D-2	7	3	30.0	6	3	33.3	+0.3
D-1	24	13	35.1	14	11	44.0	+8.9
P-5	45	29	39.2	46	37	44.6	+5.4
P-4	57	60	51.3	77	51	39.8	+11.5
P-3	42	49	53.8	48	42	46.7	7.1
P-2	—	1	100.0	9	14	60.9	39.1
Total	175	155	47.17	200	158	44.1	

Source: Office of Human Resources Management, Human Resources Planning and Management Information Systems Service.

Mobility

More women (21 staff members) than men (11 staff members) moved between departments and duty stations on promotion, further supporting the argument that women are at least as mobile as men.

Peace operations

While the number of Professional staff with appointments of one year or more assigned to peace operations

increased from 1,415 to 1,437 (345 women and 1,092 men), the percentage of women decreased from 24.7 per cent last year to 24 per cent this year. The table below shows that in peace operations the number of men exceeds by far the number of women among Professional staff with appointments of one year or more. Men account for approximately 76 per cent of civilian mission staff.

Gender breakdown of internationally recruited UN Professional staff serving in peace operations (DPKO/OMSS administered missions) as of 8 August 2002 (PI to USG)*

Mission	Per cent women	Per cent men	Total staff	Mission	Per cent women	Per cent men	Total staff
PRSG	—	100	3	UNOHCI	21	79	124
UNDOF	—	100	5	UNMEE	22	78	83
UNGCI	—	100	1	UNOA	22	78	23
UNMOGIP	—	100	2	UNAMSIL	24	76	131
UNPOB	—	100	4	UNMIK	24	76	612
UNTSO	—	100	6	EXPNATDRC	25	75	8
UNIKOM	8	92	13	UNOMIG	25	75	28
UNFICYP	15	85	13	MONUC	26	74	207
UNOB	15	85	13	UNMIBH	31	69	133
UNIFIL	16	84	19	UNLB	33	67	6
MINURSO	18	82	34	UNPOS	33	67	3
UNMISET	18	82	164	BONUCA	34	66	9
UNAMA	20	80	5	MINUGUA	35	65	48
UNSCO	20	80	15	UNTOP	50	50	4

* Source: S:\GLOBAL\CRYSTALL REPORTS\Gender Breakdown by missions and grade.rpt

Names of missions:

Office of the Personal Representative of the Secretary-General to Lebanon (PRSG); United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF); United Nations Guard Contingent in Iraq (UNGCI); United Nations Military Service Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP); United Nations Political Office in Bougainville (UNPOB); United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO); United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM); United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP); United Nations Office in Burundi (UNOB); United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL); United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO); United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNMISET); United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA); Office of the United Nations Special Coordinator for the Middle East (UNSCO); United Nations Office of the Humanitarian Coordinator for Iraq (UNOHCI); United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE); United Nations Office in Angola (UNOA); United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL); United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK); Expert Panel on natural resources for the Democratic Republic of the Congo (EXPNATDR); United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG); United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC); United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina (UNMIBH); United Nations Logistics Base, Brindisi (UNLB); United Nations Political Office for Somalia (UNPOS); United Nations Peace-building Support Mission in Central African Republic (BONUCA); United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights in Guatemala (MINUGUA); United Nations Tajikistan Office of Peace-building (Untop).

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(a) Women at the higher levels in peace operations

Of 28 peace operations, six missions comprise men only. Twenty-two operations are dominated by men (with more than 70 per cent).

In peace operations at the D-1 level and above, women constitute only 4.2 per cent (4 out of 92 staff at this level). Moreover, of the 28 peace operations, 24 have no women at these levels. There is one woman at the level of Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Georgia (USG); and three at the level of Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General (the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Georgia and Guatemala).

(b) Field Service category

In this category, out of 1,636 staff working in peace operations, women constitute 22.2 per cent, with only 2.3 per cent (2 out of 86) at levels equivalent to the Professional category (FS6 and FS7) (A/57/447).

United Nations system

As at December 2001, the overall percentage of women in the Professional and higher categories stood at 34.1 per cent in the 30 entities of the UN system, a minimal increase of 0.4 per cent from the year 2000.

Potential and substantial causes for slow growth

Gender equality at the Professional and higher levels has been less than impressive. While further analysis would be required to pinpoint causes with exactitude, the report revisits some causes of slow growth. With specific reference to the special measures, the report states that prior to this new system, the system of special measures for the advancement of women in the Secretariat had been a principal method to achieve the gender balance target of 50 per cent at all levels. Because special measures are no longer as explicit a tool under the new system, and responsibility and accountability has passed to department heads under the human resources action plans, greater attention will have to be given by all actors concerned to its approach in the new system on gender balance. Ongoing and strict monitoring of the new system and future development of supporting tools and training programmes by OHRM are critical to its success.

The future

The Secretary-General's report concludes that during the period referred to (30 June 2001 to 30 June 2002) there have been several instances of innovative planning and projects to achieve gender equality goals. With the introduction of the

new system and new management tools, such as human resources action plans, individual accountability of managers and the appointment of an Ombudsman, the Secretariat is expected to demonstrate a better performance. Progress on these fronts will now need to be monitored, evaluated and effected by OHRM and the Office of the Special Adviser, with the performance of individual departments being reflected in future reports of the Secretary-General to the General Assembly and the Commission on the Status of Women.

Further improvement in the representation of women in the UN Secretariat will, however, depend on a number of factors. Some of these would include:

- The effectiveness of the of the implementation of Human Resources Action Plans (HRAPS) for 2001-2002 in the new system of recruitment, promotion and placement;
- Reconfigured roles of departmental focal points to facilitate achievement and monitoring of gender targets;
- More effective and early mechanisms of complaint resolution;
- Work/life policy and its effective application;
- Identifying and addressing the causes of the separation rates of women;
- More effective attention to career development for Professional and General Service staff;
- Effective opportunities for spousal employment.

In your interest ... reports

- The **Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)** at the request of the General Assembly, has issued a report on possible discrimination due to nationality, race, sex, religion and language in recruitment, promotion and placement in the United Nations (A/56/956). The Fifth Committee is to consider the report at its fifty-seventh session. The report states that although some strides have been made in achieving gender equality, "the process has been very slow; men have been more likely to be hired, promoted and reappointed, particularly at P-4 to D-2 levels" and "there has been an increase in the proportion of women separating from the Organization, from 42 per cent in 1998 to 48 per cent in 2001. The recruitment trend for women does not even match the separation trend, which indicates that the Organization is unlikely to meet its gender parity target without concentrated efforts to recruit females and retain the female staff currently employed." Furthermore, it states that it is necessary "to counteract the rising separation rate of women from the Organization" and concludes that "more attention needs to be given to recruiting and promoting women at the higher levels and to counteract the rising separation of women from the organizations." OHRM's new staff selection system could represent a significant improvement over the current system, which was labour-intensive and perceived to be lacking in fairness and objectivity. In a note accompanying the report, the Secretary-

General reaffirmed his commitment to ensuring that discrimination is not tolerated at the UN and that any allegations of discrimination should be promptly addressed.

- The **International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)** prepares an annual report to its Council on the recruitment and status of women in the Organization. Efforts continue to improve the status of women in ICAO and vacancy notices are now included in two web sites on the Internet, namely, ICAO and that of the UN. But, the number of applications received from female candidates for these posts continues to lag behind that of male candidates. In addition, the small percentage of Professional female staff in most aviation administrations limits the possibility of recruiting women for technical positions in ICAO. However, high on the agenda of ICAO is ensuring that the gains that have been made are not eroded as a result of downsizing.

- The Minister for Gender, Labour and Social Development of Uganda reported to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which met in New York during the month of September, among other things, that the proportion of women in decision-making posts in her country had risen considerably, from 17 per cent in 1994 to 39 per cent today. Women now hold such key posts as Vice-President, Deputy Chief Justice, Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Deputy Inspector-General of Police.

In your interest . . . policy issues

- **General Service staff and the new staff selection system (ST/AI/2002/4)**

Below are some of the benefits of the system that will be extended to staff at the GS-5 level and above:

- Generic job descriptions (GJDs) for General Service (GS) posts will be available for staff to review in order to assist them in planning and preparing for their future career moves;
- The formalization of mobility through specified time-occupancy limits will promote more lateral moves, giving GS staff more opportunities to undertake new and challenging functions and to develop new skills and experiences;
- GS staff on mission detail receiving Special Post Allowances (SPAs) to a higher-level post for at least two years will be eligible for consideration for non-mission posts at their respective SPA level at the 15-day mark in the same manner as laterals (please note that this does not apply to SPAs from the GS to the Professional category, as selection to this category from the GS category could only be done through G-to-P examinations);

- GS staff may also apply and be considered for posts two or more levels above their current level (except for GS to P);
- Internal GS staff would continue to be given priority consideration over external candidates in that: (i) posts may not be advertised externally unless it is established that there are no suitable internal candidates; and (ii) external recruitment is possible only after it has been established that there are no suitable candidates at the duty station;
- GS staff that are pre-approved by a Central Review Panel, but are not selected by the Head of Department/Office, will be placed on a roster and may be considered for similar posts in the future. (Clarifications given to the Office of the Focal Point by staff in the Rules and Regulations Unit, OHRM, in August 2002.)
- **L-series staff and the new staff selection system** (information provided by the Office of Human Resources Management)

Under the new system and in accordance with ST/AI/2002/4, in particular section 5.5 (b) (ii):

- Women staff who hold a current appointment at the L-3 level may be considered for vacancies at the P-4 level at the 30-day mark, provided that they have been in the service of the Organization for a cumulative period of at least one year accrued over two years immediately preceding the application.
- Women staff who hold a current appointment at the L-4 level may be considered for vacancies at the P-4 and P-5 levels at the 30-day mark, provided also that they have been in the service of the Organization for a cumulative period of at least one year accrued over two years immediately preceding the application.

Previously, under ST/AI/1999/9 on special measures for the achievement of gender equality, and in particular its section 14, women holding a current appointment at the L-3 and L-4 levels, who have been in the service of the Organization for a cumulative period of one year accrued over the two years immediately preceding application for a particular vacancy, were eligible to apply for vacancies at the P-4 level that have been circulated internally.

Normally for P-4 posts, vacancies were only advertised internally, so the special measures permitted L-3 and L-4 women who met the “cumulative one-year requirement” to apply and be considered as external candidates, but not as internal candidates.

- **Entitlement to paternity leave**

Readers of **network** are reminded of the entitlement to paternity leave. Provided that a male spouse holds a

100-series appointment, he may use any unused portion of his female spouse's maternity leave, provided the female spouse is also holding a 100-series appointment with the Organization. For more information, please read HR Management Policies and Practices, No. 1, Paternity Leave, An Occasional Series, 4 January 2002.

Meetings around the UN ...

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), New York, 3 to 21 June 2002

At the conclusion of its three-week session, and after having considered reports of seven States parties to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, CEDAW made recommendations for the advancement of women in Belgium, Denmark, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Suriname, Tunisia, Ukraine and Zambia. CEDAW is the monitoring body of the Convention and consists of 23 members elected in their individual capacities. In her concluding remarks, the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Angela E. V. King, summarized the work of the session, saying that the constructive dialogue between the experts and government representatives provided a framework for better implementation of the Convention at the domestic level—not only in the countries reviewed but in all State parties to the Convention. (For further information, please visit <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw>)

Exceptional session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), New York, 5 to 23 August 2002

(For further information, please visit <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/cedaw>)

During the **XIV International AIDS Conference** in Barcelona, July 2002, an official from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) stated that experience indicates that women and girls in developing countries have little control over their own sexual relations, and face high levels of poverty and gender discrimination. Hence, they are facing heightened risks of HIV infection. Much more needs to be done to enable them to protect themselves from catching the HIV/AIDS virus. Women and girls were becoming the prime victims of the epidemic, with 75 per cent of new HIV infections globally now being attributed to heterosexual sex. Men were eight times as likely to transmit HIV/AIDS to women through unsafe sex as women were to transmit it to men. It was further stated that making contraceptive devices, such as condoms, more affordable to populations in need was crucial, since simply enhancing condom access did not guarantee that they would be used.

Security Council, New York, 25 July 2002

The Security Council opened a debate on **women, peace and security**, in which it urged the United Nations to incorporate a gender perspective in its approaches to peace. Women were playing an increasing role in preventing war and fostering peace, yet much more remained to be done to fully incorporate gender perspectives into conflict resolution and reconstruction, said the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations. He took the occasion to reiterate Secretary-General Kofi Annan's "zero-tolerance" policy on the engagement of peacekeepers in acts of sexual exploitation, harassment and the trafficking of women and girls. Also addressing the Council, Ms. Angela E. V. King, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, reported on a recent study being carried out by the Inter-agency Task Force on Women, Peace and Security that illustrated how women in many conflict areas have been able to function as active peacemakers, cautioning against the "traditional thinking that war and peace ignores women or regards them only as victims". The study addressed the impact of armed conflict on women and girls and the role of women in peace-building, while also providing the first systemic overview of gender-related activities carried out by the UN in the field of peace and security. The study contained several useful recommendations emphasizing the importance of incorporating a gender perspective in all peace and humanitarian operations, and ensuring that peace agreements hold the parties accountable for protecting women and children. In addition, the UN and its Member States should also work to increase the number of women in policy-making positions.

The fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly opened on 10 September 2002 at United Nations Headquarters, in New York. Agenda item 102 ("Advancement of women") was taken up from 9 September to 11 October 2002. Ms. Carolyn Hannan, Director, Division on the Advancement of Women, introduced the reports before the Committee, dealing with both the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the Focal Point for Women. With respect to the latter, Ms. Hannan, on behalf of Ms. Angela E. V. King, Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, introduced the report of the Secretary-General on the Improvement of the Status of Women in the United Nations system (A/57/447). (For further information go to www.un.org/womenwatch/daw and look for a link to all the GA documents for these agenda items under the title "The fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly"). Ms. Hannan stated, among other things, that progress, albeit slow, continued in the representation of women on geographical appointments, with women accounting for 41 per cent of these posts. For details, see "Highlights of the report . . ." in this issue of

network. (Please refer to Ms. Hannan's speech to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly at www.un.org/womenwatch/daw).

Follow-up to the United Nations-sponsored Millennium World Peace Summit, New York, 9 September 2002

Two years ago, 1,200 of the world's religious and spiritual leaders gathered in New York for the Millennium World Peace Summit. The mission of the Summit was to create a greater role for religious and moral leaders around the world to help bring peace to longstanding conflicts. Only 15 per cent of the delegates were women. Consensus emerged that involving women in conflict resolution was vital to peace. Therefore, some of those religious leaders reconvened at the UN on 9 September 2002 to launch the Global Peace Initiative of Women Religious and Spiritual Leaders. The initiative demands a greater role for women at the negotiating table and spotlights successful women-led efforts at reconciliation. Hundreds of delegates would convene in October at the United Nations Office in Geneva to prepare a plan of action.

Congratulations to ...

Mr. Sergio de Mello (Brazil) for his appointment as High Commissioner for Human Rights. Mr. de Mello is a UN veteran who has worked with the Organization since 1969 in different capacities. He had his first appointment with the UN High Commission for Refugees in Geneva. Mr. de Mello had a varied and distinguished career through many different postings, such as Humanitarian Coordinator for the Great Lakes Region; UN Deputy High Commissioner for Refugees; Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs; Special Representative of the Secretary-General for the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), and UN Head of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). Mr. de Mello assumed his new Geneva-based responsibilities on 12 September 2002.

Ms. Catherine Bertini (United States) for her recent appointment as the Secretary-General's Personal Humanitarian Envoy to lead a concerted international effort to alleviate the plight of the Palestinian people. Ms. Bertini will assess the nature and the scale of the humanitarian crisis and review the humanitarian needs and report back to the Secretary-General. Ms. Bertini was the former head of the World Food Programme (WFP), where she served 10 years as Executive Director of the United Nations World Food Programme, the world's largest international

humanitarian agency. (Please note that Ms. Bertini has been appointed by the Secretary-General as Under-Secretary-General for Management, effective 1 January 2003.)

Ms. Anna Tibaijuka (Tanzania), present Executive Director of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), for her new appointment at the level of Under-Secretary-General for Habitat.

Mr. Ibrahim Fall (Senegal), a former UN Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, for his appointment as the Secretary-General's Special Representative for the Great Lakes Region.

Farewell to ...

Ms. Mary Robinson (Ireland), who served for a term of five years as High Commissioner for Human Rights and left the United Nations on 11 September 2002. In her closing remarks, Ms. Robinson said that she took heart from her perception that human rights are being increasingly accepted as a fundamental part of development. In responding to a question about what she considered the worst human rights violation, she replied, "Extreme poverty." **Network** wishes her the best of success in her future endeavours.

Women in the news ...

- Over 2000 women from around the world gathered at Makerere University, Kampala, Uganda, from 21 to 26 July 2002, for the **Women's World 2002: the 8th International Interdisciplinary Congress on Women**. The Congress's overall objective was to bring together women and men of all persuasions and backgrounds, from the local, national and international community, to discuss gender-focused research and interdisciplinary scholarship at both local and international levels. Uganda was selected on the basis of the progress made in terms of gender equity in areas of social, political and economic development. The Congress takes place every three years, and it first started in Israel in 1981. (For further information, please go to <http://www.uea.ac.uk/dev/greatnet/>)
- The wives of the leaders of 18 African countries gathered in Geneva on 17 July 2002 to establish the **African First Ladies Organization against HIV/AIDS**. The First Ladies aspired to use their status and leadership to inspire communities, families and individuals to play a more active role in turning back the epidemic. Of the more than 40 million people living with HIV/AIDS worldwide, an estimated 18 million were women. In sub-

Saharan Africa, women accounted for 55 per cent of the adults infected with HIV.

- In July 2002, the treaty to establish a permanent **International Criminal Court (ICC)**, adopted in Rome in 1998 by 120 Member States of the United Nations, entered into force. The ICC's Assembly of State Parties, its parent body, approved procedures for electing the Court's 18 judges, six of whom must be women.
- At its fifty-sixth session, the General Assembly, by its decision 56/319 of 1 May 2002, appointed five members to the **Joint Inspection Unit (JIU)**. For the first time, two of the 11 inspectors of the JIU are women: Mrs. Doris Muck-Bertrand and Ms. M. Deborah.

Women and peacekeeping Civilian police judgement

The Southampton Employment Tribunal of England ruled, in a 21-page judgement, that a United States police-woman, who was fired as a United Nations police officer in Bosnia after reporting an alleged prostitution racket involving her colleagues, was unfairly dismissed from her job. The Tribunal plans to hold another hearing later in October 2002 to decide the amount of compensation due to the police officer.

Article

Briefing on the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) Gender Adviser

Ms. Angela E. V. King, Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, convened and moderated a meeting on gender and the United Nations in Afghanistan on 15 July 2002. In this context, Ms. Fatiha Serour (DESA/DAW) gave a briefing on the progress achieved so far by the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). She has been working for the past two months as Interim UN Gender Adviser for Afghanistan in the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), Mr. Lakhdar Brahimi. Ms. Gulbadan Habibi (UNICEF) also described her experience as one of four Afghan-American representatives in the recent Loya Jirga.

Ms. Serour first outlined her responsibilities as Gender Adviser. These included: (1) advising the SRSG and heads of agencies on how to mainstream gender and develop a model of integration of gender into all activities; (2) ensur-

ing the use of the gender perspective in implementing the Bonn Agreement; (3) encouraging gender balance in recruitment within UNAMA; and (4) designing a coordination mechanism/framework that would encourage inter-agency dialogue and joint or collaborative actions.

Ms. Serour emphasized the importance of communication between agencies in order to reduce the duplication and conflict of interests that often hinder progress. She reported that she found agencies eager to find practical mechanisms to mainstream gender—with one mechanism being strategies that encourage women to join the workforce. To this end, Ms. Serour helped to create a network of 45 Afghan women delegates, representing all regions of the country. These regional leaders will be critical in steps taken towards capacity-building, and will receive preparation for the next elections, perhaps even as candidates.

Ms. Habibi prefaced her comments by stating that after 30 years of conflict and instability in Afghanistan, democracy is not easy to handle; there remains many difficulties to overcome. Nonetheless, there is much enthusiasm among Afghans, and women in particular, who seem to have “lost their fear”. Ms. Habibi, who sat in nightly meetings with women from all different regions, listening to their stories and concerns, reported that “they want so much”. They want the UN to be there for them and are ready and willing to create positive change. As a woman who grew up in Afghanistan, Ms. Habibi emphasized that unfortunately this is the most divided—ethnically, linguistically, politically—that she has seen Afghan women in twenty years. She stressed that the “unification” of Afghan citizens will take much longer to rebuild than the physical infrastructure of the country.

Ms. Habibi emphasized the need for the UN to work at the village level in all parts of Afghanistan, and specifically to abandon a Kabul-centric approach. She also pointed out that there was only 10 per cent female representation in this Loya Jirga. She would like to see 50 per cent representation in the next Loya Jirga, in less than two years. She noted that the 16-year-olds of today would be able to vote in two years. She also added, “Now it is time for the UN to seriously think and act on how to mobilize and prepare young people and women for democracy. This is the time to prove ourselves and be serious; otherwise all our talk without action to me is lip service, and once we lose this chance, it is too late.”

As Interim Gender Adviser, one of Ms. Serour's duties was to assist the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in finding candidates for the permanent position. It is hoped that the position will be filled on a more long-term basis as soon as possible.

Flash flash flash ...

- **The United Nations Development Fund for Women** (UNIFEM) announced on 7 August 2002 that grants totalling over \$1 million were received to support projects addressing gender-based violence, including sexual abuse, rape, so-called “honour crimes” and domestic violence.
- In the context of abuse, **Network** would like to recommend a very practical and educational book called *The Emotionally Abused Woman—Overcoming Destructive Patterns and Reclaiming Yourself*, written by Beverly Engel, M.F.C.C., author of *The Right to Innocence*. It discusses a number of issues, including why emotional abuse is so insidious, women as victims, domination and various other topics that will help women deal with difficult situations.
- Scientists believe they may have uncovered the reason why women live longer than men—they are better sleepers. Lead researcher Dr. Alexandros Vgontzas, Pennsylvania State University, thought that current sleep research could help explain why women live, on average, several years longer than men. However, Neil Stanley, of the Human Psychopharmacology Research Unit at Surrey University, told the British Broadcasting Corporation that it was difficult to draw general conclusions about the effects of sleep because each person varies from the next. However, he said, “We know good sleep is central to good health. It is wrong to perceive sleep as a passive state of unconsciousness; the body is doing an awful lot while we sleep.” (The research was published in the journal *Chemistry and Industry*, *BBC News/Health*, 15 July 2002)

You can read all of **network** online at <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>
If you want to receive **network** by e-mail, please send a request to dain@un.org

Web sites—Every issue of **network** will include web sites on gender issues that we think our Readers will benefit from. Should you have some that you want to share with **network**, please let us know.

- <http://www.un.org/osagi>: The new web site for the office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI), including the Focal Point for Women.
- <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fp.htm>: Home page of the Focal Point for Women.
- <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpnetworks.htm>: Issues of **network**, **The UN Women’s Newsletter**, produced by OSAGI, will be posted regularly on this site. In addition, please refer to <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/fpgenderbalancestats.htm> to review the Secretary-General’s reports on the Status of Women in the UN system.
- <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/region/asro/bangkok/download/sextech.pdf>: Book of the International Labour Office, “Action against Sexual Harassment at Work in Asia and the Pacific”, prepared by ILO, Bangkok area office, and the East Asia Multidisciplinary Advisory Team. The publication discusses, among other things, the concern with sexual harassment in Asia and the Pacific. Over the past 10 years, many initiatives against sexual harassment have been initiated in the Asia and Pacific region: women’s organizations have advocated change, Governments have adopted new legislation or taken other measures, and workers and employers have taken steps against sexual harassment. The book also explores the different perceptions regarding, as well as attitudes towards, sexual harassment, and outlines the effects of sexual harassment on victims, enterprises and organizations, and society as a whole.
- <http://doso.unsystem.org>: UN System Directory of Senior Officials. The Directory is a compilation of contact information for nearly 1,800 senior officials from close to 60 entities within the UN system. For further questions, please contact ceb@unsystem.org
- <http://fasngo.org/en/leadbank/index.htm>: A leadership bank of African women.

- <http://www.iiav.nl/mapping-the-world>: Locates women's centres worldwide dealing with issues from gender mainstreaming to the AIDS/HIV pandemic.
- <http://genderdiversity.cgiar.org>: Join the database of women, scientists and professionals to receive timely

information about international job opportunities, grants and fellowships of the Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research (CGIAR).

*Dear Readers . . . If there is any manager—female or male—that you would like to recognize as somebody who shares our commitment to improving the status of women in the Secretariat, let us know. We will highlight her/his work in our next issue. If you want to send us your comments about **network**, an article that you wrote etc. we would be delighted to receive it. The more interaction we have with our readers, the better!!!*



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