International Conference: Gender Mainstreaming and the MDGs
28-30 March 2005, Islamabad, Pakistan

Abstract Format for Speakers:

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Workshop: Please indicate which Workshop you wish to participate in as a speaker:

[X] Workshop A: *Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (MDG 3)*
[   ] Workshop B: *Gender Equality, Human Rights, and Peace (Millennium Declaration and MDG 8)*
[   ] Workshop C: *Gender Equality and Poverty Alleviation for Rural Women (MDGs 1, 7 & 8)*
[   ] Workshop D: *Gender Equality and Health (MDGs 4, 5 & 6)*
[   ] Workshop E: *Gender Equality and Education (MDGs 2, 3 & 8)*

Session: Please indicate which Session, of the Workshop you indicated above, you wish to participate in as a speaker:

[   ] Session 1
[   ] Session 2
[X] Session 3

Session title/theme: **<u>Gender Roles in Media and Entertainment</u>**

Paper Title: <u>Gender, Media and ICT: United Nations Contribution, Impact and perspectives</u>

Outline of the Abstract:

I. *Introduction and Definition of the Session theme:*

New media made the process of receiving information interactive, which means that everyone involved and participating makes a difference in defining the content of messages or even benefiting from the process of message's creation and broadcasting. Everywhere the potential exists for the media to make a far greater contribution to the advancement of women.

However, there are substantial inequalities in women's and men's access to their use and production, which do not allow women to take fair advantage of new opportunities and fully contribute to development. Low income, time constrains, illiteracy, including computer illiteracy, lack of leadership skills, and cultural barriers affect access to new media and ICT-related facilities, training and equipment, restraining women from participation in directing, creating and receiving gender-neutral messages.

II. *Linkage of the Session Theme with the Workshop title:*

Equal participation in and access to media and ICT by women as well as fair projection of female images in mass media and entertainment products were identified as a critical area of concern in the Beijing Platform for Action (1995). This document called for the empowerment of women through enhancement of their skills, knowledge and access to information technology, recognizing that they are inseparable from changing attitudes and eliminating cultural barriers, fighting global poverty and illiteracy, which prevent women from fully contributing to global development.

To provide in-depth analysis of linkages between gender roles in media and entertainment and empowerment of women, the presentation will focus on the following:

I. *Issues, threats and challenges for achieving gender equality in media and ICT*

Issues: Underrepresentation, Leadership, Cultural and attitudinal barriers, Gender-based discrimination, Gender roles in entertainment, Statistics gap
Threats / Challenges: Illiteracy, Poverty and socio-economic factors, Conflicts and Security

II. *UN involvement and contribution*

CEDAW (1975), Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995), ECOSOC Ministerial Declaration (2002)
Commission of Status of Women (40th (1996) and 47th (2002) sessions): national plans and reports on implementation of Platform for Action
UN Goodwill Ambassadors
UN-NGO-Informal Regional Network (UN-NGO-IRENE) /NGO Section/ECOSOC/ UNDESA
MDGs as a measurement of added value to gender equality in media and entertainment
UN forums and conferences: World Summit on the Information Society (Geneva – 2003, Tunis - 2005)

III. *Success stories: national governments' actions*

The examples of success stories will be drawn from the following UN member states responses to the questionnaire on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly (2000): India, Japan, Lithuania, Mauritania, Mexico, Egypt, and Paraguay.

Each of these examples will describe specific actions initiated or implemented by national governments in order to achieve gender equality and empowerment in the area of media and ICT.

IV. **_Recommendations in reference to achieving the Session Theme's goal and corresponding MDGs_**

1. Developing and implementing of national policies and strategies to promote women's participation and access to expression and decision-making in and through the media and ICTs;

2. Encouraging balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media through raising public awareness and launching training programs on gender inequalities and aspects of development;

3. Collecting gender-desegregated and -oriented statistics in areas of women's media and ICTs representation, leadership, portrayal, usage of ICTs;

4. Promoting women's employment in information society;

5. Mobilizing resources and strengthening partnership among multiple stakeholders for a knowledge-based, development-oriented, people-centered and Inclusive Information Society for All and everywhere on the Earth.