



# MÉXICO

**Statement by H.E. María del Rocío García Gaytán,  
President of the National Women's Institute of Mexico**

**Fifty-sixth Session  
of the Commission on the  
Status of Women**

**27 February 2012**

**(check against delivery)**



Madame Chairperson, distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Mexican delegation I would like to acknowledge the support the Board has afforded this Commission in following up on commitments related to the enforcement of the human rights of women in all spheres.

During its first year of operations under the leadership of Ms. Michelle Bachelet, UN Women has undertaken many initiatives, such as the opening of a new Regional Centre for Latin America and the Caribbean in Panama. We would like to congratulate ourselves and the Executive Board on these achievements and take this opportunity to call on all countries to back the UN Women Strategic Plan for 2011-2013, which, together with the *16-step policy agenda aimed at ending violence against women*, provide guidelines for our national plans and programs.

Madame Chairperson,

In 2011, at the invitation of the Mexican government, we received the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights; the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food; the Rapporteur on People Deprived of their Freedom and the Rapporteur for Migrant Workers from the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR), and three of the five members of the UN Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances. The recommendations issued by these bodies will serve Mexico as a framework for future action.

As a State party, we remain committed to guaranteeing the rights protected by CEDAW, have complied in both time and form with the submission of reports, and are fully aware of the challenges we face in combating violence against women, impunity and organized crime.

### **Collaboration and Statistical Tools**

Mexico reiterates its commitment to continue working with UN Women, the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (ECLAC) and other UN agencies and programs, including the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), with a view to sharing and promoting gender equality initiatives in all spheres of life. Triangular cooperation with UN Women has enabled us to share experiences, institutional progress, strategies and pro-equality affirmative actions with other countries in the region.

We applaud the launch of the *Evidence and Data for Gender Equality (EDGE)* Initiative by the UN Statistical Division and aspire to contribute to it. We also believe the work, experience and lessons learned from the *Friends of the Chair to the UN Statistical Commission* are fundamental to the compilation and standardization of global indicators of violence against women.

By the same token, to strengthen these processes on a national and regional level, Mexico holds an annual *International Meeting on Gender Statistics*. Last year marked the 12<sup>th</sup> version of this joint effort by INMUJERES, the National Statistics and Geography Institute (INEGI), UN Women, ECLAC and the Statistical Conference of the Americas, which convenes National Mechanisms for the Advancement of Women and the region's statistical institutes. Furthermore, Mexico presented the results of its *Satellite Account of Unpaid Work in the Home* at the 9<sup>th</sup> *International Meeting on Public Policies, Time Use and Care Economy*. This landmark report is the first of its kind compiled not just in Mexico, but in the region. Thanks to its findings, today we know, for instance, that in 2009 women occupied in the informal sector devoted an average of 21 hours a week to caretaking tasks and 19 hours a week to informal work, and that the economic value of unpaid work in the home was equivalent to 22.6 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) – more than the value of oil revenues in the period.

In terms of inter-institutional cooperation, we conducted a *National Survey on the Dynamics of Domestic Relationships (ENDIREH 2011)*<sup>1</sup>. This is the third survey of its type, applied to collect information for comparative purposes, identify trends and assist in the drawing up of specific programs.

We are convinced that incorporating the gender perspective into data generation and analysis tools makes it easier to discern women's needs, in turn, facilitating the drawing up of specific policies and programs that have a tangible impact on their lives. There are still areas in which quantifiable data is lacking, such as access to resources like land, business ownership and job opportunities, decision-making vis-à-vis household spending and minority groups like migrant, indigenous and rural women. Furthermore, we are promoting the harmonization of legislation to have femicide classified as a crime and the homologation of administrative records pertaining to crimes against women.

Madame Chairperson,

While we are aware of the challenges Mexico still faces in terms of promoting gender equality and combating violence against women, political will, a legislature and an executive working in synergy, together with the input of civil society, have been strategic factors in consolidating the regulatory and institutional frameworks we currently boast.

As regards human rights, in 2011, in compliance with international commitments undertaken and at the recommendations of their governing bodies, such as the CEDAW Committee and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, among others, Mexico reported significant progress in bringing its regulatory framework into line with international standards.

Supplementary human rights provisions were incorporated into several articles<sup>2</sup> of the Constitution. In addition to terminology modifications, the powers of the competent autonomous body were outlined and it was made mandatory for authorities to take action to prevent, investigate, sanction and rectify human rights violations. The law now clearly stipulates which rights can neither be restricted nor suspended, even in emergency situations, pursuant to the American Convention on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international instruments.

Furthermore, a "writ of amparo"<sup>3</sup> can now be filed when rights protected by Mexican law and international treaties ratified by Mexico are deemed to have been violated. With regard to the trafficking of people, the Mexican Constitution provides for coordination among all three levels of government, empowers congress to promulgate a general anti-people trafficking law and have this crime deemed serious, with all the concomitant legal implications.

Amendments and addendums made in 2011 to the *Planning Law* incorporate cultural feasibility, the gender perspective and the equal rights of men and women as basic principles to be taken into account by the Federal Public Administration (FPA), and promote the generation of indicators to gauge the impact of all programs implemented. Likewise, amendments<sup>4</sup> to the *Federal Budget and Fiscal Responsibility Law* prohibit cuts to the budgets of pro-equality programs to levels below the previous fiscal year and provide for gender classification in the expenditure budget, so that spending provisions for men and women can be identified and differentiated.

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<sup>1</sup> The ENDIREH 2011 survey was conducted by INEGI in conjunction with INMUJERES and UN Women.

<sup>2</sup> The reform was promulgated on June 9, 2011; 11 articles -1, 3, 11, 15, 18, 29, 33, 89, 97, 102 and 105- underwent modifications.

<sup>3</sup> Articles 94, 100, 103, 107 and 112.

<sup>4</sup> Passed by Congress on December 6, 2011 by majority vote.

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Inmujeres, Mexico. 56<sup>th</sup> Period of Sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW/ONU), V. 19, February 27-March 9, 2011

All new laws promulgated include the gender perspective. Of particular note, however, are the *Law on Refugees and Complementary Protection*, which provides for non-discrimination by reason of gender and state care for pregnant women and victims of people trafficking, sexual and gender-oriented violence, among others; the *Migration Law*, which outlines institutional responsibilities and provides for the protection of the rights of migrant women at migratory stations; and the *International Cooperation for Development Law*, which focuses on sustainable human development and adopts gender equality and the strengthening of the State of Law as its guiding principles.

To foster gender mainstreaming and ensure the incorporation of gender perspective in the legislative federal branch, in October 2011 INMUJERES entered into an agreement with congress via the Research Center for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality at the service of the latter.

Madame Chairperson,

During my term at the helm of INMUJERES and in keeping with the *Program for Equal Opportunities among Women and Men (PROIGUALDAD 2008-2012)* and the Equality Law, we have made a concerted effort to promote the institutionalization and mainstreaming of the gender perspective, and the harmonization of state legislation. We firmly believe that a clear, well-defined, inclusive legal framework is the basis for consolidating policies that promote equality, non-discrimination and the eradication of violence against women in all its forms as state commitments.

In December 2011, 17 of Mexico's 32 states had legislation in place for the prevention and eradication of discrimination<sup>5</sup>; 26 had a *Law for Equality Between Women and Men*<sup>6</sup>; 12 had an Equality System<sup>7</sup> and 19 had a related plan or program; 18 had published laws to combat people trafficking<sup>8</sup>; all 32 had a *General Law Entitling Women Access to a Life Free of Violence* and had implemented state systems to prevent, sanction and eradicate violence against women and assist victims; and 28 had published state regulations<sup>9</sup>. By the same token, the trafficking of people was classified as a crime in all 32 states and ten had passed and published laws classifying femicide as a crime.<sup>10</sup>

### **Earmarked Budget**

Madame Chairperson,

We have incorporated the gender perspective into budget and program planning regulations. Since 2008, it has been good practice to include an article in the Federal Expenditure Budget (PEF) decree published every year to the effect that gender perspective must be promoted in the drawing up, implementation, follow up and evaluation of FPA programs, broken down by program and government agency.

<sup>5</sup> Baja California Sur, Campeche, Coahuila, Colima, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Mexico City, Durango, Estado de México, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Michoacán, Nayarit, San Luis Potosí, Tamaulipas, Yucatán and Zacatecas.

<sup>6</sup> Baja California Sur, Campeche, Coahuila, Colima, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Mexico City, Durango, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Estado de México, Michoacán, Morelos, Nayarit, Nuevo León, Oaxaca, Puebla, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tamaulipas, Veracruz, Yucatán and Zacatecas.

<sup>7</sup> Baja California Sur, Chiapas, Mexico City, Estado de México, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Puebla, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Sonora, Veracruz and Zacatecas.

<sup>8</sup> Baja California, Chiapas, Colima, Mexico City, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Nayarit, Nuevo León, Puebla, Quintana Roo, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tabasco, Tamaulipas, Tlaxcala, Veracruz and Yucatán.

<sup>9</sup> All except Campeche, Durango, Querétaro and Tamaulipas.

<sup>10</sup> Colima, Mexico City, Durango, Guerrero, Guanajuato, Estado de México, Morelos, San Luis Potosí, Tamaulipas and Veracruz. Penalties range from 70 years of prison, while some states, Mexico City included, deem the existence of a relationship, past or present, as an aggravating circumstance.

As a result, between 2008 and 2011 funds earmarked for equality increased by 112.3 percent. In 2012<sup>11</sup>, INMUJERES was allocated 18.34 percent<sup>12</sup> more funds than in 2011 and UN Women received US\$1,610,305.96<sup>13</sup> as a counterparty to develop projects in Mexico. A budget of US\$20,128,824.48<sup>14</sup> was authorized for the *Program to Support State Women's Institutions (PAIMEF)* for the implementation and execution of programs for the prevention of violence against women, while US\$5,006,372.79<sup>15</sup> went to the *Social Co-Investment Program* for civil society projects, both run by the Social Development Institute (INDESOL). The Department of the Economy (SE) was assigned US\$50,098,682.45<sup>16</sup> for programs to finance micro, small and medium companies and general partnerships, and the *Program for Women in the Agrarian Sector (PROMUSAG)*, run by the Department of Agrarian Reform (SRA), received US\$72,463,768.12<sup>17</sup>.

Notwithstanding, our goal is to approach the entire budget from a gender perspective, without the need for specific earmarks.

### Funds and Programs

All 32 states presently have mechanisms for the advancement of women, as do over 50 percent of municipalities. INMUJERES backs two programs designed to strengthen these organizations:

1. **Program to Strengthen Gender Perspective Mainstreaming<sup>18</sup> (PFTPG)** in states. Between 2008 and 2011, this program received US\$46,207,672.98<sup>19</sup>, and has a budget of US\$20,128,824.48<sup>20</sup> in 2012.
2. **Program to Strengthen Municipal Gender Equality Policies (FODEIMM)**. This program has provided assistance for over 2,008 projects since it was created in 2005<sup>21</sup> and has been allocated a budget of US\$8,051,529.79<sup>22</sup> for 2012.

It should be noted that the operating rules of these two programs stipulate that they must fall into line with international instruments for the protection of the human rights of women and Mexican law.

Since 2006 INDESOL has been implementing a *Program to Support State Women's Institutes (PAIMEF)*, the purpose of which is to help detect and prevent violence against women, assist victims and foster cooperation between the government, civil society and academics to this end. A budget of US\$20,128,824.48<sup>23</sup> has been earmarked for this program in 2012.

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<sup>11</sup> A breakdown of pro-equality actions taken on a federal level can be found in Appendix 10 and article 28 of the 2012 Federal Expenditure Budget.

<sup>12</sup> US\$60,152,979.06, equivalent to 747.1 million pesos (unless otherwise stated, all figures are converted at a rate of 12.42 Mexican pesos to the US dollar, which was the average exchange rate in December 2011), of which US\$1,191,626.40 (14.8 million pesos) will be used for administrative activities; US\$652,173.91 (8.1 million pesos) to support public functions and good governance; US\$18,534,621.58 (230.2 million pesos) to foster gender perspective mainstreaming; US\$31,078,904.99 (386 million pesos) to promote and coordinate gender equality actions, US\$644,122.38 (8 million pesos) for building projects and US\$8,051,529.79 (100 million pesos) to support the equality policies of municipalities.

<sup>13</sup> Equivalent to 20 million pesos.

<sup>14</sup> Equivalent to 250 million pesos.

<sup>15</sup> Equivalent to 62.18 million pesos.

<sup>16</sup> Equivalent to 622 million pesos.

<sup>17</sup> Equivalent to 900 billion pesos.

<sup>18</sup> Its 2008 predecessor was the Fund for Gender Perspective Mainstreaming.

<sup>19</sup> Equivalent to 574 million pesos.

<sup>20</sup> Equivalent to 250 million pesos.

<sup>21</sup> Set up in 2008 as a Fund for the Creation and Strengthening of Women's Institutes, it was officially elevated to the status of a program in 2011.

<sup>22</sup> Equivalent to 100 million pesos.

<sup>23</sup> Equivalent to 250 million pesos.

For the last ten years, INMUJERES has been implementing the **PROEQUIDAD Fund** in support of civil society projects to improve the living conditions of women and promote respect for their human rights and gender equality.<sup>24</sup> Between 2002 and 2011, 480 organizations in 28 states received a total of US\$ 8,293, 075.68<sup>25</sup> from this fund.

### **Equality System and Institutional Culture Program**

Madame Chairperson,

Inter-institutional coordination and interaction in the area of gender equality has improved over the years with the *National System for Equality between Women and Men*, created as a result of the *General Law for Equality between Women and Men*. At the 12 sessions held between 2007 and 2011, a total of 86 agreements were reached. Noteworthy achievements include 19 sectorial/special programs, whose objectives, strategies and lines of action are in line with the 2007-2012 National Development Plan. These programs are geared toward promoting equality between women and men, actions to raise awareness, including institutional programs to educate civil servants, and the creation of 13 Policy Units for Equality between Women and Men at agencies of the Federal Public Administration (FPA).

At the federal government level 13 state departments have implemented an *Equality Program* and a *Gender-Responsive Institutional Culture Program*, which is an offshoot of the former. Government agencies are presently executing 246 plans of action under this program, with which INMUJERES and the Department of Public Functions have joined forces to come up with strategies to combat sexual harassment in the workplace. To this end, 48 committees have been set up to prevent and sanction this type of behavior and support victims, while administrative procedures for reporting offenders are in place at FPA agencies. Additionally, the *Protocol for Intervention in Cases of Sexual Harassment* has been adopted and online and live training sessions are being held.

The Department of Defense (SEDENA) has created a mechanism to afford victims of such behaviors access to military justice, pursuant to the *General Law Entitling Women Access to a Life Free of Violence* and international treaties, and in keeping with regulations governing Mexico's armed forces.

### **Combating Violence and People Trafficking and Justice Procurement**

Madame Chairperson,

An inter-institutional approach is being taken to the combating of violence against women, with the creation and implementation of mechanisms to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence and support victims. One such mechanism is the *National System for the Prevention, Sanctioning and Eradication of Violence against Women*, created pursuant to the *General Law Entitling Women Access to a Life Free of Violence (LGAMVLV)*. Others include the recently created *Agency to Assist Victims of Violence (PROVICTIMA)*; the *National Commission for the Prevention and Eradication of Violence (CONAVIM)*; the *Special Congressional Commission for the Timely and Comprehensive Follow Up of Actions Taken by the Competent Authorities to Prosecute Cases of Femicide*; the *National Center for Crime Prevention and Social Participation run by the National Public Security System (SSP) at the Department of the Interior (SEGOB)*. A *National Information and Databank on Cases of Violence*

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<sup>24</sup> Targeting indigenous women, families that have suffered violence in Ciudad Juárez, female prisoners and senior citizens, disabled women, women living with HIV/AIDS, women in the sex trade, teenage mothers, women family heads, community leaders, female entrepreneurs and students, etc.

<sup>25</sup> Equivalent to 103 million pesos.

against Women has been set up, along with 14 specialized agencies<sup>26</sup> to investigate and prosecute crimes against women and assist victims, including a Special Federal Attorney's Office for Violent Crimes Against Women and People Trafficking (FEVIMTRA).

Of all the actions taken, I would like to highlight the model employed to ensure basic conditions at *Shelters for Battered Women and their Children*, and the certification of these installations. Additionally, the SSP has introduced a *Protocol for the Police Handling of Gender Violence*. To date, 21 workshops have been held, at which male and female police officers from both municipal and state forces are trained to detect cases of violence, intervene, assist and protect victims and prevent further incidences according to protocol.

As of December 2011, the criminal codes of all 32 states classified rape and/or sexual harassment<sup>27</sup> and abuse as crime conducts, while 31 states recognized rape as a crime<sup>28</sup> and 30, incest<sup>29</sup>. Only one state considers marriage or cohabitation as an extenuating circumstance in the case of rape; 25 do not take these factors into account at all and enforce the same penalty as for rape; and six view these as aggravating factors. In 14 states, abduction<sup>30</sup> is classified as a crime and three sanction the illegal deprivation of freedom for sexual ends<sup>31</sup>. All these behaviors are classified as crimes under federal law.

In 2011, the *General Law Entitling Women Access to a Life Free of Violence* was amended to provide for administrative liability in the event of failure to comply with its provisions. As regards victims, the law stipulates that they are not obliged to participate in conciliation mechanisms with their aggressor, that they are entitled to an evaluation and an education free of stereotypes, and may seek refuge in shelters with their children. Under the newly amended law, indigenous women are entitled to the free assistance of interpreters and court-appointed defense attorneys familiar with their language and culture.

In December 2011, congress passed a bill to amend the Federal Criminal Code, the *LGAMVLV*, and the organic laws governing the FPA and the Attorney General's Office (PGR) to have femicide classed as a crime. The bill, which has yet to be passed by the Senate, is the result of nine initiatives and provides for major reforms to the criminal classification of sexual harassment, sexual abuse, rape, domestic violence, artificial insemination and fertilization, and induced sterility, among others.

### **Combating People Trafficking**

Three articles of the constitution<sup>32</sup> were amended to establish cooperation between all three levels of government. As a result, the trafficking of people is now classed as a serious crime, with all the attendant legal implications, and victims are guaranteed anonymity. Two articles<sup>33</sup> of the *Law to*

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<sup>26</sup> One federal and 13 state agencies in Baja California, Baja California Sur, Chiapas, Chihuahua, Mexico City, Estado de México, Durango, Guerrero, Hidalgo, Oaxaca, Puebla, Quinta Roo and San Luis Potosí.

<sup>27</sup> All 32 states sanction sexual harassment as an illegal conduct. Ten differentiate between vertical harassment (where a superior exercises power over a subordinate) and horizontal harassment (where there is no relationship of subordination), although both are punishable by law; in two, it is classified under the blanket term "vertical and horizontal sexual harassment"; 14 sanction only vertical sexual harassment and in six, only horizontal sexual harassment is penalized.

<sup>27</sup> Except Tlaxcala.

<sup>28</sup> Except Tlaxcala.

<sup>29</sup> Except Puebla and Tlaxcala.

<sup>30</sup> Baja California, Baja California Sur, Campeche, Chiapas, Coahuila, Colima, Puebla, Hidalgo, Nuevo León, San Luis Potosí, Sinaloa, Sonora, Tabasco and Zacatecas. Chihuahua and Estado de México repealed laws classifying abduction as a criminal offense.

<sup>31</sup> Guerrero, Mexico City and Durango.

<sup>32</sup> Articles 19, 20 and 73.

<sup>33</sup> Articles 5 and 13.



*Prevent and Sanction People Trafficking* were also amended to impose penalties on anyone who contracts or publishes ads connected with this type of crime.

In 2011, the *National Program for the Prevention and Sanctioning of People Trafficking*<sup>34</sup> was implemented and the National Migration Institute adopted a procedure to help identify and assist foreigners who have been the victims of crime, including victims of people trafficking.<sup>35</sup> Several public figures and opinion leaders have endorsed media efforts to raise awareness of people trafficking and violence against women.

### **Procuring Justice**

Mexico faces challenges in the procurement of prompt and speedy justice for victims and in combating impunity. Actions to raise awareness about the human rights of women in this area have been stepped up and measures are being taken to standardize information variables at agencies of the Attorney General's Office (PGR) and areas specialized in dealing with the victims of crime at State Attorney's Offices. INMUJERES is currently working in conjunction with several organizations and agencies involved with this issue, while Mexico's Supreme Court of Justice (SCJN) has entered into a *Cooperation Agreement with UN Women* to undertake investigative and educational activities that incorporate the gender perspective and promote non-discrimination.

In 2011, the SCJN ruled that sentences handed down by the Inter-American Court of Human Rights (IACHR) are binding on the judicial branch of the federal government.

With regard to the sentences handed down by IACHR in the "Cotton Field"<sup>36</sup> and "Valentina Rosendo Cantú"<sup>37</sup> cases, the Mexican government has publicly acknowledged its responsibility<sup>38</sup> for omissions and compensated the victims. The latter is being investigated by the Attorney General's Office (PGR) via FEVIMTRA, which means it will be heard in a civilian and not a military court.

On this note, the Federal Expenditure Budget for 2012 has earmarked US\$2,404,156<sup>39</sup> to cover damages and comply with sentences and amicable settlements handed down by the Inter-American Human Rights Court/Commission and the National Human Rights Commission (CNDH), and an additional US\$2,117,093<sup>40</sup> for mechanisms to protect journalists and human rights advocates.

To help procure justice for victims, CONAVIM is promoting the setting up of *Women's Justice Centers* (CJM) that take an inter-institutional, multi-disciplinary, sequential approach. In 2011, federal funds of US\$1,076,812<sup>41</sup> were allocated to this initiative. Four states now have centers and three more will soon be opening their doors.

Madame Chairperson,

A priority theme of the next period of sessions of the CSW is the "eradication and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls" and we view this as an invaluable opportunity to raise matters of common interest and discuss the obstacles encountered on the way. We have identified the

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<sup>34</sup> Published in the January 6, 2011 issue of the Official Gazette (DOF).

<sup>35</sup> [http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php/page/Boletin\\_17811](http://www.inm.gob.mx/index.php/page/Boletin_17811)

<sup>36</sup> See [http://www.conavim.gob.mx/es/CONAVIM/Campo\\_algodonero](http://www.conavim.gob.mx/es/CONAVIM/Campo_algodonero)

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.presidencia.gob.mx/2011/12/alejandro-poire-romero-secretario-de-gobernacion-durante-el-acto-de-reconocimiento-de-responsabilidad-del-estado-mexicano-caso-valentina-rosendo-cantu>

<sup>38</sup> <http://www.conavim.gob.mx/es/CONAVIM/07112011>

<sup>39</sup> Equivalent to 33.5 million pesos (at the Banxico exchange rate of 13.93 Mexican pesos to the US dollar effective on January 2, 2012), with increases approved by congress accounting for 31 million of this amount.

<sup>40</sup> Equivalent to 29.5 million pesos, with increases approved by congress accounting for 27 million pesos of this amount.

<sup>41</sup> Equivalent to 15 million pesos (at the Banxico exchange rate of 13.93 Mexican pesos to the US dollar effective on January 2, 2012)

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Inmujeres, Mexico. 56<sup>th</sup> Period of Sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW/ONU), V. 19, February 27-March 9, 2011

following issues that are of key concern to Mexico and which we believe coincide with the challenges facing other countries:

- Access to speedy, effective justice, with legal systems being used to prosecute and penalize perpetrators of acts of violence against women
- The eradication of discriminatory social and cultural patterns
- The harmonization of legislation in keeping with international commitments undertaken vis-à-vis the human rights of women
- The standardization of variables and indicators used by legal systems for statistical and classificatory purposes
- Combined efforts that translate into effective actions, programs and policies on a state and local level, with funds being earmarked to combat all forms of violence against women, and protect and assist victims.

Indubitably, the *16-step policy agenda aimed at ending violence against women* drawn up by UN Women provides ample scope for action and will help the States plan strategies to address unresolved challenges and obstacles.

### **Combating Poverty, Rural Women and the Empowerment of Women**

Madame Chairperson,

Combating poverty is a priority theme of this period of sessions and for Mexico it is one that is closely tied in with equal opportunities for women and men and human development. The participation of women and their empowerment is a prerequisite to the development of the country, a premise that underscores the 2007-2012 National Development Plan (PND). We have taken on board the recommendations of the reports presented to us by the UN Secretary-General and those adopted in the General Declaration on Rural Women issued by the CEDAW Committee at its 50<sup>th</sup> session in October 2011. Likewise, we agree on the importance of strengthening the capacities of rural women and implementing programs and policies that help eradicate and revert the problems and discrimination they face. "Women from rural, indigenous and farming communities are key partners in the country's social and economic development."

In this context and in keeping with the objectives of the PND, over 75 programs, actions and strategies that touch the lives of rural and/or indigenous women are currently being implemented. The most noteworthy of this is *Oportunidades*, a human development program that in 2011 reached out to 5,717,088 families spread over 96,756 communities, 62.3 percent of which were rural communities; the *Live Better Strategy*, a practice that takes a comprehensive approach to the coordination of social programs; and the *100x100 Strategy* to transform municipalities with the lowest Human Development Indexes (IDH) by coordinating the programs and actions of over 14 agencies and entities on all three levels of government, as well as those of civil society and public- and private-sector organizations in 125 municipalities.

In 2012, the Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI), the Department of Agriculture, Cattle-farming, Rural Development, Fishing and Food (SAGARPA), the Department of the

Environment and Natural Resources (SEMARNAT), the SRA, the SE and SEDESOL were allocated US \$231,062,544.28<sup>42</sup> to develop programs that foster the equality and empowerment of women.

The *Productive Organization Program for Indigenous Women* (POPMI) assists 25,000 indigenous women and a further 168,000 have benefited from the *Micro-financing Fund for Rural Women* (FOMMUR). By the same token, the *Program for Women in the Agrarian Sector* (PROMUSAG) seeks to mitigate a lack of paid work and productive opportunities by creating jobs for rural women and educating them in administrative matters and the gender perspective.

In addition to these programs, measures are being taken to improve the quality of life in poverty stricken homes, with an emphasis on women family heads. As of mid-2011, 52.4 percent of subsidies granted under the *Rural Housing Program* had gone to women family heads (9,978 subsidies) in communities classified as “highly” or “very highly” marginalized, as did 53.3 percent (17,402) of those granted under the “*Tu Casa*” program, which subsidizes home purchase, building, improvement and expansion projects in semi-urban, urban and rural communities.

Equally important to the empowerment of rural women has been inter-institutional involvement in initiatives such as the *Meeting of Rural, Indigenous and Farming Women*, where women from all over Mexico come together to share their experiences and build their decision-making and other capacities, with a view to gaining their economic independence through the creation of micro enterprises. The SRA, SEMARNAT, SE, SEDESOL, CDI, SAGARPA, INMUJERES and the National Fund to Support General Partnerships (FONAES) participate in these meetings, which have been taking place for the last seven years.

Madame Chairperson,

In terms of education, the current government administration has progressively increased the amount of funds allocated to scholarships, which have been used as a strategic tool to close educational gaps, particularly in rural areas.

Consideration for social, linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversity are central components of initiatives such as the *Basic Education Scholarship Program for Young Mothers and Pregnant Girls* (PROMAJOVEN), under which 11,495 scholarships were granted, with 2,386 recipients completing their basic education. In the 2010-2011 academic year, the *Rural Education Financing Program* gave 35,011 scholarships to girls and boys who do not have access to educational services in their local communities. Finally, as of June 2011, the *Agricultural Day Laborers Program* had handed out 82,481 scholarships valued at 22.8 million pesos to 22,906 primary and secondary school students in 19 states.

In some cases, more than half of available scholarships go to girls. For instance, 52.8 percent of the 981,197 upper-middle education scholarships granted under the *Oportunidades* program went to girls, rising to 56.3 percent in the case of the *Upper-Middle Education Scholarship Program* (PROBEMS).

Likewise, upper-middle education is now mandatory under the Mexican constitution, thereby guaranteeing education from pre-school right up until high school. Attendance is expected to increase gradually as of the 2012-2013 academic year until full coverage is achieved.

This year saw the creation of two new programs to promote access to and ensure the continued education of underprivileged socio-economic groups: the *University Scholarship Program*, which will

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<sup>42</sup> Equivalent to \$2.87 billion pesos.

Inmujeres, Mexico. 56<sup>th</sup> Period of Sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW/ONU), V. 19, February 27-March 9, 2011

offer 400,000 scholarships, and *Síguele*, which will grant 600,000 additional upper-middle education scholarships as of March.

On the issue of sexual and reproductive health, *Seguro Popular*, a national program aimed at sectors of the population that are not covered by the social security system, now provides treatment for women diagnosed with cervical, uterine and breast cancer. Coverage will be extended to ovarian cancer as of this summer. Women who belong to the Seguro Popular<sup>43</sup> program are also entitled to the free services provided by other programs, like the *Healthy Pregnancy* program.

We believe it is important to continue educating and raising awareness among young people in rural communities as to health and gender issues. This is the goal of initiatives like *Rural Teen Centers (CARA)*, which hold meetings to educate young people on issues such as self-esteem, sexual and reproductive health, sexually transmitted diseases, HIV and AIDS. To date, 44,488 mobile modules have been set up and 24,737 support groups for pregnant teenagers have been formed.

One of the Millennium Goals is to reduce maternal mortality and with this objective in mind, we continue to promote inter-institutional cooperation in this area, particularly programs that target rural communities.

Madame Chairperson,

Within the framework of the *National Strategy to Accelerate a Reduction in Maternal Mortality*, INMUJERES, in conjunction with the National Public Health Institute (INSP), embarked on an "Evaluation of the Impact of the Obstetrical and Neonatal Rescue Program, Optimum and Opportune Treatment" (PRONTO<sup>2</sup>), designed to improve the handling of obstetrical emergencies. To prevent maternal mortality, radio capsules were broadcast in Spanish and eight indigenous languages<sup>44</sup> to ensure women in rural communities are aware of the warning signs of obstetrical emergencies and encourage them to seek healthcare during pregnancy, childbirth and post-partum. A total of 825 capsules were broadcast in 2011 by seven of the community radios stations sponsored by the Commission for the Development of Indigenous Peoples (CDI), reaching an estimated 5.5 million speakers of indigenous languages and 21 million members of the general population.

To improve the maternal and perinatal health of rural and indigenous women, through the Department of Health (SS), INMUJERES is promoting recognition of community networks as tools for strengthening capacities and the participation of women in strategies to eliminate maternal mortality:

- *Support Centers for Pregnant Women (AME)*. In 2007-2011, technical support and advice was provided for 355 projects in 148 indigenous communities under this program. A total of 16,782 women were given shelter by 55 centers in 20 states and 33,240 pregnant women were transferred to hospitals.
- *Community Sponsorship Project*. Under this program, which targets indigenous communities with the lowest Human Development Indexes<sup>45</sup>, 11,798 sponsors provided guidance and companionship to 25,651 pregnant women and were instrumental in having 2,520 women transferred to clinics before their health was endangered.

<sup>43</sup> Over 1,600,000 pregnant women joined the program between June 2008 and April 2011.

<sup>44</sup> This strategy was developed by INMUJERES in conjunction with the National Center for Gender Equality and Reproductive Health (CNEGYSR), the CDI, the National Population Council (CONAPO), and the National Institute of Indigenous Languages (INALI). The capsules were broadcast in the Amuzgo, Mixtec, Tsotsil, Tzeltal, Zapotec, Mixe, Chinanteca and Mexicano de Guerrero languages.

<sup>45</sup> 210 municipalities in seven states in 2011.

Inmujeres, Mexico. 56<sup>th</sup> Period of Sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW/ONU), V. 19, February 27-March 9, 2011

- *Professional Midwifery*. In February 2011, the SS created the position of “welfare assistant.” Since 2006 and up until June 2011, 2,210 midwives were certified under the program and assisted 11,984 births during the first half of 2011 alone.

Helping women strike a balance between work and family life is the *Crèche Program in Support of Working Mothers*, which has benefited 250,000 women and created 45,000 jobs for women in the five years since it began. There are now 9,000 crèches in operation, providing daycare for over 950,000 children, including 3,400 with some type of disability. As of mid-2011, the program had a presence in 49.7 percent of all municipalities in the country (1,221)<sup>46</sup>, including 46 of the 250 municipalities with the lowest Human Development Indexes and 429 with predominantly indigenous populations.

The *Temporary Job Program (PET)* provides short-term financial relief for essentially rural populations affected by low demand for manual labor or emergency situations in exchange for their contribution to projects that benefit local families or communities. As of mid-2011, 254,693 people —41.1 percent of whom were women— had benefited from the program, which was allocated a budget of US\$217,037,037.03<sup>47</sup> last year. SEDESOL received 46.6 percent of this amount, 34.9 percent went to the SCT and the remaining 18.5 percent to SEMARNAT.

### **Participation in Decision-Making Processes**

In terms of the political empowerment of women, resolve and commitment on the part of Mexico’s institutions to protect the political and civil rights of women have been strategic factors in getting more women elected to political office and ensuring they hold on to their seats.

In 2011, the Electoral Court of the Federal Judiciary (TEPJF) amended<sup>48</sup> the *Federal Electoral Institute (IFE) Agreement*. The law now requires alternates to be of the same sex as candidates running for seats in congress or the senate in the 2011-2012 federal elections<sup>49</sup>, thereby making it impossible for elected women candidates and their alternates to cede their seats to men.

To this end, congress passed a bill in December 2011 to amend the *Federal Code for Electoral Institutions and Procedures (COFIPE)*<sup>50</sup>. The bill requires alternates to be of same sex as candidates in elections held after 2012 and candidatures that fail to comply will not be registered. The bill has since been sent to the senate for approval.

As of December 2011, in the case of candidatures put to relative majority vote, in 21 states the quota was 30 percent or more; in one state it was less than 30 percent; in three, it was a recommendation; and in seven, no quotes were enforced. On the proportional representation lists, nine states fix parity; 14 apply quotas of between 30 and 40 percent; in three, the quota is less than 30 percent; in two it is a recommendation; and four states lack quotas. In 18 states, the penalty for failure to meet quotas is refusal to register the candidature. Of these, two also impose a fine; four simply notify the parties and eight do not specify any penalties.

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<sup>46</sup> Including all 16 districts of Mexico City.

<sup>47</sup> Equivalent to 2.69 billion pesos.

<sup>48</sup> Approved by majority vote of the upper chamber of the TEPJF on November 30, 2011.

<sup>49</sup> Of the 300 tickets for deputy seats to be put to relative majority vote, 120 listed women, while 26 of the 64 senate tickets listed women.

<sup>50</sup> Report that amends and addends articles 20, 218, 219 and 225 of COFIPE, approved on December 7, 2011 by the Department of the Interior Commission and voted on at a plenary session of congress on December 15, 2011. The report has since been turned over to the senate for approval.

Inmujeres, Mexico. 56<sup>th</sup> Period of Sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW/ONU), V. 19, February 27-March 9, 2011

Based on the lessons we have learned, amendments to the *Regulations Governing the Funding of National Political Parties*<sup>51</sup> were deemed necessary. In 2008, it was established that 2 percent of ordinary spending was to be used to develop and promote the political leadership capacities of women, but amendments introduced in 2011 now make it mandatory for political parties to draw up an *Annual Work Plan*, facilitating more thorough tracking of their actions. In the same vein, IFE has issued an *Accounting Manual for the Budgeted Spending Accounts System and Guidelines for the Drawing up of Programs*.<sup>52</sup> It will also conduct audits to determine the use earmarked funds are put to.

*Strengthening the Political Participation of Women and Promoting an Economic Empowerment Agenda*<sup>53</sup> (SUMA Equality to Transform Mexico) is another of the projects INMUJERES is involved in. Intended to build the capacities of 1,500 women over a period of three years and increase their presence in decision-making forums on a federal, state and municipal level, as of February 2012, over 3,000 women had attended the ten forums held as part of the project and more than 500 had received training. The *Strategic Platform for Political Equality* has made it possible to follow up on compliance with objectives, including the monitoring of state electoral codes and laws on the political rights of women. A *Gender Quota Effectiveness Index* has also been drawn up.

Within the framework of the 4<sup>th</sup> *National Civil Society Organizations Competition 2011-2012*, IFE backs 32 projects to identify gaps and educational requirements for the development of civic capacities in rural, urban and indigenous communities, while TEPJF conducts educational activities with an emphasis on the political and electoral rights of indigenous women. *Indigenous Regulatory Systems and State Intervention in Indigenous Communities: The Role of Gender-Responsive Political and Social Participation* is just one of the projects developed by the latter.

The results of the upcoming presidential elections on July 1, at which deputies and senators will also be elected, will allow us to gauge the impact of the body of measures and actions INMUJERES has backed with a view to fostering the development of a gender-responsive political culture in Mexico.

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Madame Chairperson,

To sum up, we adopt the conclusions and recommendations of the Secretary-General's report. However, in the case of Mexico, we believe one of the major obstacles standing in the way of the economic empowerment of rural women is land ownership, without which they cannot gain access to the benefits of productive projects and programs and the credit lines granted by financial institutions. Emigration is gradually turning Mexico's countryside into the domain of women and we need to address the needs of female family heads in light of this phenomenon. Rural women need to be prepared for natural disasters. Equally important is making sure they have fair access to education, while creating the conditions for them to complete their schooling and develop their capacities, including a solid grasp of information technologies. Finally, as regards the generation of data, statistics

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<sup>51</sup> Amendments made by IFE's General Board, approved on July 4, 2011 and published in the DOF on July 7, 2011. Funds transferred from the National Executive Committee of each party to their State Executive Committees, affiliated organizations, foundations and/or research institutes, political education centers and funds channeled into the building of women's political leadership capacities must all be recorded separately for accounting purposes and their use specified. A result of the joint efforts of INMUJERES, IFE, international agencies and civil society.

<sup>52</sup> Issued on October 5, 2011 and published in the DOF on October 20, 2011.

<sup>53</sup> Endorsed by INMUJERES, this project enjoys the commendation of IFE and TEPJF. It is co-financed by UN Women and INMUJERES, with the collaboration of women's institutes in participating states, and is coordinated by five civil associations: Equidad de género: Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia; Instituto de Liderazgo Simone de Beauvoir; Mujeres Trabajadoras Unidas; Inclusión Ciudadana; and Liderazgo, Gestión y Nueva Política.

Inmujeres, Mexico. 56<sup>th</sup> Period of Sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW/ONU), V. 19, February 27-March 9, 2011

and indicators, we need to measure gaps in land use and ownership, access to credit sources, educational services, information technologies and other agricultural inputs.

Taking stock, Mexico has made considerable progress in terms of gender equality and the empowerment of women during the last government administration, due mainly to the political will of the executive and the unwavering support of the legislature and judiciary, state and municipal governments, and civil society.

The institutional legal framework we have constructed provides a solid foundation for the incoming administration to consolidate and build on progress made to date.

On the international arena, as we prepare for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20), it should be remembered that women are key to sustainable development worldwide and, as such, all international agreements and progress made in this area need to be taken into account.

The Brasilia Consensus, which the States adopted at the 11<sup>th</sup> Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean - ECLAC, and the Declaration of the Inter-American Year of Women, adopted at the 35<sup>th</sup> Assembly of Delegates of the OAS Inter-American Commission of Women, which I am honored to preside over on my country's behalf, comprise an inter-governmental agenda for the promotion and protection of the human rights of women in our region.

We are confident that, together with UN Women, the political will of our governments, the cooperation of international organizations and the participation of civil society, we can close ranks to guarantee women equality and lives free of all forms of violence and discrimination, so that future generations can reap the benefits of a fairer world and a culture of peace.

Thank you

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