

ADVANCE COPY

Draft Information Notice for the Beijing +15 Regional Review Meeting Geneva, 2-3 November 2009

I. Background and Purpose

1. In line with the role assigned to them by the General Assembly in the review of progress made in the implementation of and follow-up to the outcome of the major United Nations conferences and summits, the regional commissions are expected to provide contributions to the 15-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action. The outcomes of these regional reviews will contribute to the global review which will take place at the annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2010.
2. In this context, at the sixty-second session of the Commission in 2007, the ECE member States agreed to convene a Regional Meeting in preparation for the 15-year review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.
3. The Meeting will be based on past experience of the regional review meetings which the ECE organized in the context of the Beijing +5 and +10 reviews which were held in 2000 and 2004 respectively.

II. Objectives

4. The main objectives of the Meeting on "*New challenges and opportunities for gender equality in the ECE region: key issues and policy responses*" are to:
 - (a) Take stock of the progress made in the region on gender equality and women's empowerment, and address the major challenges ahead;
 - (b) Discuss gender-sensitive economic policies, taking into account the impact of the financial crisis on the countries of the region;
 - (c) Facilitate policy design and implementation based on successful experiences in engendering economic and labour market policies;
 - (d) Promote partnerships to increase gender equality in the region;
 - (e) Create a forum for discussing forward-looking action;
 - (f) Contribute to the global 15-year review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

III. Themes and Programme

5. After an overall review of progress and setbacks since the ECE Beijing +10 review, the Meeting will address new opportunities and challenges for gender equality in the ECE region in the context of the current economic crisis as well as the longer term challenges faced by countries in the region.
6. The Meeting will address the following themes:
 - (a) Regional review of progress in implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;
 - (b) Gender-sensitive economic policies in the context of the economic and financial crisis;
 - (c) Gender and the corporate sector;
 - (d) New partnerships, networks, and alliances for gender equality.

IV. Expected Outcome

7. The chairperson's conclusions will highlight the main points raised and views expressed during the Meeting, focusing on future challenges and opportunities for gender equality and women's empowerment in the region, and they will provide possible policy directions to maximize opportunities and address the challenges identified. These conclusions will subsequently be transmitted to the Commission on the Status of Women and will constitute, together with the regional synthesis report, the contribution of the ECE region to the global 15-year review.

V. Participation

8. The Meeting will be a region-wide event. The core group of participants will be representatives of relevant ministries of ECE member States. International organizations (UN and non-UN), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and academia throughout the region will be actively involved in the Meeting.

9. Countries are encouraged to ensure that national delegations are headed by high-level representatives. In view of the themes covered by the Meeting, they are encouraged to include representatives of concerned line ministries such as the ministries of economy, finance, labour and social affairs, as well as non-governmental actors active in the economic realm.

VI. Partners and Preparatory Process

10. The preparations will be shared among the regional organizations with specific expertise and experience in the areas addressed, namely UNDP, UNIFEM, the European Commission and the Council of Europe. ECE will provide a substantive contribution to the area of women in the economy and will play a catalytic role in other areas. Furthermore, the ECE secretariat will work in close cooperation with the Office of the Special Advisor on Gender Issues and the Division for the Advancement of Women in order to ensure linkages between the regional and global levels of the review.

VII. Venue

11. The Meeting will be held on 2-3 November 2009 at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in English, French, and Russian.

VIII. Accreditation and participation of non-governmental organizations

12. As in previous meetings of this kind, European networks of Women NGOs (at both regional and subregional level) will facilitate the coordination of NGO participation in order to ensure a real and well-balanced representation of civil society from ECE countries.

13. NGOs with accreditation with the Economic and Social Council as well as other NGOs which were accredited at the Beijing Conference (1995) and subsequently at the ECE Beijing +5 and +10 reviews are automatically accredited to participate in the Meeting.

14. Other NGOs wishing to participate must follow the accreditation procedure which is outlined on the ECE website: <http://www.unecce.org/gender>.

IX. Documentation

15. Documentation for the Meeting will consist of a regional synthesis report of national responses to the Beijing +15 questionnaire and three background papers prepared by the ECE secretariat covering the substantive themes of the Meeting. In addition, other background papers will be contributed by major partner organizations.

X. Travel and other costs

16. Travel, accommodation, medical insurance, and other expenses are to be borne by the participants.

XI. Hotel Accommodation

17. Participants are responsible for finding their own accommodation in Geneva. A list of hotels (which provide special United Nations rates) is available at the following web page: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>

XII. Passport and Visa Requirements

18. Participants must have a valid passport and, as necessary, a visa for entry into Switzerland (to be obtained from the Swiss Consulate in the respective countries). Participants are advised to make their visa applications well in advance of the date of travel.

XIII. Registration

19. All ECE member States are invited to send a list of their delegation and the national delegates are requested to complete the conference registration form, which will be available on the ECE website (<http://www.unece.org/gender>) in due course. The forms must be returned to the ECE secretariat by 2 October 2009, either by fax (+41-22-917-0036) or by e-mail (beijing15@unece.org). Representatives of accredited NGOs will also be requested to follow the same registration procedure.

20. Prior to the Meeting, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pregny Gate for the issuance of an identification badge. A map and directions are provided on the ECE website: <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>

For further registration details, please contact:

Ms. Felirose GUTIERREZ
Office of the Executive Secretary
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Phone: + 41 22 917 1488
Fax : + 41 22 917 0036
E-mail: beijing15@unece.org

All questions concerning the event should be addressed by email to:

Mr. Patrice ROBINEAU
Senior Adviser to the Executive Secretary

Ms. Lisa WARTH
Associate Expert

E-mail: beijing15@unece.org