



**Arab High Level Conference on Beijing+20:
Towards Justice and Equality for Women in the Arab Region**

**Cairo, Egypt
2-3 February 2015**

Information Note

I. Background

The Beijing Declaration was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995, and reaffirmed in 2000 during the 23rd Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly. The Beijing Declaration symbolizes the commitment of the international community to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment. It calls upon Governments, civil society, and the private sector to undertake strategic measures to ensure justice and equality and achieve lasting peace and development. The Platform for Action of the Beijing Declaration is structured around 12 critical areas of concern: women and poverty; education and training of women; women and health; violence against women; women in armed conflict; women and the economy; women in power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; human rights of women; women and the media; women and the environment; and the girl child. The Platform for Action provides a reference framework for both the analysis of the situation of women and the assessment of States' efforts to advance gender equality.

Through the accountability framework envisioned in the Beijing Declaration, multi-level reviews led by the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action are held every five years. In March 2015, CSW will hold its 59th Session dedicated to reviewing global progress toward gender equality in the 20 years since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration. Accordingly, States have been called upon to prepare national reports on achievements, challenges, and persistent gaps, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders (particularly non-governmental organizations) and based on a common guidance note developed by the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women) and the United Nations UN Regional Commissions. In addition, the five Regional Commissions, including the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), were mandated to prepare regional synthesis reports drawing on national reviews completed in their respective regions over the course of 2014. These national and regional reports will also contribute to the Secretary General's Global Review Report on Beijing+20 to be submitted to the 59th Session of CSW.

The "Arab High-Level Conference on Beijing+20: Towards Justice and Equality for Women in the Arab Region" is the culmination of a comprehensive programme developed by the UN-ESCWA Centre for Women in partnership and close collaboration with the League of Arab States' Department of Women, Family, and Child, and the UN-Women Arab States Regional Office. The programme includes a number of activities leading to the adoption of the *Arab Regional Synthesis Report on the progress achieved in implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action after 20 years*. These activities include: (a) an Expert Group Meeting for representatives of National Women's Machineries on the Guidance Note for the preparation of national review reports (Amman 27-28 February 2014); (b) a consultative workshop with Arab Civil Society Organizations on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the

region (Beirut, 17-18 August 2014); (c) drafting of the regional synthesis report; (d) an Expert Group Meeting for representatives of National Women's Machineries to present and review the draft regional synthesis report (Beirut 22-23 October 2014); and, (e) preparation of an analytical study on the status of women in the Arab region 20 years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action (to be completed by June 2015).

II. Objectives and Expected Outcomes:

The primary objective of the "Arab High-Level Conference on Beijing+20: Towards Justice and Equality for Women in the Arab Region" is to reaffirm Arab States' commitments to the principles enshrined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and subsequently adopt an official Arab Declaration underscoring a renewed pledge to enhance gender equality and women's empowerment in the region.

The Conference will aim to adopt the *Arab Regional Synthesis Report on the Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the Arab Region after 20 Years*, which was prepared based on national review reports submitted by 21 Arab countries, providing an overview of progress achieved in the region in relation to the 12 areas of concern outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action.

The Conference sessions will focus on national accomplishments and challenges related to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration in the 20 years since its adoption. Sessions will also examine past approaches and proposed future measures toward the full realization of the Beijing Platform for Action in the Arab region, particularly in connection with parallel global processes regarding equality and justice for women. In this context, the Conference will address emerging regional developments and their impact on the implementation process of the Beijing Declaration.

III. Provisional Agenda

The agenda of the Conference and all related documents may be accessed on the following link: <http://www.escwa.un.org/sites/BeijingPlus20/>

IV. Organizers

The "Arab High-Level Conference on Beijing+20: Towards Justice and Equality for Women in the Arab Region" is organized jointly by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission

for Western Asia (ESCWA), the League of Arab States, and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women). The Arab States Regional Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) is also contributing to the organization of the Conference, with support for the participation of various civil society organizations.

V. Participants

The “Arab High-Level Conference on Beijing+20: Towards Justice and Equality for Women in the Arab Region” will bring together representatives of Arab Member Countries and National Women’s Machineries, experts, members of civil society, international and regional organizations, and United Nations agencies.

VI. Contact Information

All correspondence related to the “Arab High-Level Conference on Beijing+20: Towards Justice and Equality for Women in the Arab Region” should be addressed to the following email address: beijing20review@un.org

VII. Date and Venue

The Conference will be held at the **Sofitel Hotel El-Gezira** in Cairo, the Arab Republic of Egypt, on 2-3 February 2015. Participants registration will open at 8:00 AM on Monday, 2 February 2015. The Conference will begin at 10:00 AM on Monday, 2 February and conclude at 17:30 on Tuesday, 3 February 2015.

Sofitel Hotel address and contact details:

3 El Thawra Council Street
ZamalekCAIRO, EGYPT
Phone: (+20) 2/27373737

Fax: (+20) 2/27363640

Website: <http://www.sofitel-cairo-el-gezira.com>



VIII. Working Language

All Conference sessions will be conducted in Arabic, with simultaneous interpretation to English and French.

IX. Entry Visa to the Arab Republic of Egypt

Participants are kindly requested to make the necessary arrangements to obtain their entry visa to the Arab Republic of Egypt directly through the Egyptian Consulate in their country of residence.

X. Transportation to and from the Airport

All participants are responsible for their transportation from and to Cairo International Airport and internal transportation to and from the Conference venue.

XI. Accommodation

A list of hotels offering special rates for UN meeting participants is included below. Participants are kindly requested to contact their preferred hotel directly to make their own reservations, indicating their participation in a UN conference.

Zamalek	Sofitel Hotel El Gezira	\$113/night	Single Occupancy BB, subject to 24% hotel tax)
Downtown	Conrad Hotel	\$119/night	BB, subject to 24% hotel tax)
Boulaq	Fairmont Nile City Hotel	\$110/night	BB, all inclusive
Downtown	Semiramis Hotel Intercontinental	\$95/night	BB, all inclusive (not cleared by UNDSS)
Zamalek	Marriott Hotel	\$90/night	BB, all inclusive - GROUP RATE
Zamalek	Marriott Hotel	\$140/night	Bed only, subject 24% hotel tax)
Zamalek	Hilton Cairo Residences	\$120/night	BB, subject to 24% hotel tax)
Zamalek	Flamenco Hotel	\$82/night	BB, all inclusive