



Women's National Commission

1st Floor, 1 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0ET
Telephone: 020 715 6933 Fax: 020 7215 2840
Email: wnc@dti.gsi.gov.uk Web: www.thewnc.org.uk

Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 10 years on

facilitators pack for local and community events

Contents

If you wish to receive any of the documents included this pack in electronic format, please contact the WNC.

- Check list for organising a meeting
- Background information to Beijing +10 and the Platform for Action
- About the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)
- Linking the Women's National Commission, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Platform for Action 10-year review
- Suggested discussion points for meetings
- Useful websites and reading tips for further information

Additional resources in PowerPoint:

- Background information to Women's National Commission
- How NGOs contribute to CSW and the Platform for Action

Check list for organising a meeting

In order to help you organise your local event, the checklist below aims to remind you of some key activities you will need to consider. As all meetings have different purposes and desire different outcomes, this is a guideline only.

Task	Tick when complete
Determine purpose of meeting and develop agenda. Establish meeting date.	
Define and distribute roles and responsibilities for organisers/helpers.	
Source venue and confirm booking (consider budget, accessibility, room layout, audio and visual requirements, catering).	
Identify and approach potential chair and speakers, making clear their role in the meeting.	
Identify and apply for sponsorship if applicable.	
Identify potential participants and draft invitation.	
Send out invitations and advertise meeting among community networks. Send also to WNC to circulate to its membership. Develop a list of confirmed attendees.	
Send out meeting papers (agenda, discussion papers, etc) and organise information packs for attendees if appropriate. Ask the WNC to forward relevant publications for distribution at your meeting.	
Re-confirm venue and remind speakers of meeting details (where, when, their role).	
On the day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get there early to check/set up the venue • Run through requirements/specifications with venue manager • Greet speakers • Be on hand to answer questions and assist where needed 	
Record notes of the meeting and produce outcome report. The WNC would love to hear about your meeting — you may wish to consider putting together a short piece for the newsletter.	
Send thank you notes to key people involved in meeting (chair, speakers, helpers).	

Background information to Beijing +10 and the Platform for Action

In 1975, during International Women's Year, the First World Conference on Women was held in Mexico City. The conference launched a new era in global efforts to promote the advancement of women by opening a worldwide dialogue on gender equality.

At this conference, governments adopted a World Plan of Action offering guidelines for both governments and the international community on how to secure equal access for women to education, employment opportunities, political participation, health services, housing, nutrition and family planning.

The conference also launched the United Nation's decade for women (1976-1985). During this time, another two World Conferences on Women were held - in Copenhagen (1980) and in Nairobi (1985). The Nairobi conference reviewed and appraised achievements made on the three major goals of the decade: equality, development, and peace. *Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women* was the key outcome document from the Nairobi conference, providing a blueprint for action to improve the status of women, and reaffirming the commitment made by the international community to the advancement of women and the elimination of gender-based discrimination.

In 1995, the fourth, and to this day the latest, World Conference on Women was held in Beijing. At this Conference, 189 states adopted the Platform for Action (PfA), an agenda for women's empowerment as well as committing themselves to a Political Declaration, known as the Beijing Declaration, in their determination to address the goals of equality, development and peace for all women around the world.

The Beijing Declaration states that the advancement of women and the achievement of equality between women and men are a matter of human rights and a condition for social justice. Empowerment of women, and equality between women and men, are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among all peoples.

The Platform for Action outlines twelve critical areas of concern where strategic action is needed:

1. The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women
2. Inequalities and inadequacies in, and unequal access to, education and training
3. Inequalities and inadequacies in, and unequal access to, health care and related services
4. Violence against women
5. The effects of armed or other kinds of conflict on women, including those living under foreign occupation
6. Inequality in economic structures and policies, in all forms of productive activities and in access to resources

7. Inequality between men and women in the sharing of power and decision-making at all levels
8. Insufficient mechanisms at all levels to promote the advancement of women
9. Lack of respect for and inadequate promotion and protection of the human rights of women
10. Stereotyping of women and inequality in women's access to, and participation in, all communication systems, especially in the media
11. Gender inequalities in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment
12. Persistent discrimination against, and violation of, the rights of the girl-child.

The Fourth World Conference on Women also mandated the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), within the United Nations (UN) system, to regularly review the critical areas of concern in the PfA.

About the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

CSW is a UN body set up in 1946 as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), administered by the Division for the Advancement of Women. ECOSOC is the United Nations body facilitating international cooperation on standard setting and problem solving on economic and social issues.

The primary purpose of CSW is to prepare recommendations and reports promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields, based on the principle that men and women shall have equal rights.

The twenty-third special session of the UN General Assembly entitled *Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the 21st century*, also often referred to as Beijing +5, undertook a five year appraisal and review of the implementation of PfA in 2000. The outcome documents from this conference, *Further Actions and Initiatives to Implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action* and the *Political Declaration* together with the PfA itself, form the basis for the multi-year programme of work for CSW between 2002-2006.

This year marks the ten-year anniversary of the Beijing conference. The 49th session of CSW in 2005 celebrated the anniversary by considering two themes:

- *Review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly.*
- *Current challenges and forward-looking strategies for the advancement and empowerment of women and girls.*

In addition, high-level panel discussions, roundtables and NGO side events that took place during CSW this year focused on the implementation of PfA by identifying national achievements, best practices, remaining gaps, and challenges.

CSW49 concluded with attending government delegations agreeing a Declaration reaffirming the commitments made ten years ago in Beijing and calling for further action from governments for full and accelerated implementation of PfA.

Additionally, CSW adopted ten resolutions on a wide range of topics including trafficking in women and girls, mainstreaming a gender perspective, women's economic advancement, and women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS guiding the promotion of gender equality at the national level.

Linking the Women's National Commission, the Commission on the Status of Women and the Platform for Action review

In preparation of the review of PfA at the 49th session of CSW, the WNC's International Working Group agreed to establish a CSW sub-group with the purpose of taking forward the views of UK non-governmental organisations (NGOs) before, during and after CSW.

Before the CSW meeting in New York, the CSW sub-group submitted a written statement to the UN outlining key concerns of UK women. An open information meeting was also organised in London at which UK NGOs met with the UK Government delegation and received useful information about attending CSW.

The CSW sub-group also produced a brochure *Having it all? Women in the UK talk about the Beijing Platform for Action, ten years on*. The brochure lists key lobbying points against each of the twelve critical areas of concern in the PfA. The aim of the brochure is for it to be widely distributed to women in the UK and to start a dialogue on how to take the Beijing agenda forward in the next ten years.

Suggested discussion points at meetings

- How is the Platform for Action relevant to me?
- How can we raise awareness about the Platform for Action agenda?
- What can local and grassroots organisations do to take forward the Platform for Action?

Useful websites and reading tips for further information

Women's National Commission the official independent advisory body giving the views of women to the UK Government. www.thewnc.org.uk

The following documents are included in this pack:

- WNC written statement submitted to the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.
- WNC Beijing +10 Brochure: *Having it all? Women in the UK talk about the Beijing Platform for Action, ten years on.*
- Bibliography of reports and information material about the tenth anniversary of the Platform for Action.

Women and Equality Unit UK Government unit supporting the Ministers for Women. www.womenandequalityunit.gov.uk

European Women's Lobby the largest co-ordinating body of national and European non-governmental women's organisations in the European Union. www.womenslobby.org

United Nations' Division for the Advancement of Women the body advocating and promoting equal participation of women and men, and striving to stimulate the mainstreaming of gender perspectives both within and outside the United Nations system. www.un.org/womenwatch/daw

- **Beijing Platform for Action from the United Nations**
<http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/plat1.htm>
- **United Nations Economic Commission for Europe** held a Beijing +10 preparatory meeting, Ministerial meeting and NGO forum reports are available from <http://www.unece.org/oes/gender/beijing10.htm>
- **Conference of Non-Governmental Organisations (CONGO)** in consultative relationship with the United Nations
<http://www.ngocongo.org/index2.html>