



**STATEMENT BY MRS. RUCHI GHANASHYAM, MINISTER, ON AGENDA
ITEM 9: UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT FUND FOR WOMEN:
IMPLEMENTING THE MULTI-YEAR FUNDING FRAMEWORK 2004 IN THE
ANNUAL SESSION 2005 OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD OF UNDP/UNFPA
13-24 JUNE 2005 ON JUNE 16, 2005**

Mr. President,

We thank the Associate Administrator of UNDP and the Executive Director of UNIFEM for the remarks and the report.

We attach high value to the work of UNIFEM. Its mandate is not only close to our hearts but also to our national priorities. The Fund can contribute to increasing options and opportunities for the socio-economic development of women in developing countries.

The principle of gender equality is enshrined in India's Constitution. Our policies have evolved from an essentially 'welfare' approach in the initial years of our independence to 'advancement', and later to 'empowerment', with rights being firmly anchored in a developmental approach. This approach is reflected in our National Policy for the Empowerment of Women, and more recently, in the gender-sensitive budgeting exercise undertaken by the Government of India.

Mr. President,

In its introduction, the report puts its work in the context of the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, Security Council resolution 1325. In our understanding, UNIFEM draws its mandate from the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and this Executive Board. Its priorities are not to be set by, or derived from the resolutions and decisions of, the Security Council.

We have highlighted in the past that gender issues are sensitive and delicate in many parts of the world and that there is need for UN agencies to recognize these sensitivities. We, therefore, feel that the UNIFEM's approach should not be to look for "entry points" for its activities. Rather, assistance should be provided on request. The results may be slow in coming, but this would, in our view, be a more realistic and sustainable approach. Here we would reiterate one of the over-arching principles that

guide the operational activities of the United Nations, namely, national or country ownership. The evaluation team, studying gender mainstreaming in UNDP, has also indicated in its preliminary findings that gender programmes are more likely to succeed when there is national ownership and support for these programmes.

Finally, any discussion of the MYFF has to look at the funding aspect. The report indicates that in 2004, UNIFEM experienced a 30% decrease in delivery of core funds, compared to 2003, offset by approximately 9% increase in delivery of non-core funds. Although, the Fund achieved a larger and more diversified resource base, reliability in core resources remained elusive. While there was some increase in core funds, these did not reach the projected level and an independent assessment of UNIFEM identified resources as one of the three pervasive and systematic obstacles that impede the work of gender equality advocates throughout the UN system. Just as UNIFEM cannot succeed without the partnership and trust of programme countries, the success of its efforts is also dependent on the availability of adequate core resources.

Having said this, we feel it would be useful for UNIFEM also to undertake some introspection on why reliability in core resources remains elusive despite so much stated support, and how it could enhance the trust of its partners and expand its resource base by enhancing the effectiveness of its programmes.

Thank you, Mr. President.

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