

BRAZIL

BRAZIL'S RESPONSE TO THE "QUESTIONNAIRE ON THE APPLICATION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995) AND THE RESULTS OF THE TWENTY-THIRD PERIOD OF THE EXTRAORDINARY SESSIONS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2000)"

Introduction

In the year 2000, the Brazilian Government presented to the United Nations General Assembly its National Report on the Implementation of the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995). In that Report, the Brazilian Government referred to the Beijing Conference as landmark, both for the State and for civil society in the country. It recognized the Platform as an instrument that consolidates previous advances and indicates perspectives for the future. The Report addresses advances and the obstacles encountered in the Platform implementation process, and addresses each one of the thirteen areas of special concern.

The purpose of this Document is to respond to the list of enquiries contained in the "Questionnaire on the Application of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the Results of the Twenty-Third Period of Extraordinary Sessions of the General Assembly (2000)". Therefore, the Document will build upon the information provided in the Beijing+5 Report, providing complementing and updated material primarily using the following sources: Report presented by the Brazilian State to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (*Relatório apresentado pelo Estado Brasileiro ao Comitê das Nações Unidas sobre a Eliminação de Todas as Formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher*) (CEDAW Committee) in 2002; Document from the Women's Movement (*Documento do Movimento de Mulheres*) presented to the CEDAW Committee in 2003; Brazil's Participation in the Twenty-Ninth Session of the CEDAW Committee (*Participação do Brasil na 29ª Sessão do Comitê CEDAW*), 2003; Feminist Political Platform (*Plataforma Política Feminista*) that resulted from the National Conference on Brazilian Women, 2002; documents from the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women; contributions from specialists for the purpose of this text and various documents, such as Internet sites.

This Document also seeks to incorporate a race and ethnic perspective throughout the text. According to data from the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (*Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística - IBGE*), 54% of the Brazilian population stated that they are white, 45.4% black or mulatto, and the others, Asian and indigenous. The majority of the black population is comprised by descendents of Africans brought to Brazil and officially enslaved until 1888. Brazil was the last western country to abolish slavery. The historical consequences of the marginalization of the African-Brazilians are the genesis of the ongoing inequality and structural violence that disproportionately affects the population of African descendents, perpetuating the manifestations of racism. In Brazil, African descendents constitute 64% of the poor and 69% of the indigent¹. Whereas the Human Development Index (HDI), 2000, placed the country in 74th position, a closer look taking into account the ethnic-racial division would indicate a HDI for the population of African descendents in 108th position and the HDI for the

¹ "Ipea afirma que racismo só será combatido com política específica", *Folha de São Paulo*, A6, July 8, 2001.

white population in 43rd position². It is important to emphasize that women of African descent suffer from both gender and racial discrimination. The criteria of gender and race trasverse the different levels of the continuing inequality and social exclusion. Poverty and socio-economic inequality affect women, African descendents and the indigent populations of Brazil in a disproportionate manner. The incidence of poverty is clearly more accentuated among women of African descent and those who live in rural areas.

² See Marcelo Paixão, *Brasil 2000 – Novos marcos para as relações raciais*.

Part I – General Panorama

Conscious of the serious inequalities that exist in Brazilian society, the Brazilian Government has sought to adopt urgent and structural measures to confront them. The decision of President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva to create Special Secretariats on Policies for Women, for the Promotion of Policies on Racial Equality and for Human Rights, treating these issues as transversal to all of the government's policies, is an example of the determination to change this grave situation.

The concentration of wealth in Brazil is the fourth highest in the world, behind only Sierra Leone, the Central African Republic and Swaziland. The average income of the wealthiest 10% is 30 times greater than that of the poorest 40% of the population³. The profound social inequalities are heaped upon existing regional disparities and discrimination based on race/ethnicity and gender.

There is a clear trend toward the feminization of poverty and the persistence of different levels of salaries between men and women. Employed men receive an average salary 42% higher than that of employed women. The strong occupational segmentation in the job market is evidenced by the fact that men work primarily in the higher paid sectors – industrial and productive occupations – while the women undertake activities related to personal and social services, associated with lower salaries⁴. In addition, Brazilian society is suffering from the consequences of the structural adjustment policies, which have a much more crushing effect on the feminine population.

Over the last decade, some public policies have generated positive impacts, such as an expansion in basic education, which is now almost universal in Brazil. As a result, the general illiteracy indicators decreased, benefiting the feminine population. The average level of education attained increased, as well as the number of students enrolled in schools. This did not, however, translate into an improvement in the quality of education. Neither did it eliminate the disparity in the salaries between men and women, which remains for all levels of education.

In the area of health, public policies for pre-natal and neo-natal assistance have led to a drastic decrease in infant mortality⁵. Despite this promising result, attention to women's sexual and reproductive health is still inadequate. The maternal mortality rate is one of the most serious health problems in Brazil. At the beginning of the 90s, the rate reached 114.20 deaths per 100,000 live births. Official data indicate that there was a significant reduction over the course of the decade. In the period from 1995 to 1997, the rate was 57.17 per 100,000. In 1998, the proportion was 40 per 100,000. Estimates given indicate that 5000 women die on an annual basis

³ Flavia Piovesan and Silvia Pimentel, *“Contribuição a partir da perspectiva de gênero ao relatório alternativo sobre o PIDESE”*, Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM), Brazil, December 2002.

⁴ *Ibidem*.

⁵ Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *Dados sobre mulher associados a pobreza, economia e educação* (text prepared based on information from the *Síntese dos Indicadores Sociais 2002 e 2003* – IBGE and the Brazilian National Report to CEDAW), pp. 2-3.

and that 96% of these deaths could be avoided⁶, given that 65.9% of the victims of maternal death were totally dependent on the public health system⁷. With respect to abortion, studies indicate that approximately one million women, including mothers of families, resort to abortion every year. In general, abortions are realized in a clandestine manner – using procedures that result in infections and even death – making it impossible to establish an exact number. Besides the lack of preparation on the part of the professionals and services, the clandestine nature hinders the provision of assistance to the victims. Abortion, carried out under unsafe conditions, is the fourth most significant cause of maternal mortality in the country. Health issues related to the frequency of teenage pregnancy should also be emphasized. In addition, less than 20% of women undergo Pap tests and 65% of them do not take any preventative measures to protect against HIV.

Brazil adopted legislation, related to women's participation in the power structure, that established quotas for women candidates and that initially had a positive effect. However, the political parties do not always comply with the quotas. Clearly, other affirmative actions are necessary to increase the participation of women in the upper echelons of political power.

There have been advances over the past decade with respect to legal issues, including the enactment of the New Civil Code, which eliminated the majority of the discriminatory provisions present in the former Code. Also, normative measures were adopted that are fundamental for the full exercise of women's human rights, such as: the criminalization of sexual assault (Law 10.224, dated May 15, 2001); a prohibition to curb discrimination against women under labor legislation by withdrawing the requirement for official proof of pregnancy and sterilization, and prohibiting other discriminatory practices for the purposes of admission or the legal continuation of the employment relationship (Law 9.029, dated April 13, 1995); special protection for women in the job market, through specific incentives (Law 9.799, dated May 26, 1999); a requirement for compulsory notification in the case of maternal death in order to ensure an investigation into the cause and the adoption of preventative measures (Ministry of Health Order no. 653/GM, dated May 28, 2003); family planning within the context of global and integrated health services (Law no. 9.263, dated January 12, 1996); and compulsory notification, within the national territory, of cases of violence against women attended by public or private health services (Law no. 10.778, dated November 24, 2003). Recently, Decree 5.030, dated March 31, 2004 constituted an Inter-Ministerial Work Group that includes participation by civil society and government. The objective of the Group is to develop a proposal for legislative measures and other instruments to restrain domestic violence against women. The Group drafted a proposal for special legislation relating to domestic and family violence.

Brazil has been consolidating its commitment to human rights within the international arena, submitting to the jurisdiction of the Inter-American Court of Human Rights and the International Criminal Court. It has also accepted the standing of the Committee on the Elimination of All

⁶ Folheto Mortalidade Materna, Rede Nacional Feminista de Saúde. In: *Contribuição a partir da perspectiva de gênero ao relatório alternativo sobre o PIDESC*, Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (CLADEM), Brazil, December 2002.

⁷ See report: *Mortalidade Materna e o Direitos Humanos: As Mulheres e o Direito de viver livre de morte materna evitável*, Advocacy, 2004 (in press).

Forms of Racism (CERD) to receive individual accusations and has ratified the Optional Protocol to CEDAW.

In addition, Brazil presented its first National Report to the CEDAW Committee and defended it during the session held in 2003. In 2002, it submitted the report to the United Nations Commission on Economic and Social Rights. The report included a chapter on the situation of women, which was presented to the Commission by representatives from the women's movement in 2002. Within the ambit of multilateral free-trade negotiations, it is noteworthy that the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (*Secretaria Especial de Políticas para as Mulheres* - SPM) represents Brazil in the MERCOSUL Specialized Meeting on Women (*Reunião Especializada da Mulher do MERCOSUL* - REM). Through the SPM, Brazil has played an important role in discussions on gender within the international arena. It hosted, for the first time, two preparatory technical meetings for meetings of the UN, preparations for the 48th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women – CSW and preparations for the Ninth Regional Conference on Women, of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL). It has also actively participated in meetings of the Inter-American Commission of Women (*Comissão Interamericana de Mulheres* – CIM) and, next July, it will assume the *pro-tempore* Presidency of the REM.

With respect to the Millenium Goals, it should be highlighted that Brazil has similar rates for both boys and girls for matriculation in school and conclusion of basic education. During the 90s, in Brazil's fight against illiteracy, the percentage of women who became literate was higher than for men, thereby inverting the prior scenario. In the Part 2 of this Document, greater information on these data is provided, as well as on other indicators related to the Millennium Goals, such as the proportion of seats in Parliament and maternal health.

After the Beijing Conference, to facilitate implementation of the Platform, the Brazilian Government restructured the National Council on Women's Rights in order to render it more capable of proposing, implementing and evaluating public policies directed at the promotion of gender equality. This will be reviewed in Part 3 of this Document concerning institutional development.

In January 2003, the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (*Secretaria Especial de Políticas para as Mulheres* - SPM) was established, linked to the Presidency of the Republic and with Ministerial status. The SPM has the power to formulate, coordinate, accompany and, in some cases, execute public policies related to gender equity. It is also responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Beijing Platform. In order to guarantee the transversality of a gender perspective in the public policies of the Federal Government, the SPM has sought to influence the design of programs included in the 2004-2007 Multi-Year Plan (*Plano Plurianual* - PPA), while maintaining a continuous dialogue with civil society. For this purpose, a National Conference on Women's Policies will be held in July 2004, which will propose guidelines for the elaboration of the National Plan for Women's Policies. Besides the specific activities of the SPM for the promotion of women's human rights, the SPM has also undertaken activities with other relevant governmental entities, such as the Special Secretariat for Policies for the Promotion of Racial Equality (*Secretaria Especial de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial* – SEPPIR), the unprecedented creation of which occurred under Law 10.678, dated May 23, 2003, and the

Special Secretariat for Human Rights. These three Secretariats, all with Ministerial status, are directly linked to the Presidency of the Republic.

These efforts by the SPM are directed at creating conditions to fully overcome the serious problems that have been identified in the area of public policies⁸. The SPM is particularly committed to the elaboration of public policies that guarantee governmental actions and programs that are integrated, articulated, continuous and accessible to all women, taking into consideration the specific and unique regional conditions existing in the country. As can be seen, therefore, institutional mechanisms for monitoring the goals to promote gender equity in the execution of public policy must still be created and strengthened. This necessitates an increase in the budget allocated to the area. The strengthening of these mechanisms is particularly important when the current economic situation in Brazil is examined.

⁸ “*O Brasil e a Convenção sobre a Eliminação de Todas as Formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher – Documento do Movimento de Mulheres para o Cumprimento da Convenção sobre a Eliminação de Todas as Formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher – CEDAW, pelo Estado Brasileiro: Propostas e Recomendações*”, Brasília, 2003, paragraph 27.

Part 2 – Progress Achieved in the Areas of Special Concern in the Beijing Platform for Action

In this Part of the Document, some of the state and civil society initiatives related to the thirteen areas of special concern in the Beijing Platform for Action will be listed and analyzed. The objective of this Document is not to present a broad diagnosis of the situation of women in Brazil. This can be found in the Report presented by Brazil to the CEDAW Committee in 2002, which was further updated in the document “Brazil’s Participation in the 29th Session of the CEDAW Committee” (“*Participação do Brasil na 29^a Sessão do Comitê CEDAW*”).

Women and Poverty

The 2002 and 2003 social indicators demonstrate advances, particularly in the areas of health⁹, education¹⁰ and living conditions¹¹, experienced by men and women. However, the disparity between rich and poor, as well as regional inequality, still looms large in the country¹². Women earn less than men even when they enjoy the same type of employment relationship, work the same number of hours, exercise the same profession and have the same level of education as the men. Further, the difference in income between the sexes is present in various economic sectors¹³. Above all, the persistence of the process of the feminization of poverty must be registered.

The reality of non-white women, particularly African descendents, is even more dramatic. According to data cited in the Report presented by Brazil to the CEDAW Committee, “the income of non-white women is up to 70% less than that of white men, and 53% less than the income of white women. In comparison with non-white men, their income is 40% less”¹⁴.

⁹ See sub-chapter *infra* “Women and Health”.

¹⁰ See sub-chapter *infra* “Education and Training for Women”.

¹¹ Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *Dados sobre mulher associados a pobreza, economia e educação* (text prepared based on information from the *Síntese dos Indicadores Sociais 2002 e 2003* – IBGE and the Brazilian National Report to CEDAW), p. 3. According to the authors: “Electric lighting was the essential service that achieved the highest coverage. In 1999, it reached 94.8% of the homes and in 2001 it reached 96%. The proportion of residences benefiting from garbage collection increased from 80.0% in 1999 to 83.2% in 2001. With respect to basic sanitation, in 2001 18.9% of homes did not have access to the general water supply system and 33.2% did not have an adequate sewage disposal system (linkage of the sewage installation to the sewage collection network or a septic tank). In 1999, these percentages were, respectively, 20.2% and 35.3%.” (*op.cit.*, p.3)

¹² Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *Dados sobre mulher associados a pobreza, economia e educação* (text prepared based on information from the *Síntese dos Indicadores Sociais 2002 e 2003* – IBGE and the Brazilian National Report to CEDAW), p. 3.

¹³ Data bank on the women’s work in Brazil, which contains historical information back to 1970, with statistics on the growth of female work, the relationship between the family and female work, education and work, the positions occupied by women on the job market and the quality of the female work, presented in the form of tables, accompanied by explanatory texts and methodological notes. Responsible Team: Cristina Bruschini (Coordinator), Maria Rosa Lombardi (conception, planning, execution and monitoring).

http://www.fcc.org.br:8080/servlets/mulher/series_historicas?pg=ghgm.html

¹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, State Secretariat for Women’s Rights, coordinated by Flávia Piovesan and Silvia Pimentel, *Relatório Nacional Brasileiro relativo aos anos de 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997 e 2001 nos termos do artigo 18 da Convenção sobre a Eliminação de todas as formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher*, Brasília, 2002, p. 103.

In the last ten years, governmental and non-governmental initiatives of limited reach have emerged. These initiatives have benefited women with policies for access to economic resources. Some were originally designed to focus on women, while others were aimed at the low-income populations and, therefore, assisted women in particular. Examples include experiences with micro-credit¹⁵ and registering women as the benefactors of social programs, as well as experiences with agricultural reform¹⁶.

The Zero Hunger Program (*Programa Fome Zero*) is one of the governmental initiatives that are directed at combating poverty, with special attention to women¹⁷. Recognizing the right to food and seeking to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, the Program seeks to implement a permanent policy of food security that, using participatory management, will confront the structural sources of hunger and poverty. The Program involves all the Federal Government Ministries, as well as the State and Municipal Governments and Brazilian society as a whole. The Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger coordinates the program. The central entity is the National Council for Food Security, and the local entities are the Management Committees. The government and civil society are represented on both types of entities.

Fome Zero involves activities directed at urgent situations, such as an improvement in the meals provided by schools and the distribution of food-cards, which provide monetary resources to low-income families for the purchase of food. It also includes activities of a structural nature, such as the construction of water treatment plants, the expansion of rural electrification, housing programs and activities to generate employment and income in rural areas (e.g., assistance to agricultural families and to the agricultural reform settlements).

With respect to women, *Fome Zero* undertakes activities to combat malnutrition, and maternal and infant mortality, and programs directed at health education, with an emphasis on teenage pregnancy and breast-feeding. Based on the assumption that women better administer the domestic budget, the Program transfers resources preferentially to women.

On January 9, 2004, Law 10.836 was adopted to create the Family Assistance Program (*Programa Bolsa Família*), with the goal of unifying the management and execution procedures for the activities to transfer resources from the Federal Government. The activities particularly targeted were: the National Program for a Minimum Wage (*Programa Nacional de Renda Mínima*) linked to School Education Assistance (*Educação Bolsa Escola*), instituted under Law

¹⁵ Despite the paucity of data on the subject, a Internet search indicates the existence of a significant number of micro-credit initiatives. For example: more than 50% of the clients of the “People’s Bank” in the municipality of Belém, Pará, are women (http://www.prefeituradebelem.com.br/artigo.asp?artigo_id=768); 80% of the beneficiaries of the “People’s Bank” in the municipality of Blumenau are women (<http://td257.hospedagemweb.com.br/construindo/construindo04.htm>); and 58% of the individuals served by the “People’s Bank” in Goiânia are women (http://www.sebrae.com.br/br/cooperecrescer/finalistas_1634.asp). (All of the Web pages mentioned in this footnote were visited on June 4, 2004)

¹⁶ Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM), *Participação do Brasil na 29ª Sessão do Comitê para a Eliminação da Discriminação contra a Mulher – CEDAW*, Document Series, Brasília, 2004, p.21.

¹⁷ Information on the *Programa Fome Zero* was extracted from the document *Participação do Brasil na 29ª Sessão do Comitê CEDAW*, from the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM), Document Series, Brasília, 2004, and the Web page www.fomezero.gov.br, visited on May 29, 2004.

10.219 on April 11, 2001; the National Program for Access to Food (*Programa Nacional de Acesso à Alimentação – PNAA*), created under Law 10.689 on June 13, 2003; the National Program for a Minimum Wage (*Programa Nacional de Renda Mínima*) linked to Health-Food Assistance, instituted by Provisionary Measure no. 2.206-1, dated September 6, 2001; the Gas Subsidy Program (*Programa Auxílio-Gás*), instituted by Decree no. 4.102, dated January 24, 2002; and the Federal Government Single Registration System (*Cadastramento Único do Governo Federal*), established under Decree no. 3.877 on July 24, 2001.

Benefits under the Family Assistance Program (*Programa Bolsa Família*) will be preferentially paid to women. The granting of benefits is conditional upon a pre-natal exam, nutritional monitoring, health monitoring, and school attendance by the children of 85% in a regular school establishment, under the terms of Article 3 of Law 10.836/04.

Education and Training for Women

During the 90s, the illiteracy rate for the Brazilian population decreased from 20.07% to 12.63%, with the greatest decrease occurring for women. In 1991, 80.15% of men were considered literate, while, by 2000, the rate had risen to 86.23%. Over the same period, the percentage of women considered to be literate increased from 79.72% to 86.50%¹⁸.

In 1999, 23% of Brazilian men and 27% of Brazilian women had studied nine years or more, corresponding to high school and university levels. Three years later, in 2002, the proportions of men and women that achieved these educational levels increased, with the women in the lead – 31% of women and 28% of men¹⁹.

However, there has been, and still is, a strong trend toward gender segmentation in the various fields of study²⁰. In the educational system, women tend to follow preparatory courses, whereas men enter into professional courses²¹. In higher-level education, the Human and Social Science fields tend to attract a higher proportion of women, whereas the Exact and Technological Sciences tend to attract men²². Teaching, which is a low-paying occupation, is an example of a

¹⁸ Hildete Pereira de Melo. *Gênero e Pobreza no Brasil*, Agreement between the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM) and the Economic Commission for Latin American and the Caribbean (CEPAL), Rio de Janeiro, 2004, p. 13.

¹⁹ http://www.fcc.org.br:8080/servlets/mulher/series_historicas?pg=ghgm.html The prevalence of women among the most educated is evident from high school through university. In 2002, 54% of the students enrolled in high school and 56% of the students who undertook the entrance examinations and entered into university were women. Another relevant aspect in the process of obtaining a higher education is that, in addition to the fact that women constitute the majority of the students enrolled at these educational levels, most of the students who complete the level are also women. In 2002, females comprised 58% and 63% of the graduating students in high school and university, respectively. For professional training, however, the presence of women is less significant, making up approximately one-third of the enrollment at the basic and technological levels, and 41% of the technical level.

²⁰ *Relatório Nacional Brasileiro relativo aos anos de 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997 e 2001 nos termos do artigo 18 da Convenção sobre a Eliminação de todas as formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher*, Brasília, 2002, p. 146.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 146.

²² Both in university and professional training, women's choices for study seem to be related to certain areas of knowledge. It becomes evident that some academic areas are more permeable to the presence of women and others less so, suggesting the future reproduction of female occupational "niches" or "ghettos" in the job market. For example, when the enrollment rosters for the university entrance exams for the entire decade of the 90s are examined, there are only three areas in which women do not form the majority: Sciences, mathematics and computers; agriculture and veterinary sciences; and Engineering, production and construction. The last of the three

field that is dominantly female – accounting for 80% of female workers. Considering that teaching is one of the principal niches for the integration of women into the job market, measures to more highly value the profession would contribute to an improvement in teaching, as well as to decrease the disparity in income between men and women²³.

Among the objectives of the National Program for Textbooks, created by the Federal Government, is the goal of combating the dissemination of gender stereotypes in textbooks. In the Beijing + 5 Report, the Program was described in the following manner:

Prior to their purchase and distribution to the schools, books were screened, passing through quality evaluation, which reinforces gender equality by classifying the textbooks used in the public education system and excluding the use of those having any type of discrimination.

In 2002, the Brazilian Report to the CEDAW Committee stated:

The selection strategies introduced by the Ministry of Education and Culture for textbooks seem to be adequate for picking out only the most serious and adult expressions of sexism and racism (Beisiegel, undated)

Therefore, the selection criteria must be refined in order to finally ensure that the textbooks used in Brazilian public schools cease to reproduce gender and racial stereotypes.

Notable among the strategies to combat stereotypes and racial discrimination is the recent adoption of a policy of quotas for students of African descent in Brazilian universities, such as UERJ (Rio de Janeiro State University), UNEB (Federal University of Bahia), UnB (University of Brasília), and UFPR (Federal University of Paraná), among others. In order to decrease inequality in access to higher education, particularly with respect to race, the Government will send a Law Project to the Congress guaranteeing the reservation of half of the vacancies in Federal Universities for students who have completed secondary school in the public system.

Women and Health

The National Program for Complete Care for Women's Health (*Programa Nacional de Assistência Integral à Saúde da Mulher – PAISM*), launched in 1983 by the Ministry of Health, is of particular note among the governmental programs. Arising out of cooperation between the women's movement and the Federal Executive Power, PAISM championed the concept of complete care for women's health through actions covering the entire spectrum, including prevention, diagnosis, treatment and recuperation²⁴. However, in 2002, the Brazilian Report that was presented to the CEDAW Committee stated the following:

is the most impervious to enrollment by young women (only 26%). On the other hand, in 2002, women represented 75% of the students that chose Education, 63% of those who chose courses in Humanities and Arts, and 72% of the students who intended to follow careers in Health and social well-being.

²³ *Relatório Nacional Brasileiro relativo aos anos de 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997 e 2001 nos termos do artigo 18 da Convenção sobre a Eliminação de todas as formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher*, Brasília, 2002, p. 148.

²⁴ Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM), *Participação do Brasil na 29ª Sessão do Comitê para a Eliminação da Discriminação contra a Mulher – CEDAW*, Document Series, Brasília, 2004, p. 25.

After more than 15 years of existence by PAISM, an evaluation undertaken by the women's movement, particularly in the area of health, demonstrated that its effectiveness and reach were insufficient given the needs of Brazilian women. Currently, the women's movement is attempting to reformulate the Program based on the Conferences on Population and Development (Cairo) and on Women (Beijing). However, it should be noted that the Program, as it was idealized, was not fully executed, and still today the responsible technical area has jurisdiction over assistance for pre-natal and childbirth activities, family planning, prevention of AIDS transmission in women and newborns, and violence against women²⁵.

Instruments aimed at technical or normative improvements for PAISM have been periodically formulated for the purposes of a policy of complete attention to women's health. Thus, in 1998, a Program for the Humanization of Labor and Childbirth (*Programa de Humanização do Parto e Nascimento* - PHPN) was instituted to improve the quality of attendance during labor, and to reduce the cesarean rate and maternal deaths²⁶. In order to participate in the PHPN, the municipality is required to present a plan for the functional integration of the municipal maternity wards and the health units. In order to receive the resources provided for under the Plan, the municipality must register pregnant woman at the beginning of the pre-natal care and record each one of the procedures undertaken in order to prove compliance with the requirements considered to be appropriate for quality pre-natal care.

Integration of the municipalities in the PHPN was slow. Between 2000 and 2002, only 28.7% of the resources available for implementation of the Program had been transferred and only 5% of the births were undertaken in accordance with all of the Program parameters.

Limits on the payment for cesarean births seem to have produced an impact. In 1995, 32.4% of births under the public health system were cesarean. In 2001, the percentage decreased to 25.1%.

Between 1997 and 2001, the average number of pre-natal consultations by pregnant women practically doubled, reaching a level of 4.2 consultations per pregnant woman. However, the increase in the number of consultations did not result in a sufficient improvement in the quality of service.

The Ministry of Health advised that 650 municipalities have integrated into the PHPN this year, for a total of 4631 participating municipalities.

Although these numbers indicate certain advances resulting from the PHPN, the 1995 to 2000 data do not demonstrate any significant change in the number of maternal deaths. On the other

²⁵ *Relatório Nacional Brasileiro relativo aos anos de 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997 e 2001 nos termos do artigo 18 da Convenção sobre a Eliminação de todas as formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher*, Brasília, 2002, p. 183.

²⁶ Information on the *Programa de Humanização do Parto e Nascimento* (PHPN) was taken from the text by Wilza Villela, "A Saúde da Mulher no Brasil – contribuição ao relatório Beijing + 10, 2004.

hand, there was a drastic drop in infant mortality in the 90s, directly accredited to the programs for pre-natal and post-natal care²⁷.

In March 2004, the President of the Republic launched the National Pact for the Reduction of Maternal and Neo-Natal Mortality (*Pacto Nacional pela Redução da Morte Materna e Neonatal*). The Pact resulted in a governmental program, based in the area of health, that defines strategies and goals for the current government's mandate and for the next 25 years. It is based on consistent and articulated joint operations with states and municipalities for the reduction of maternal mortality and the provision of family planning services. The aim of the Program is to involve all of civil society, particularly municipal and state health councils, the National Health Council, professional associations, union entities, scientific associations, non-governmental organizations and the media.

The National Commission on Maternal Death (*Comissão Nacional de Morte Materna*) was reactivated as part of the effort to reduce maternal mortality. The Commission established the compulsory notification of maternal death to enable an investigation into the causes and to assist in the adoption of preventative measures (Ministry of Health Ruling no. 653/GM, dated May 28, 2003). The Commission also hosted the Fifth National Forum on Maternal Mortality.

On May 28th of this year – International Day for the Fight for Women's Health and National Day for the Fight Against Maternal Mortality – the Ministry of Health established the National Policy for Integrated Care for Women's Health – Principles and Guidelines (*Política Nacional de Atenção Integral à Saúde da Mulher - Princípios e Diretrizes*). The Policy arises out of the commitment to implement actions on health that contribute to guarantee women's human rights and reduce the morbidity/mortality from preventable and avoidable causes. Within a gender focus, the Policy incorporates the integral nature and promotion of health as guiding principles in the effort to consolidate advances in the area of sexual and reproductive rights. Emphasis is placed on an improvement in obstetric care, family planning, attention to unsafe abortion procedures and the fight against domestic and sexual violence. Now, the prevention and treatment of women living with HIV/AIDS, and victims of chronic degenerative diseases and gynecological cancer are also included. In addition, the Policy broadens actions to attend groups that are historically excluded from public policies, due to their specific nature and needs.

The Ministry of Health, through the Technical Area for Women's Health, hosted the International Seminar on Public Policies for Women in the Area of Health: Latin American Experiences (*Seminário Internacional Políticas Públicas para as Mulheres na Área da Saúde: Experiências Latino-Americana*), on May 25-27, 2004. The purpose of the Seminar was to strengthen public policies, legislation and national women's health programs through dialogue and articulation among the official sectors and social movements in Latin American and the Caribbean.

Approximately 140 people participated in the Seminar, including representatives from Portuguese and Spanish-speaking, Latin and Central American and Caribbean countries. They were health professionals who coordinate Women's Health Programs in the Ministries of Health

²⁷ Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *op. cit.* p. 2-3. In 2001, the rate was estimated at 28.7 infant deaths per 100,000 live births, while in 1990 the rate was 47.5.

and Secretariats of Health of the main cities of the Latin American and Caribbean countries; representatives from movements, organizations and networks of women who work with women's health; and politicians, law-makers and planners who work with these issues.

The participants committed to develop institutional mechanisms for dialogue and consensus building.

The strength of these accords is based on the fact that these mechanisms will not be limited to the work undertaken exclusively within the ambit of the countries themselves. They will also operate on a regional level.

For this purpose, a Forum for Public Policies for Women's Health in Latin America and the Caribbean was created. The Forum will articulate national, sub-regional and regional efforts, with the following objectives:

- a) Create forums for the exchange of information and experiences, and facilitate the dissemination of knowledge on public policies and health programs for women, programs that address the transversality of gender in health policy and programs for sexual and reproductive health.
- b) Promote articulation between the teams from the Ministries of Health that coordinate the Women's Health Programs and other similar entities, and women's organizations and other civil society organizations, on the national and regional levels, in order to facilitate and support the various health practices and policies.
- c) Benefit, promote and facilitate processes for the elaboration of public policies directed at promoting women's health in the pursuit of equity, particularly in so far as it concerns reproductive rights, including the transversality of gender and taking into consideration regional diversities.
- d) Contribute to the training of managers in the area of public policies for women's health.
- e) Establish an agenda of common priorities for the region and, through the Forum, guarantee the incorporation of these priorities into the regional agendas related to health.
- f) Create and strengthen mechanisms for cooperation between the countries with respect to the specific themes, based on south-south cooperation processes.

Violence Against Women

In 1985, Brazil undertook a pioneering effort to establish the first Specialized Police Station for Women (*Delegacia Especializada de Atendimento às Mulheres - DEAM*). By 2000, 255 units existed, increasing to a current level of 339, the majority of which are located in the Southeast Region of the country²⁸. Despite consensus on the relevance of DEAMs, they serve less than

²⁸ Respectively, the Brazilian National Report on the Implementation of the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, "*Mulher 2000: Igualdade de Gênero, Desenvolvimento e Paz para o Século XXI*", Brasília, 2000, p.33, and the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM), *Participação do Brasil na 29ª Sessão do Comitê para a Eliminação da Discriminação contra a Mulher – CEDAW*", Document Series, Brasília, 2004, p.29.

10% of the Brazilian municipalities, enjoy very little prestige among police, and are unprepared and unequipped to provide services. Some do not even have telephones or vehicles²⁹.

The SPM has concentrated its activities to combat violence against women on the following goals: a) support for shelters for women in situations of risk; b) support for specialized services that assist women in violent situations; c) training for professionals in public institutions working to combat violence against women; and d) improvement in the judicial system that deals with violence against women.

This is one of the areas in which the SPM has been most active, including the application of its resources for support shelters, police stations, etc. The SPM initiated the program to confront violence; hosted, in November 2003, the National Meeting of Police Officers in order to define Terms of Reference for the orientation and creation of new DEAMs, in addition to equipping the already-existing units; and continues, in partnership with the National Secretariat for Public Security, to offer capacity-building programs for the DEAMs (1205 professionals have already been trained). In the program for the Single System for Public Security (*Sistema Único de Segurança Pública*), a specific chapter is dedicated to the issue of gender violence, providing guidelines for State activities to deal with the issue.

Another activity undertaken by the SPM, under the rubric of the program to confront violence, was the building of shelters in secure locations for female victims of domestic and sexual violence. They are maintained in partnership with the states, municipalities, Distrito Federal and non-government entities. The shelters ensure that women, whose lives are threatened, and their minor children, have access to temporary shelter for 3 to 5 months. In addition to shelter, they receive social and psychological assistance, medical care in the public system, courses to integrate into the job market and free legal assistance. In November 2002, the Federal Government also held the First National Meeting of Shelters (*1º Encontro Nacional de Casas-Abrigo*), bringing together coordinators and staff from 70 units across the country. The purpose of the meeting was to gain a better understanding of the operating conditions of the shelters and define the profile of the women and children who make use of them; promote an exchange of experiences; define the ideal operating parameters; define criteria for support for the construction and maintenance of shelters; identify partners for the training of a network to confront violence in the municipalities; build a data bank on the shelters; and update the Terms of Reference for support to the projects.

For the purposes of policy formulation, actions were undertaken to assist indigenous women. These included, among others, visits to the communities and villages to verify accusations of violence and the situation of indigenous women.

The activities of the Inter-Ministerial Working Group (IWG) should be mentioned again. The Group relies on the participation of civil society and the government, and its objective is to elaborate a proposal for legislative measures and other instruments to restrain violence against women.

²⁹ *Relatório Final da Pesquisa Nacional sobre as Condições de Funcionamento das Delegacias Especializadas no Atendimento às Mulheres*, National Council for Women's Rights / National Secretariat for Public Security, Brasília, 2000.

The central theme of the proposals, which have been developed by the IWG for the elaboration of legislation, is to define the concept of domestic and family violence against women as being any behavior based on gender relations that causes death; harm; embarrassment; a limitation on self-determination; physical, sexual, moral or psychological suffering; or social, political or economic constraints; as well as damage or loss to patrimony, which has occurred within or outside of the domestic unit by any person with or without a familiar link, who shares, has shared or has not shared the same home or residence as the victim.

In addition, the IWG reaffirmed in the proposal that all women, independently of class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, income, culture, educational background, age or religion, have the right to live free of violence, denounce anyone who assaults them and seek assistance from the Public Authorities. The IWG defines these types of violence as a violation of human rights.

Based on these definitions, the Group is establishing the necessary procedures for prevention, assistance, victim protection and sanction of the aggressor, with the objective of eradicating domestic and family violence against women. The result of all of this work will be presented to the National Congress as a proposal of the Executive Power.

The National Plan for Public Security includes a chapter on domestic and gender violence, establishing guidelines for the National Program for the Prevention and Reduction of Domestic and Gender Violence. The objectives of the Program include preventing and reducing domestic and gender violence, assisting the victims to leave the violent situation and apprehending the aggressors. The Program established a goal to create, on the state and municipal levels, integrated and decentralized systems to assist the women and aggressors³⁰.

Women and Armed Conflict

There are no armed conflicts currently underway in Brazil in terms of the definition provided under international humanitarian law. However, the level of urban violence is alarming and a clear understanding of the connection between the high level of violence in general and the level of violence against women has not yet been developed.

During armed conflicts, there is a recurring trend toward an exacerbation in the discrimination against women, including violence against women. The various groups in conflict seek to consolidate their power and one of the methods used is to dominate the women based on gender stereotypes. The destruction caused by armed conflicts also results in the overburdening of women, who become responsible for de-structured families and the requirement to ensure the survival of the family members – providing subsistence items and caring for the children. At the same time, the strong impact on women has the potential to turn them into protagonists for change – which is not always encouraged.

³⁰ <http://www.mj.gov.br/noticias/2003/abril/pnsp.pdf>

Women and the Economy

Participation by women in the workforce increased from 29% in 1976 to 43% in 2002³¹. During the 90s, the increase in participation by women in the job market was reflected in an increase in the *per capita* GDP of women³². The disparity between men's and women's salaries was somewhat reduced, but persisted in Brazilian society for all levels of education³³.

The unemployment rate stands at 6.7% for women and 5.9% for men. Compared to men, the proportion of women who retire is lower, while the proportion of older women who do not receive retirement allowances or pensions is higher³⁴.

In order to analyze the current situation of women's access to employment and adequate working conditions, one must consider the vulnerability of protective labor legislation given the structural adjustment reforms that are being implemented in Brazil and other countries.

A very successful example of joint action by union organizations and the Brazilian Government occurred in 2000, at a time when the revision of ILO Convention 103 was imminent. The international document provides for the protection of maternity rights for women workers, an issue which was regulated in Brazil in 1943 through labor legislation, and incorporated into the Federal Constitution of 1988.

Through a process of intense mobilization, 26,000 signatures were collected across the country and a document was delivered to the Ministry of Labor. Pursuant to directions from the Presidency of the Republic, Brazil supported the position of women workers in the ILO meeting in June of that year. Specifically, Brazil defended an increase in maternity leave to 17 weeks, as provided for under legislation in force in the country³⁵.

On July 12, 2003, the Minister of State for Social Security and the Minister of the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women published Joint Regulation no. 77, constituting a Working Group to prepare a report containing an analysis and suggestions for public policies for the inclusion of women in Social Security. The Group prepared a final report, with an analysis of the current situation, alternatives and recommendations. The following passage from the Report is included in order to provide an understanding of the contents:

After an analysis of the situation, the Working Group elaborated alternatives for the inclusion of women in Social Security, based on a list of demands provided by the women's movements with respect to the issue, as follows:

³¹ Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *op. cit.* p. 5.

³² Hildete Pereira de Melo. *Gênero e Pobreza no Brasil*, Agreement between the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM) and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (CEPAL), Rio de Janeiro, 2004, p. 13.

³³ See Hildete Pereira de Melo, *op.cit.* p.12–15. Also see Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *op. cit.* p. 2. For the authors: "According to a synthesis of indicators for 2003, women with up to four years of study received an average of R\$ 0.40 per hour of work less than men, and women with more than 12 years of study received approximately R\$ 5.40 less per hour worked." (*op.cit.* p.12-15)

³⁴ Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *op. cit.* p. 5.

³⁵ Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *op. cit.* p.14.

1. *incorporation of families that work within the informal market, with lower rates for contribution or indirect contribution, like for the agricultural family. Suggestion: Proposal to Amend the Constitution;*
2. *lower percentage contribution by women without employment and without their own income, who carry out, on an exclusive basis, domestic work within the home of their own families. Suggestion: Proposal to Amend the Constitution;*
3. *permit the payment of maternal leave assistance up to a value of R\$720.00 (seven hundred and twenty reais), independently of the value of the income of the secured party and of civil servants. Suggestion: Proposal to Amend Constitution;*
4. *inclusion of domestic employees under labor and social security rights. Suggestion: Awareness raising for the population involved; and*
5. *sharing of social security rights with the spouse/partner who is without his/her own income. Suggestion: Project for Law.*

It should be mentioned that a Constitutional Amendment Proposal (PEC 385/2001), to provide an assistance benefit to housewives, is currently under debate in the National Congress. The Proposal was approved by the Constitution and Justice Commission of the House of Deputies, and will now be sent for voting in plenary session in the same house.

Women in Power and the Decision-Making Process

The Beijing + 5 Report referred to the legislation that established quotas for women candidates as the “most significant experience developed in Brazil with respect to the issue of women’s access to power and decision-making processes.” The Report credited the success of the 1996 experience, in which the quota was 25%, and the 1998 experience, when it was raised to 30%, to the legislation and the “Women without Fear of Power” campaign undertaken by the female members of the National Congress, with the support of the National Council for Women’s Rights and the women’s movement³⁶.

Despite representing only 11.11% of the Senate and 8.77% of the House of Deputies, the number of women in the National Congress increased by 45% in 2002, compared to 1998. Similarly, there are only 133 State Deputies in the entire country, but this number (from 2002) represents an increase of 25.5% relative to 1998.

The implementation of the quota policy based on the gender of the candidate has not yet achieved the expected results because the women candidates do not receive effective and adequate support, the parties do not comply with the quotas and the parties do not affirmatively

³⁶ Brazilian National Report on the Implementation of the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, “*Mulher 2000: Igualdade de Gênero, Desenvolvimento e Paz para o Século XXI*”, Brasília, 2000, p.43.

direct resources toward the women candidates³⁷. Currently, there are proposals before the National Congress that are aimed at altering this legislation to render it more effective.

Within the ambit of the Federal Executive Power, in 2003 five women were nominated as Ministers, leading the Ministries of Environment, Social Assistance and Promotion, Mines and Energy, and the Special Secretariats on Policies for Women and for the Promotion of Racial Equality. For the Brazilian State, this represented the greatest ever number of women in the Cabinet at the highest level of the Federal Government. Further, three of the Female Ministers are of African descent.

Despite the increase in the number of women in the highest echelons of the Federal Government, the situation of the Judiciary is still extremely disadvantageous for women. The Federal Supreme Court, which received four new members in the last year and one-half, includes only one female Minister among the 11 members. The Superior Labor Court has 16 male Ministers and one female Minister, although the number of female judges on the bench at the lowest level is higher than the number of male judges³⁸.

Institutional Mechanisms

In the Beijing + 5 Report, Brazil presented the institutional mechanisms that were strengthened after the Beijing Conference, most notably the National Council for Women's Rights (*Conselho Nacional dos Direitos da Mulher*), the National Council for Population and Development (*Comissão Nacional de População e Desenvolvimento*), and the Inter-Sectoral Commission for Women's Health of the National Health Council (*Comissão Intersetorial de Saúde da Mulher do Conselho Nacional de Saúde*)³⁹.

Among the institutional mechanisms established in the last ten years, the most important was the creation, on January 1, 2003, of the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (*Secretaria Especial de Políticas para as Mulheres*) – an entity linked to the Presidency of the Republic, with Ministerial status. The Secretariat is responsible for: a) directly and immediately advising the President of the Republic on the formulation, coordination and articulation of women's policies; b) developing and implementing educational campaigns and campaigns to combat discrimination of a national nature; c) elaborating gender planning that contributes to the actions of the Federal Government and other governmental spheres, in order to promote equality; d) articulating, promoting and executing cooperation programs with national and international, public and private entities that deal with the implementation of policies for women; and e) promoting and monitoring the implementation of legislation for affirmative action and the

³⁷ *O Brasil e a Convenção sobre a Eliminação de Todas as Formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher – Documento do Movimento de Mulheres para o Cumprimento da Convenção sobre a Eliminação de Todas as Formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher – CEDAW, pelo Estado Brasileiro: Propostas e Recomendações*, Brasília, 2003, p. 26-27; Organizing Commission for the National Conference of Brazilian Women, *Plataforma Política Feminista*, Brasília, 2002, p. 17.

³⁸ National Data Bank for the Judicial Power (<http://www.stf.gov.br/bndpj/tribunaissuperiores>, visited on June 4, 2004.)

³⁹ Brazilian National Report on the Implementation of the Platform for Action from the Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995) to the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly, "*Mulher 2000: Igualdade de Gênero, Desenvolvimento e Paz para o Século XXI*", Brasília, 2000, p.46

definition of public actions for compliance with accords, conventions and action plans signed by Brazil that are related to women's equality and the fight against discrimination⁴⁰.

By the end of 2003, the Secretariat had applied 98% of the resources budgeted for the year for: a) the training of staff in public institutions that are instrumental in combating violence against women; b) promotion of events to inform society on the rights of women; c) publication and distribution of informative material, studies and research on the rights of women; d) support for, and establishment of, services to attend or shelter women in dangerous situations; e) support for, and establishment of, state or municipal entities for women's policies and rights; f) campaigns to renounce and prevent violence and discrimination against women; g) support for the establishment of specialized services to assist women suffering from sexual violence and any other form of discrimination⁴¹. The budget of the Secretariat was quadrupled for 2004, thereby increasing its ability to act in all of the areas.

On the institutional level, another advance was the creation of the Special Secretariat for Policies for the Promotion of Racial Equality (*Secretaria Especial de Políticas de Promoção da Igualdade Racial* – SEPPIR), pursuant to the terms of Law 10.678, dated May 23, 2003. The central goal of the Secretariat, also with Ministerial status, is the formulation, coordination and articulation of policies and guidelines for the promotion of racial equality in Brazil.

Women's Human Rights

The use of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as an instrument to guarantee women's human rights has been gaining force in recent years as a result of actions by civil society and the government.

Brazil ratified the Convention in 1984 and should have presented reports to the CEDAW Committee in 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997 and 2001. At the end of 2001, Brazil finally began the preparation of its first National Report to the CEDAW Committee, with the objective of covering the period from 1985-2001.

The Report was prepared by a consortium of people and organizations, and resulted in a broad-based document on the situation of women in Brazil and the relevant Executive, Legislative and Judicial measures that have been taken⁴². The partnership with the Human Rights and Social

⁴⁰ Law n°. 10.683, dated May 28, 2003, Art. 22.

⁴¹ Part 3 of this Document contains more information on the SPM.

⁴² The National Report was prepared by a consortium of organizations and people, with the participation of: Citizen Advocacy for Human Rights (*Advocacia Cidadã pelos Direitos Humanos* – ADVOCACI); Actions on Gender, Citizenship and Development (*Ações em Gênero, Cidadania e Desenvolvimento* – AGENDE); Citizenship, Study, Research, Information and Action (*Cidadania, Estudo, Pesquisa, Informação, Ação* – CEPIA); Feminist Studies and Advisory Center (*Centro Feminista de Estudos e Assessoria* – CFEMEA); Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights (*Comitê Latino-americano e do Caribe para a Defesa dos Direitos da Mulher* – CLADEM); Black Woman's Institute (*Instituto da Mulher Negra* – GELEDÉS); Institute for the Promotion of Equity (*Instituto para a Promoção da Equidade* – IPÊ); Center for the Study of Violence, University of São Paulo (*Núcleo de Estudos da Violência da Universidade de São Paulo* – NEV) and Legal Assistance and Gender Studies (*Assessoria Jurídica e Estudos de Gênero* – THEMIS); Christina Bruschini, Fúlvia Rosemberg and

Issues Division of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was constructive and respected the critical dimension of this consortium. The Brazilian Government approved the Report and, in 2002, presented it as the official document to the CEDAW Committee.

In the same year, thirteen national Networks and Coalitions of women elaborated the Women's Movement Document on Compliance with CEDAW by the Brazilian State⁴³. This document arose out of a process that involved approximately 1500 women's entities from all over the country, reflecting the plurality of Brazilian society and the women's movement.

In July 2003, the Minister responsible at that time for the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women presented the Report in the 29th Session of the CEDAW Committee. The Report had been updated with information from the Government that had taken office in January of that year. The Brazilian Delegation also included the Minister responsible for the Special Secretariat for the Promotion of Policies for Racial Equality, representatives from the Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Health, and invited feminists who specialized in the area, representing the NGOs – Feminist Studies and Advisory Center (*Centro Feminista de Estudos e Assessoria - CFEMEA*) and Citizenship, Study, Research, Information and Action (*Cidadania, Estudo, Pesquisa, Informação, Ação - CEPIA*).

In another effort to utilize CEDAW to secure women's human rights, Brazil ratified the Optional Protocol to CEDAW, dated June 28, 2002. The approval process within the Federal Legislative body was marked by opposition from the orthodoxy of the Catholic Church and Evangelicals, in addition to intense activity by the feminist movement directed at the Parliamentarians. The vote in the Federal Senate was not unanimous, contrary to what occurred the same year with the unanimous approval of the Statute of Roma (on the International Criminal Court) and Article 14 of the Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. The latter established the mechanism for individual recourse to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination – CERD. This scenario indicates greater acceptance of international mechanisms for human rights in Brazil, but also demonstrates the opposition when the theme turns more specifically to the human rights of women.

Sandra G. Unbehaum, from the Carlos Chagas Foundation (*Fundação Carlos Chagas*); Maria das Neves Araújo, the then Minister of Justice and Mônica de Melo, Women's Rights Office (*Oficina dos Direitos da Mulher*).

⁴³ The preparation process for the Document, led by CLADEM-Brasil (Brazilian section of the Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women's Rights) and Actions on Gender, Citizenship and Development (*Ações em Gênero, Cidadania e Desenvolvimento – AGENDE*), included the participation of the Brazilian Women's Coalition (*Articulação de Mulheres Brasileiras – AMB*); Coalition of Brazilian Black Women's NGOs (*Articulação de ONGs de Mulheres Negras Brasileiras*); National Coalition of Rural Women Workers (*Articulação Nacional de Mulheres Trabalhadoras Rurais – ANMTR*); National Commission on the Woman Worker of the Central Worker's Union (*Comissão Nacional sobre a Mulher Trabalhadora da Central Única de Trabalhadores - CNMT-CUT*); and Articulated Movement of Amazônia Women (*Movimento Articulado de Mulheres da Amazônia – MAMA*). Brazilian Network for Feminist Studies and Research (*Rede Brasileira de Estudos e Pesquisas Feministas – REDEFEM*); North-Northeast Feminist Network for Studies and Research on Women and Gender Relations (*Rede Feminista Norte-Nordeste de Estudos e Pesquisas sobre a Mulher e Relações de Gênero – REDOR*); National Network of Traditional Midwives (*Rede Nacional de Parteiras Tradicionais*), Feminist Health Networks (*Redes Feminista de Saúde*), National Feminist Network for Health, Sexual Rights and Reproductive Rights (*Rede Nacional Feminista de Saúde, Direitos Sexuais e Direitos Reprodutivos*), Women's Network on the Radio (*Rede de Mulheres no Rádio*), National Women's Secretariat of the General Confederation of Workers (*Secretaria Nacional da Mulher da Confederação Geral dos Trabalhadores*), National Women's Secretariat of the Union Force (*Secretaria Nacional da Mulher da Força Sindical*) and Brazilian Union for Women (*União Brasileira de Mulheres – UBM*).

Women's human rights are not yet adequately understood and applied by those who administer the law in Brazil. Socio-legal surveys still identify a high incidence of gender stereotyping in judicial decisions, which is clearly evidenced in cases of domestic violence and sexual violence⁴⁴. For example, the aggressors tend to be absolved when the victim is less of the stereotypical "honest woman". In order to overcome this reality, emphasis must be given to capacity building for professionals⁴⁵ and the criminal legislation adopted in the 40s must be reformed. The legislation, as it still stands, includes discriminatory precepts with respect to women. It sets out types of crimes in which the passive subject is the "honest woman", and places rape and other crimes against sexual freedom in the section dedicated to crimes against custom, in which the protected legal object is custom and public morality, rather than the dignity of a human person.

In addition to the SPM's activities relating to the CEDAW Committee, it has been highly active with respect to women's human rights through its participation in meetings of the Commission on the Status of Women – CSW/UN, CEPAL and the Inter-American Commission on Women (*Comissão Interamericana de Mulheres – CIM*). The SPM has also debated and participated in the evaluation process for Beijing and Cairo, forwarding its positions on ratification of the platforms for action and declarations that arose out of these international forums.

The SPM and the Brazilian Government have been active in the defense of women's human rights, particularly the defense of sexual and reproductive rights. In December 2003, in a meeting of MERCOSUL Countries, Brazil presented a document on sexual and reproductive health. Debate on the Document led to the creation of the MERCOSUL Intergovernmental Commission on Sexual and Reproductive Health, through Ministers Agreement no. 1303. The Document presented at the meeting served as the basis for the elaboration of a MERCOSUL policy on the issue. In May 2004, a national governmental program was launched against homophobia (*Brasil sem Homofobia*), coordinated by the Special Secretariat for Human Rights. Some States, such as Rio Grande do Sul, have adopted measures that recognize rights arising out of same-sex unions.

Women and the Media⁴⁶

In order to understand the issue of "women and the media" in Brazil, one must consider the general scenario existing in the country. The Brazilian system of information dissemination is dominated by private initiatives, under public concession. It is one of the most dynamic and modern economic sectors, sustained by a large-scale publishing industry that is one of the seven largest in the world. The use of Internet in Brazil has expanded exponentially in recent years, turning the country into one of the most promising digital markets.

Also in recent years, various surveys have indicated a critical vision by sectors of the Brazilian population with respect to TV programming. According to a survey "*Fala Brasil*", 80% of the

⁴⁴ Silvia Pimentel, Ana Lúcia P. Schritzmeyer and Valéria Pandjjarjian - *Rape: Crime or 'Courtesy'?*..1998.

⁴⁵ See Part 4 of this Document, sub-chapter "Women's Human Rights".

⁴⁶ This sub-chapter is based on information provided by the specialist Jacira Melo, from the Patrícia Galvão Institute.

interviewees agreed with the statement that, “in general, women are treated as sex objects on television”.

A study undertaken in 1998 by the Council for the Defense of the Rights of the Human Person (*Conselho de Defesa dos Direitos da Pessoa Humana*), linked to the Ministry of Justice, revealed that, among the statutes, codes, laws and decrees in the country, there exist 11 mechanisms to fight against TV stations that exploit degrading or violent situations, sexual abuse, racism and other forms of discrimination. For example, appearances in video by children and adolescents is protected by the Statute for Children and Adolescents, created on July 13, 1990 (Law no. 8.069); Law Afonso Arinos, dated January 5, 1989 (no. 7.716), which defines the crimes of prejudice based on race and color, addresses discrimination by the media in Art. 20; and Article 221 of the Constitution, which states that programming must give preference to educational, artistic, cultural and informational purposes. However, there is not one single mechanism, regulation or self-regulatory system focusing specifically on the image of women and girls in the communication media.

Another issue that is of particular relevance is the inclusion of women in the digital revolution. In 1996, women represented 12% of Internet users and, in December 1999, they corresponded to 39% of the total number of users. The SPM has participated and assisted in seminars that debated the issue of digital inclusion and the need to train women in this area.

A relevant initiative that has been implemented on the state and local levels is the development of programs for the installation of community tele-centers – in public schools and community centers – for access by and training of youth in information technologies and Internet services. Measures must be taken to ensure that these programs are available to both sexes, with specific requirements for gender, racial and ethnic equity that also take into account regional characteristics.

Women and the Environment

ECO – 92, held in Rio de Janeiro, approved the Agenda 21, which contains a chapter on the issue of gender and the environment. Based on the principles proclaimed in Agenda 21, and with the objective of instituting a new development paradigm for the country, the Ministry of Environment has been heading a participatory process for strategic planning that involves the elaboration and implementation of a Brazilian Agenda 21.

The first step in this process was concluded in July 2002 with the elaboration of the Brazilian Agenda 21. It arose out of the application of a participatory methodology that involved the government, productive sector and civil society. Pursuant to a decision of the Commission for Sustainable Development Policies and the National Agenda 21 (*Comissão de Políticas de Desenvolvimento Sustentável e da Agenda 21 Nacional – CPDS*), the entity responsible for managing the implementation phase, the proposals contained in the Brazilian Agenda 21 should be integrated into the programs from the government’s Multi-Year Plan (*Plano Plurianual - PPA*).

The Agenda 21 Priority Actions, contained in the chapter entitled “Protect the Most Vulnerable Sectors of the Population: Women, Blacks and Youth”, establishes the following:

Social inequality particularly affects the black population, the social indicators for which are, on average, 50% lower than for the white population. Another source of social imbalance can be identified among women, who exercise fewer value-added activities than men, particularly those women who head low-income families. Another area of inequality involves the vulnerable youth population, with few opportunities and an unemployment rate much higher than that for the adult population, who are victimized by urban violence, drugs and dangerous situations.

Actions and Recommendations

- *Promote a large-scale mobilization campaign for the various public and private institutions, as well as the third sector, to discuss, propose and implement solutions for the fate of the “street children”, with the understanding that the problem belongs to all Brazilians and that the solution is the responsibility of the entire society.*
- *Establish minimum wage policies for female heads of families.*
- *Establish policies to equalize salaries between blacks and whites.*
- *Implement training and professional capacity-building programs for youth, articulated with “first job” programs to guarantee employment.*
- *Promote sports and cultural activities, and visits to theaters and museums for at-risk children, as a way of protecting against marginalization, and to foster community participation and hope for the future⁴⁷.*

The Girl-Child

Pursuant to Article 53, parag. 3 of the Federal Constitution, the Federal Senate and the House of Deputies, jointly or individually, may create Parliamentary Inquiry Commissions (PICs) to investigate a determined fact. Similar legal provisions can also be found in state and municipal legislation.

The issue of child sexual exploitation has been the subject of various PICs. Between 1995 and 1998, PICs were held on prostitution, sexual exploitation and abuse of children and adolescents in Natal, northern Minas Gerais, Distrito Federal and Goiânia. The PICs have assisted in raising public awareness on the issue, uncovering the existence of trafficking routes for girls and the procurement dynamics, which can even involve the family of the victims⁴⁸.

The National Congress Parliamentary Front for Children and Adolescents (*Frente Parlamentar pela Criança e Adolescente do Congresso Nacional*), created in 1993, included 73 Parliamentarians in 2002. The Front collaborated on the establishment of a PIC to determine the

⁴⁷ Agenda 21 – Priority Actions, p. 49 (<http://www.mma.gov.br/port/se/agen21/index.cfm>)

⁴⁸ *Relatório Nacional Brasileiro relativo aos anos de 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997 e 2001 nos termos do artigo 18 da Convenção sobre a Eliminação de todas as formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher*, Brasília, 2002, p. 107–108.

responsibilities for child-youth exploitation and prostitution. It has also been involved in the National Campaign to End Violence, Exploitation and Sexual Tourism of Children and Adolescents, and in the presentation of a Project for a Law to establish a National Day for the Fight Against Abuse and Sexual Exploitation of Children and Adolescents⁴⁹.

Under the current Government, the Ministry of Justice was bestowed with the mission of coordinating all of the actions to combat the abuse and exploitation of children and adolescents. It is a priority of this Government. The Government's commitment was expressed by the Minister of Justice, Márcio Thomaz Bastos, in May 2003:

*"As is the case for organized crime, we have not only one policy to combat child-youth sexual exploitation, but, rather, various. Each specific situation requires an action", stated the Minister of Justice, Márcio Thomaz Bastos. He emphasized that the issue is a priority. "We intend to include in the budget for this year, in the Multi-Year Plan, a substantial amount of money for this fight", he stated. Within the context of the planned articulation, Thomaz Bastos reminded that the idea is to benefit as much as possible from the experience of civil society organizations and entities, "that have, for years, dedicated a large part of their lives without remuneration", to the fight against sexual exploitation.*⁵⁰

In order to facilitate this coordination, the Ministry of Justice created the Center to Confront Child-Youth Violence and Sexual Exploitation (*Núcleo de Enfrentamento à Violência e à Exploração Sexual Infante Juvenil* – NEVES). Among its objectives, NEVES will build a data bank on the subject and implement the national policy to confront the problem, based on the National Plan to Confront Child-Youth Violence and Sexual Exploitation, approved in 2000⁵¹.

Given the lack of data on the subject, it is hoped that this governmental effort obtains success in identifying the level of involvement of the families in the exploitation of the children by third parties and on abuse that occurs within the home. This study must consider the specific situation of girls, who particularly suffer from gender stereotypes present in the family and in society.

With respect to child labor, in the universe of 78 million people that comprise the workforce in Brazil, approximately 4.5 million children and adolescents work. Of these, 47% are between 14 and 15 years old, 44% between 10 and 13 years old, and 9% between 5 and 9 years old. Studies show that a significant number of rural establishments use child labor. This means that 30% of the workforce in the small agricultural undertakings in five states is composed of minors of 14 years old. According to data from the International Labor Organization, among these male and female domestic workers in Brazil, there are 500,000 children and adolescents, mostly female and half of them of African descent. Of this total, 30% begin to work at between 5 and 11 years of age; 26% do not study; 53% work more than 40 hours per week; 56% do not get vacation

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, p.108.

⁵⁰ <http://www.mj.gov.br/noticias/2003/maio/RLS160503-exploracao.htm>

⁵¹ <http://www.mj.gov.br/noticias/2003/maio/RLS160503-exploracao.htm>

time; 2.5% do not receive any type of remuneration, while 64% receive less than one-half of a minimum salary; and the majority do not know their rights⁵².

⁵² Flavia Piovesan and Silvia Pimentel, “*Contribuição a partir da perspectiva de gênero ao relatório alternativo sobre o PIDESC*”, Latin American and Caribbean Committee for the Defense of Women’s Rights (CLADEM), Brazil, December 2002.

Part 3 – Institutional Development

Creation of the Women's Councils began in the 80s on the national, state and municipal levels. They constituted the most widespread national mechanism established for the promotion of gender equality. These entities are, in general, comprised by representatives from the government and civil society, and have the mandate to propose and monitor public policies.

Creation of the São Paulo State Council on the Condition of Women (*Conselho Estadual da Condição Feminina de São Paulo*), followed by the creation of the National Council for Women's Rights (*Conselho Nacional dos Direitos da Mulher – CNDM*) in 1985, were fundamental steps in the development of institutional mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality. In 2002, there were 97 similar councils throughout the country. There are now 132 of which 23 are State Councils and 109 are Municipal Councils⁵³.

The CNDM concentrated its efforts on activities to inform and raise the awareness of women with respect to their rights. Its intense and successful work in the process to draft the 1988 Federal Constitution culminated in the incorporation of most of the proposals made by the women's movement. In 1989, the CNDM experienced a serious crisis, with a loss of administrative and financial autonomy, leading to the resignation of all of the Council members. The Beijing Conference was fundamental for the restructuring of the Council.

A result of the CNDM restructuring was the creation of the Executive Secretariat. This change provided for an institutional organization that was more appropriate for proposing, implementing and evaluating public policies designed for the promotion of gender equality.

In addition, through cooperation agreements, the Ministry of Planning, Budget and Management made human and financial resources available for the various CNDM projects. And, in an unprecedented initiative, an analysis was undertaken of the 2000/2003 Multi-Year Plan (*Plano Plurianual - PPA*) from a gender perspective for the purpose of proposing activities to promote equitable gender relations in Brazilian society. Based on this analysis, the CNDM chose 25 strategic programs for monitoring. Of these programs, only two directly focused on women: the Women's Health Program of the Ministry of Health, and the Program to Combat Violence Against Women, of the Ministry of Justice⁵⁴.

The recent restructuring process for the CNDM is aimed at a new model that facilitates an improvement in the dialogue between the government and civil society. In 2003, the SPM hosted a National Meeting of the Councils for Women's Rights, which brought together State and Municipal Councils from different regions of the country. During the meeting, the importance of strengthening and expanding the Councils became evident, as did the need to reactivate the Forum of Councils for Women's Rights (*Fórum de Conselhos dos Direitos da Mulher*).

⁵³ These data were collected during a survey carried out by Brazilian Institute for Municipal Administration (*Instituto Brasileiro de Administração Municipal – IBAM*), with the support of the SPM.

⁵⁴ *Relatório Nacional Brasileiro relativo aos anos de 1985, 1989, 1993, 1997 e 2001 nos termos do artigo 18 da Convenção sobre a Eliminação de todas as formas de Discriminação contra a Mulher*, Brasília, 2002, p. 55–56.

In 2002, the State Secretariat for Women's Rights (*Secretaria de Estado dos Direitos da Mulher* – SEDIM) was created under the Ministry of Justice. In the first year of its existence, this placement on the government organogram limited SEDIM's activities to those related to the Ministry of Justice, particularly the policies for prevention and fight against sexual and domestic violence⁵⁵.

In January 2003, a new mechanism within the Federal Government was instituted: the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM), directly linked to the Presidency of the Republic, with Ministerial status. The Secretariat, the mandate for which is described in Part 2 of this Document, recognizes the great challenge of ensuring that a gender perspective is transversally present in all areas of the government. For this, the SPM participated and is participating in the elaboration and monitoring of the PPA.

In an unprecedented endeavor, the 2004-2007 PPA included broad participation by diverse sectors of civil society in a process initiated at the end of 2002. The Secretary General of the Presidency, together with civil society, held 27 regional meetings across the country, resulting in a document that synthesized the civil society proposals for the PPA.

The SPM also held an important public audience to discuss, with the women's movement organizations, its proposal for the PPA. The purpose of the proposal was to ensure the inclusion of gender and racial equality, as a transversal theme, to guide the formulation of public policies. The activities of the SPM and the feminist movement resulted in the inclusion of the challenge to "Promote the Reduction of Gender Inequality" among the challenges contained in the mega-objective "Social Inclusion and Reduction of Social Inequalities" in the 2004-2007 PPA. It should be noted that the challenge to "Promote a Reduction in Racial Inequalities" is also included in this same mega-objective⁵⁶.

Another participatory mechanism that will be utilized by the current government is the National Conference on Policies for Women, which will be held in July 2004. The objective of the Conference is to propose guidelines for the National Plan on Policies for Women. The Conference will conclude a large-scale process that involved the organization of conferences within the 27 Federal Units. It should be emphasized that this is the first time that a government has convened a conference for women. The initiative mobilized more than two thousand municipalities in municipal and regional plenary sessions, involving all of the 27 States and the Distrito Federal, for the realization of state-level Conferences. The entire process is being undertaken with the active participation of the organizations of the women's and feminist movements.

The Special Secretariat on Policies for Women, networks of forums, and national and state-level coalitions of women have emphasized the fragility of the existing institutional mechanisms and have highlighted the need for accompaniment and monitoring mechanisms for women's policies.

⁵⁵ Sandra Unbenhaum and Cristiano Miglioranza Mercado, *op. cit.* p. 11.

⁵⁶ Project of Law n°. 30/2003 – PLPPA 2004-2007, *Annexe I – Strategic Orientation of Government*. Brasília, 2003.

On the institutional level, in addition to the state and municipal councils on women's rights, there exist positions responsible for the implementation of equality policies within the local executive powers, as well as on the women's secretariats, coordinating bodies and assistance entities.

Finally, it should be reiterated that another advance on the institutional level was the creation of the Special Secretariat for Policies for the Promotion of Racial Equality – SEPPIR, pursuant to the terms of Law 10.678, dated May 23, 2003. The main goal of the Secretariat, also with Ministerial status, is the formulation, coordination and articulation of policies and guidelines to promote racial equality in Brazil. The Special Secretariat for Human Rights, which is also imbued with Ministerial status and linked directly to the Presidency of the Republic, is also active in this area.

Part 4 – Obstacles Encountered and Measures Taken

In order to fully realize upon the Beijing Platform for Action, the Brazilian Government is seeking to ensure the incorporation of a gender perspective in the public policies provided for in the PPA, as was described in Part 3 of this Document. Similarly, measures destined for the implementation of the Platform with respect to poverty⁵⁷ and institutional mechanisms⁵⁸ are described in Part 2 of this Document. This sub-chapter will address the Platform's main areas of concern for which measures for the future are not mentioned.

Education and Training for Women⁵⁹

The current government, through the Ministry of Education and the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women, created the Mother Student Program (*Programa da Mãe Estudante*), designed to educate mothers of children who receive assistance under the School Scholarship Program (*Programa Bolsa Escola*). The latter Program encourages families to maintain their children in school.

The government is also seeking to expand the trust fund that finances regular education for children 7 to 14-years old. The aim is to extend financing to cover a wider range of ages, so that the fund would cover pre-school, elementary and middle school, thereby benefiting children, youth and adults.

Another relevant measure is the Gender Equality in Work Relations Program (*Igualdade de Gênero nas Relações de Trabalho*), which provides capacity building for women. The new PPA provides for the Program and the SPM is responsible for its execution.

Women and Health⁶⁰

The current Government is continuing with its policies related to women's health and STD/AIDS. It also implemented and will develop the following actions:

- Make available technical manuals on Pre-Natal and Immediate Post-Natal Care, Unsafe Abortion and Menopause (in 2004);
- Foster national debate on sexual and reproductive rights, with an emphasis on responsible fatherhood, teenage pregnancy and the guarantee of access to family planning for women and men – cooperation between the Ministry of Health and the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women;
- Establish a toll-free telephone number, “Dial Women's Health”, for the dissemination of information and to facilitate access to health services – functioning since 2003;
- Include a query as to color in the information systems, documents and surveys of the Unified Health System;

⁵⁷ See Part 2, sub-chapter “Women and Poverty”, of this Document.

⁵⁸ See Parts 2 and 3, sub-chapter “Institutional Mechanisms”, of this Document.

⁵⁹ Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM), *Participação do Brasil na 29ª Sessão do Comitê para a Eliminação da Discriminação contra a Mulher – CEDAW*, Document Series, Brasília, 2004, p.22.

⁶⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 25–26.

- Encourage and support, together with the States, the implantation of the policy of care for Sickle Cell Anemia and other pathologies with a greater incidence in the black female population;
- Establish Committees for a Reduction in Maternal Death in all of the states, in the capitals and in the 387 municipalities with a population greater than 100,000 inhabitants;
- Support municipalities with a population greater than 100,000 inhabitants to strengthen and structure reference and counter-reference networks for the early detection and treatment of cervical and breast cancer, and for assistance in high-risk pregnancies;
- Guarantee the availability of reversible birth control methods in all of the Family Health Program units and increase the number of hospitals in the public system that offer tubaligations and vasectomies;
- Strengthen PAISM;
- Undertake surveys to evaluate dangerous conditions for rural and urban female workers in order to develop policies that specifically attend these populations;
- Create an Inter-Sectoral Technical Council, comprised by government and civil society entities to propose activities related to geriatric health, people with handicaps and indigenous populations;
- Introduce the National Health Plan into the prison system in a manner that includes actions specifically aimed at women's health; and
- Define an epidemiological profile for women's mental health and the realization of a quantitative and qualitative survey on gender and mental health.

Violence Against Women⁶¹

The Federal Government is implementing the Program to Prevent and Combat Violence Against Women and Assist Female Victims of Violence. As part of this Program, a Working Group was convened, with government and civil society participation. The Group drafted a proposal for legislation on domestic and family violence, under the coordination of the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women (SPM).

The Program also included: activities to expand and improve the quality of services to combat violence in all of the Federal Units; support for the implantation of care services and/or shelters for women at risk; regular evaluations of the Women's Police Stations; capacity building for professionals in public institutions that participate in the fight against domestic and sexual violence against women; and integrated actions within the health, policing and legal systems to restrain all forms of gender violence, and to ensure protection of the victims.

Women and the Economy⁶²

The Brazilian Government is implementing and developing the following actions, among others, in the area of employment:

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, pp. 29-30.

⁶² *Ibidem*, pp. 2-28.

- Goals for capacity building for professionals, and job and income generation for young women 15 to 24 years old, which include a gender perspective, have been defined under the First Job Program of the Ministry of Work and Employment;
- To establish goals to increase the length of time that children, 0 to 14 years old, remain in school, which would also facilitate mothers' ability to work;
- Increase the duration of compulsory basic education from 8 to 9 years by having children enter school at the age of six years;
- Contribute to an increase in technical and managerial capacity for women in the rural and urban sectors through capacity building for women managers;
- Contribute to the integration of women into the productive sector, encouraging investment in autonomous and collaborative initiatives, based on access incentives and availability of rural and urban lines of credit;
- Participate in inter-sectoral control systems to monitor and enforce the execution of policies for professional capacity building, employment opportunities and mechanisms for income generation;
- Continue with the program to combat child labor; and
- Support entrepreneurialism in small and medium enterprises headed by women.

Women in Power and in the Decision-Making Process⁶³

The goals of the current Federal Government include:

- To expand the affirmative action policies to reach beyond electoral quotas;
- To encourage the various governmental entities to adopt internal policies that value women's work;
- Increase the number of women who hold positions of representation on the international level;
- Strengthen the State and Municipal Councils, and the Secretariats for Women's Rights as institutional forums for the government, and diversify them (regionally and numerically);
- Strengthen and expand the state and municipal-level women's secretariats, coordinating bodies and assistance entities;
- Increase the participation of women in leadership positions in the federal public administration;
- Institute continuous campaigns in the media in order to foster greater political capacity for women;
- Hold capacity-building seminars and meetings for women on the exercise of power; and
- Act jointly with the political parties and the Public Ministry to strengthen the implementation of the policy on quotas.

Women's Human Rights

The Federal Government, through the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women, is working to ensure that the educational process for legal professionals incorporates issues related to women's human rights. In order to accomplish this, the Secretariat will articulate with the Magistrate

⁶³ *Ibidem*, p. 23.

Universities and Schools, the Public Defender's Office and the Ministry of the Public – official entities that train professionals for the respective careers⁶⁴.

Within the international arena, the current Brazilian Government reiterated its commitment to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and to comply with the recommendations of the CEDAW Committee⁶⁵. It has also actively participated in other international forums, reaffirming the Beijing and Cairo commitments.

Women and the Media

The Federal Government, through the Special Secretariat on Policies for Women, will draft a proposal for the Women and the Media Program (*Programa Mulheres e a Mídia*)⁶⁶.

In June 2004, the SPM will host the Women and the Media Seminar, bringing together journalists from various means of communication in the country. The objective will be to focus on women as news producers and on the treatment of women by the media, when they are the news. It will also address the need to incorporate, in the preparation of information, an approach that acknowledges the plurality of gender. The Meeting Agenda will also include matters such as the relationship of the media with organized civil society and proposals for moving forward in the preparation of an agenda that includes new areas and priorities

Women and the Environment

The Federal Government, through the divisions of the Ministry of the Environment with the relevant jurisdiction, will continue in the implementation of the Brazilian Agenda 21, as described in Part 2 of this Document.

The Girl-Child

The Brazilian Government has been and will continue to develop activities with respect to:

- Increasing the availability and number of daycares and pre-schools for the age group of zero to six years old;
- Maintain the fight against child labor as a priority of the current government, intensifying the investigation and enforcement actions, and the implementation of the Program for the Eradication of Child Labor (*Programa de Erradicação do Trabalho Infantil*), by which, families that withdraw their children from the workplace and keep them in schools will receive resources from the Child Citizen Program (*Programa Criança Cidadã*);
- Implement the National Plan to Combat Child-Youth Sexual Exploitation, which is based on the national policy to combat violence.

⁶⁴ Secretaria Especial de Políticas para as Mulheres (SPM), *Participação do Brasil na 29ª Sessão do Comitê para a Eliminação da Discriminação contra a Mulher – CEDAW*”, Série Documentos, Brasília, 2004, p. 47.

⁶⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 8.

⁶⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 9.