

CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

Statement

This session will also produce critical inputs into intergovernmental discussions later in 2010. Of particular relevance is the Annual Ministerial Review of the Economic and Social Council in July, dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women; and the high-level plenary meeting of the General Assembly in September 2010 on achieving the MDGs by 2015. The Commission has a critical catalytic role for ensuring that the gender equality perspective is fully addressed. Furthermore, the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security later this year presents yet another opportunity to devise ways to tackle the remaining challenges.

Chair,

The gap between rhetoric and action, between commitments and implementation must be closed. The time for action is now. There cannot be progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, without progress in gender equality. Discrimination against women and inequality impede progress in development, peace and security and Excehallthn

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range of tools, capacity-building programmes and training. Monitoring and evaluation of efforts has improved.

Despite these advances, progress in improving women's lives, eliminating discrimination and violence and achieving equality has been uneven across countries and regions. The pace of progress towards the realization of the MDGs is very slow. There has been almost no progress with regard to MDG 5, to improve maternal health.

Illiteracy remains a serious constraint for women, who continue to account for nearly two thirds of the 776 million illiterate adults in the world. The global economic and financial crisis has created new hurdles. According to a report of the International Labour Organization (ILO), the unemployment rate







from the previous year. As of 30 June 2009, women in the UN Secretariat constituted 38.3 per cent<sup>2</sup> of staff in the professional and higher categories, an increase of 0.7 percentage points since 30 June 2008.

Of note in the Secretariat in the last year was the adoption by the Secretary-General of the Gender Balance Strategy and Action Plan including departmental gender scorecards. Some of the salient recommendations in the gender strategy include (a) updating and strengthening the implementation of policies that positively impact organizational culture and productivity, such as flexible work arrangements; (b) Mechanisms related to the 1999 policy on temporary special measures applicable to the recruitment, promotion and placement of women (ST/AI/1999/9) to be modified to