

*Olga Pellicer, Forward and Backward in Beijing, Introduction*

The Platform of Action subscribed in Beijing revolves around 12 areas or spheres of special concern regarding the situation of women. Each advances a diagnosis, sets the main goals, and urges lines of action. The document reflects the most serious problems women face in the world, including points of concern of both developed and undeveloped nations. The preliminary discussion showed the progress made in the studies concerning women's problems and the advances reached in matters of organization, professionalism and influence of Non Governmental Organizations (ONG). It also made evident the notorious and significant growth of very conservative movements which had a great influence in the Beijing Conference and, unfortunately, contributed to the distortion, through the media, of the conclusions adopted in the Fourth World Conference on Women.

*Aída González Martínez, The Fourth World Conference on Women in the Global Agenda of UN*

Even though much has been done for the improvement of women's condition, the Beijing Conference showed that there are still many problems to be solved. This paper identifies three stages in the recognition of the equality of women during the period 1946-1995. Furthermore, it analyzes the preparatory process of the Conference and the documents issued from it. The paper examines the influence of the world political context in the adoption of the documents of the three previous conferences as well as the process itself of investigation and negotiation which led to the adoption of the Platform of Action of Beijing and the dispositions it contains for its application. Finally, it emphasizes the relationship between the Fourth World Conference on Women and the international conferences and

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summit reunions held the last five years. The conclusions emphasize the overall importance of the subject on women's condition and the pressing need to eliminate all existing barriers standing against her full and equal participation in society. In this context, the undeniable validity of the Beijing Conference is stressed.

Alicia Elena Pérez Duarte y Noroña, *The Beijing Conference and the Domestic Relations of Women: Implications for the Mexican Judicial System*

This essay examines those aspects that bond women to family and which must be revised in the Mexican legislation in the light of the agreements adopted in the Beijing Conference. The author describes the legal frame of the rights of women in Mexico. She then analyzes those aspects which bond women to family contained in the Declaration of Beijing and examines the main points of the Platform of Action related to that subject. Finally, the author discusses some of the main secondary norms of the Mexican legislation which must be revised in order to attain a substantial improvement in the domestic daily conditions of Mexican women.

Gloria Brasdefer, *The Results of Beijing and Women's Access to Power*

The paper examines the contributions of the Platform of Action related to the subject of inequality between women and men in the exercise of power and the adoption of decisions in all levels. It approaches the characteristics of the preparatory discussion of the Beijing Conference from a national standpoint as well as the most relevant proposals on the subject put forward during the two years of activities of the National Coordinator Committee and the consultation forums established for the discussion of Mexico's participation in the Fourth World Conference on Women. The conclusions place emphasis on the importance of the agreements reached at Beijing for the political conditions of women in Mexico.

Clara Jusidman, *The Employment of Women in the Conclusions of Beijing*

The problems related to the employment of women in the world are very complex. This paper shows that the conceptual frames derived from the development of model of industrialized countries has underestimated a significant portion of the contribution of large social sectors, including women, to the development and social welfare. This is particularly the case for undeveloped countries which have

adopted without examination those conceptual frameworks. The work also claims that international transformations during the last five years deeply affect the conditions of salaried workers both women and men in undeveloped and industrialized nations, as well as their systems of protection and social security. Given its prevalence around the world, the specific case of the salaried woman is examined in the essay in order to determine if the conclusions adopted in Beijing correspond to the problems that millions of working women are facing in our days.

*Laura Salinas Bristáin, The Conference of Beijing and Women's Human Rights*

The twentieth century has witnessed a normative progress in the subject on women's human rights. However, some aspects of the matter are still subject to disagreement. One such aspect is that of sexual rights. This paper describes and examines the treatment given to the subject on women's human rights in Beijing. It underlines the main advances achieved there, and places emphasis on the contributions of Mexico's delegation in that international conference. Also, it appraises the importance of such achievements for the improvement of women in Mexico.

*Rodolfo Tuirán, Women's Health: Controversy and Construction of Consensus in the Conference of Beijing*

This paper emphasizes the importance of the agreements reached at the Conference of Beijing in order to improve the condition of women in all the world, particularly in those aspects related to their health conditions. The author identifies the conversion of the goal of improving the condition of women into a state affair, a task of governments and a concern of the international community, as one of the main achievements of the Conference. He also describes and examines the process leading to the adoption of the Platform of Action and the identification of 12 spheres of special concern, although he focuses on the treatment of the subject concerning women and health, particularly on three of the most controversial matters. Finally, the author directs our attention to the reactions provoked in Mexico by the agreements reached at Beijing, in particular those of ultraconservative groups. The author emphasizes the importance of not distorting those important agreements and preventing ultraconservative groups from doing so since such attitudes offend the spirit of the Conference of Beijing and its main objective: the improvement of the condition of women.

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María de la Luz Malvido, *Violence Against Women in the International Agenda, 1975-1995*

The essay consists of two main sections. The first section describes and examines the problem of violence against women discussed in the Conference of Beijing and during the preceding years. The author emphasizes the growing international attention that the subject has stimulated since the Nairobi Conference in 1985, which caused that the subject were considered an area of special concern in the Beijing Conference in 1995. The second section brings into focus the domestic violence against women. The author examines the relationship between violence and power, stressing that domestic violence, in which women are victims, is the result of asymmetrical relations of power in a society which gives preeminence to the masculine. The paper identifies the social and political foundations of domestic violence and highlights the extreme need of progress towards the full achievement of women's human rights, above any kind of discrimination. The conclusions put forward recommendations in order to prevent and eliminate discrimination and violence against women.

Gabriela Delgado Ballesteros, *The Access of Women to Education and the Multilateral Agenda*

The prevailing situation of disparity, deficiency and poverty, as well of the unequal access to educational services between men and women, was one of the spheres of special concern identified by the Conference of Beijing. This paper examines the compromises and actions which were adopted by the participants of the conference for that matter of concern. The first section brings into account the importance of the subject on education in the documents issued by conferences, conventions, and summits organized by the United Nations, including the four World Conferences on Women held between 1975 and 1995. The second section focuses on the agreements adopted in Beijing and emphasizes their importance for the Mexican case.

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