



*"2005 presents a unique opportunity to make good on our commitments to women. The year will determine whether we are prepared to take the necessary steps to make gender equality meaningful to the majority of women who can only at present dream of a world free from poverty, violence and discrimination."*

**— Noeleen Heyzer,  
UNIFEM's Executive Director**

In the last decade the South Asia region has been witness to a unique accountability mechanism. A mechanism where in Governments and the women's movement in the region have very successfully deployed review processes, to track implementation of the Beijing Platform For Action (BPFA), and Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The participatory and transparent nature of these biennial meetings have entailed a process of introspection, gap analysis, to address emerging challenges so as to respond with a common South Asian agenda for action. This process facilitated by UNIFEM has resulted in successful cross-regional peer learning and exchange of best practices.

The Beijing Plus Ten process once again provides the impetus to advance actions on key concerns without losing momentum on the ground. The obligations and commitments embodied in both CEDAW, Beijing, can inform, enhance and move forward efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. This is an opportune time for UNIFEM to look back and reflect through sharing experiences across regions and partners, towards consolidating a new vision for women world over.

UNIFEM South Asia is organizing a community of practice session that will provide deep insights into several dimensions of the enabling accountability process in the region.

The panelists will focus on :

- ❖ Enhancing knowledge based processes through peer learning and experiences from the ground
- ❖ Transformative potential of regional accountability processes
- ❖ Linkages between Beijing, CEDAW and MDGs

## THE PANELISTS



**H.E. Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar** is currently Advisor to the Prime Minister, and heads the Ministry of Women Development, Government of Pakistan. She has been a pioneer in the field of education, women's development and political empowerment. She has been elected to Municipal Council Corporation, Rawalpindi and headed the national election campaigns in 1993 and 1997. She has a Masters degree in public administration from the Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, USA.



**Ms. Salma Khan** is currently a CEDAW Committee Member and the Chairperson, NGO Coalition of 626 organizations on Beijing Plus Five in Bangladesh. She was first elected a member of the CEDAW Committee in 1993 and was re-elected in 1997. She was elected Chairperson of the Committee for the period 1997-1998. Ms. Khan represented the CEDAW Committee in the Expert Group meeting held in Maastrich in 1994 to draft the basic elements of the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW Convention, which laid the foundation for the provisions contained in the Optional Protocol.



**Mr. Shyam Sunder Sharma** is currently the Joint Secretary in the Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, His Majesty's Government of Nepal. He is an expert on management and gender based issues and is well versed with international instruments for women's empowerment like CEDAW, BPFA. He has a rich experience on issues of district administration and public affairs management. He has a Masters degree in business and public administration from Tribhuvan University, Nepal and Liverpool University, UK.



**Prof. Pam Rajput** is the former Dean and Director, Centre for Women Studies and Development, Punjab University. She is currently a member of the International NGO Planning Group; Convener of India Women's Watch and South Asia Women's Watch and a member of the Steering Committee, Asia Pacific Women's Watch. She is also the Vice Chair of National Alliance of Women and Mahila Dakshita Samiti, India. An academic turned activist, she has been active in the women's movement since 1975, and engaged in advocacy for women's rights at the national and international levels.



**Ms. Bandana Rana** is the President of Sancharika Samuha, a forum of women journalists in Nepal. She has been playing an instrumental role in moving the women's agenda forward through media and communications in the last two decades. As a dynamic member of the women's movement she has effectively forged partnerships between governments and civil society for the implementation of the BPFA and CEDAW. She is a tireless policy advocate, actively associated with international media groups for building a global consensus on gender equality.

## Programme

Chaired by Ms. Chandni Joshi, Regional Programme Director, UNIFEM South Asia Regional Office

- ❖ Opening remarks: Dr. Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director, UNIFEM (10 minutes)
- ❖ Film: Showcasing the successful South Asian Beijing review process module (10 minutes)
- ❖ Remarks: H.E. Ms. Nilofar Bakhtiar, Advisor to Prime Minister, Ministry of Women Development, Government of Pakistan (10 minutes)
- ❖ Remarks: Ms. Salma Khan, CEDAW Committee Member (10 minutes)
- ❖ Remarks: Mr. Shyam Sunder Sharma, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Women, Children and Social Welfare, His Majesty's Government of Nepal (10 minutes)
- ❖ Remarks: Prof. Pam Rajput, Member, International NGO Planning Committee and Convener, India Women's Watch from India (10 minutes)
- ❖ Remarks: Ms. Bandana Rana, President, Sancharika Samuha, civil society from Nepal (10 minutes)
- ❖ Interactive Discussion: (15 minutes)
- ❖ Closing Remarks: Ms. Chandni Joshi, Regional Programme Director, UNIFEM South Asia Regional Office (5 minutes)



The United Nations Development Fund for Women was created by the UN General Assembly resolution in 1976, in response to the call from the women's movement. It was set up to be an aid to and advocate for women of the developing world-to give them voice and visibility. Serving as a bridge between global policy-makers and women in the developing world, UNIFEM forms linkages and bridges micro-voices to macro-policies.



304 East 45th Street, 15th floor, New York, NY 10017, USA  
Tel: +1.212.906.6400 Fax: +1.212.906.6705  
[www.unifem.org](http://www.unifem.org)  
[www.womenwarpeace.org](http://www.womenwarpeace.org)

(Conceived and developed by UNIFEM South Asia)

## Enabling Accountability Mechanisms: Voices from South Asia

Date: 1 March 2005 Time: 1.15-2.45 p.m.  
Venue: Conference Room 6

Organized by: UNIFEM South Asia Regional Office at the Forty-ninth session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women in New York 28 February - 11 March 2005