

**Presentation at the Communication Workshop
organized by the NGO Section/DPI**

women's human rights. This has made further development of policy at global level at times over the past decade extremely difficult.

Equally problematic is that fact that the 10-year review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at national level in 2005 clearly indicated that - while gains have been made in many areas, in terms, for example, of policies, legislation and institutional mechanisms on gender equality - there is a huge gap between the policy recommendations and the obligations of States and their translation into concrete action and positive outcomes on the ground. The Declaration

United Nations existing gender equality institutions - the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, the Division for the Advancement of Women and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) - into one body.

Following the presentation of the report, and an intensive in-house consultative process, the former Secretary-General presented a revised proposal, adapted to the needs of the Organization, to consolidate these gender equality bodies into a new office combining normative and operational mandates, to be headed by an Under-Secretary-General reporting directly to the Secretary-General. The report of the High-level panel and the proposal of the Secretary-General are currently with the General Assembly for discussion at its resumed 61st session.

The discussion of institutional mechanisms for gender equality within the UN provides an important opportunity to review past strategies and mechanisms and develop structures and processes which can more adequately meet current challenges in order to further the implementation of the gender equality mandates. NGOs can play an