

WOMEN'S COMMISSION
Progress Report on Women's Commission Conference 2002

PURPOSE

This paper informs Members of the latest progress in the planning of the Women's Commission Conference 2002.

BACKGROUND

2. The Women's Commission is organising a Conference with the theme of "Women for a Better Tomorrow" 「半邊天下 - 婦女事務研討會」 on 10-11 May 2002 at the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre. The aim is to raise general awareness of women-related issues and promote gender sensitivity within the community.

3. Specifically, the Conference seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- Generate discussion and explore ideas among participants on three priority areas of work of the Commission:
 - Gender Mainstreaming
 - Empowerment of Women
 - Public Education
- Create opportunities for exchange of experience, expertise, knowledge and opinions among local women organisations and international gender experts
- Encourage collaboration among local non-government organisations (NGOs), government, community groups and businesses with a view to developing a co-operation model to further address women's concerns
- Broaden the perspective of our community on issues concerning their own and others' lives

4. As at 25 March 2002, the Organising Committee of the Women's Commission Conference 2002 has held thirteen meetings since its setting up in September 2001 to take forward planning and related preparatory arrangements for the Conference. Meeting Planners, a professional conference organizer, was appointed in December 2001 to be the conference manager.

PROGRAMME

VIP Guests and Speakers

5. The following VIP guests and speakers have accepted invitation to speak at the Conference:

(a) **VIP Guests:**

- The Chief Executive: Officiating Guest at Opening Ceremony;
- Ms. Hua Fuzhou, Vice President, Member of the Secretariat, All-China Women's Federation (ACWF): to read out a short speech of Ms. Gu Xiulian, Vice-President, First Member of the Secretariat, ACWF at Opening Ceremony; and
- The Chief Secretary: Guest of Honour at Closing Reception at Government House.

(b) **Speakers:**

- Ms. Noeleen Heyzer, Director of UNIFEM: Keynote Speaker at Opening Ceremony;
- Ms. Helene Dwyer-Renaud, Director of Gender-Based Analysis of Status of Women Canada: Keynote Speaker at Plenary Session on Gender Mainstreaming;
- Dr. Patricia Licuanan, Former Chair of UN Commission on the Status of Women: Keynote Speaker at Plenary Session on Empowerment;
- Ms. Zou Xiaoqiao, Deputy Director-General, International Liaison Department, ACWF: Keynote speech at Plenary Session on Empowerment;
- Ms. Xu Xi, renowned writer: Keynote Speaker at Plenary Session on Public Education;

- Ms. Elsie Leung, Secretary for Justice: Luncheon Speaker; and
- Dr. E. K. Yeoh, Secretary for Health and Welfare: Speaker at Closing Session.

6. In addition to keynote speeches, a number of informal networking and break-out sessions are scheduled to allow for exchange of ideas on Gender Mainstreaming, Empowerment and Public Education. The three Task Forces have already worked out the topics, objectives, panelists and facilitators of their respective sessions. A 5-minute video on snapshots of the changing images of women over the past years to be narrated by Mr. Leslie Cheung is being produced and will be shown at the Public Education break-out session on “Portrayal of Women in Popular Culture” and the Closing Reception. The Conference flyer is being sent out to target participants.

7. A martial arts performance led by Ms. Li Fai will be staged at the Opening Ceremony of the Conference.

8. The official languages of the Conference are Cantonese and English, with simultaneous interpretation services for the Opening Ceremony, all keynote sessions and a few break-out sessions.

The Marketplace

9. More than 30 NGOs and service agencies have responded to the Women Commission’s invitation to participate in the Marketplace. The Marketplace would allow the NGOs to showcase their work. As only a maximum of 40 display panels could be set up at the venue, each organization would only be allotted one display panel. They were invited to attend a Marketplace hands-on workshop on 27 March 2002 during which they would be briefed on the guidelines and specific requirements in producing their display materials.

Community Activities: Focus on Women (previously called Peripheral Activities)

10. Women from different sectors have attended the several meetings held in the past few months to explore possible activities to be organized around the time of the Conference. In response to the invitation sent out by

the Organising Committee in mid-February, returns on over 40 planned activities have been received. These activities include health checks for women, talks, seminars and courses, exhibitions, arts programmes, etc. A “calendar of activities” would be published and distributed together with the Conference flyer. Arrangements are being made to upload and update the information onto the Conference website.

The Crèche

11. Baptist Oi Kwan would assist in running a crèche for the Conference. Carers would run educational programmes for children and showcase their curriculum to the parents during breaks. Incidental expenses incurred from the operation of the crèche would be met by the Conference budget. Baptist Oi Kwan’s proposal was endorsed by the Organising Committee. Related guidelines on running the crèche would be drawn up in due course.

COMMUNICATION AND PUBLICITY

12. The Women’s Commission announced the organisation of the Conference at the “Public Education Launching Ceremony-cum-Reception to celebrate the International Women’s Day” on 8 March 2002. As said earlier, a Conference flyer giving details and inviting registration is being sent out. A separate Conference website has been prepared by the conference manager where detailed information and registration for the Conference would be made available. Registration would be on a first-come-first-served basis. A hyperlink will be made to Government’s homepage to increase publicity for the event.

13. Apart from the Conference flyer, posters would be printed and distributed to NGOs to promulgate the event. Advertisements would be placed along MTR escalators, and radio and TV interviews for WoC members would be arranged nearer the time. Press supplements are also included into the publicity plan and schedule. A press conference would be held on 10 May before the pre-opening reception where all the keynote speakers would meet the media. In addition, Members will wish to note that the Conference is listed as one of the activities to celebrate the 5th Anniversary of the Establishment of HKSAR. The Opening Ceremony would be broadcast live on Government’s homepage.

WAY FORWARD

14. Work on the following activities are being followed up:-
- (a) guest lists for the Opening Ceremony and Closing Reception;
 - (b) design for invitation cards, which would be issued in early April;
 - (c) a welcome dinner for overseas speakers to be held on 9 May, the evening before the Conference;
 - (d) sponsorship to be sought for events like the Luncheon and Tea/Coffee Breaks;
 - (e) design of Conference satchel and souvenirs for VIP guests, speakers and performers; and
 - (f) a full Conference website.

The conference manager will see to the on-site arrangements.

ADVICE SOUGHT

15. Members are invited to note the latest progress of the Conference as detailed in this paper and give comments and suggestions on any of the arrangements related to the Conference.

Women's Commission Secretariat

19 March 2002