

**Summary Report to the Standing Committee of the Anglican Consultative Council,
20 February 2001**

Anglican Women's Participation at Two United Nations Meetings for Beijing+5

New York, USA. 28 February to 17 March 2000.

Forty-fourth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women CSW

The CSW acted as the preparatory committee for Women 2000: Beijing+5, known officially as The United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly: Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century.

The tasks were:

- to assess the impact that the Beijing Platform for Action (PFA) had over the last 5 years;
- to draft a stronger document to which the UN would give assent at its meeting in June.

Beijing Platform for Action Strategic Objectives

Seven Anglican women, whose home countries are Kenya, Uganda, Canada, and the US, worked with the Rt. Rev. Herbert Donovan, interim Anglican UN Observer, in contributing an analysis of the proceedings from a faith-based perspective. They worked ecumenically, and with the interfaith caucus. Visibility was achieved by wearing small badges which said "Women of Faith believe in the PFA", in order to be distinguished from another very vocal faith-based group called "Family" which opposed the PFA.

New York, USA. 5 to 9 June 2000.

The United Nations Special Session of the General Assembly: Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century

The tasks were"

- To prevent erosion of the gains made by women over the last 5 years;
- To convince voting delegates to approve the document prepared by the CSW in March.

The Anglican NGO delegation had three members (this being the limit), whose home countries are Kenya, Canada, and the United States. They worked ecumenically and

with the interfaith caucus to determine faith-based responses, which were then submitted to the various political caucuses.

Some highlights of the process:

1. In 1995, in Beijing, some types of domestic violence were considered acceptable because of cultural norms. In 2000, "honour killings" were deemed violence against women, hence to be abhorred and outlawed.
2. The clause regarding women's right to worship God freely was the cause of much contentious debate. In the end compromise wording was formulated.
3. The clause regarding water quality and sustainable food production was deleted. The Environment Caucus deemed the loss to be very grave.