

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Statement by

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15th Commission on Sustainable Development

*Inter-linkages and cross-cutting issues, including means
of implementation*

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Mr. Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Golda Meir Mount Carmel International Training Center (MCTC) was founded in 1961 by MASHAV – the Center for International Cooperation – as the first international training institute to deal with women and development. In fact, the UN Declaration of the "Development Decade for the Promotion of Women" was made only in 1975, in Mexico, 14 years after MCTC had already gained a reputation for its unique contribution to the advancement of women in Africa and Asia. Its web of activities has since expanded to cover the Latin American region, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, the Caribbean, the Middle East and Oceania. Over 12,500 participants have attended programs at MCTC; in addition, many more thousands have been reached through on-the-spot training courses, conducted by Israeli experts at the request of local partners.

MCTC's international cooperation grows and is strengthened annually. Among its partners are a number of governmental and non-governmental organizations (TIFF, YABT, Pan-American Institute, Seto Gurans); international aid agencies (USAID, OAS, IDB, World Bank, Save the Children Fund Norway); international women's organizations (Soroptimist International, Women's Mediterranean Forum, International Council of Women); and international and United Nations specialized agencies such as ILO, IOM, UNESCO, UNICEF, UNECE, UNHabitat, INSTRAW and UNDP.

MCTC attempts to help develop sustainable communities by building and strengthening civil society, encouraging the participation of women in all sectors and focusing on socio-economic development as a tool for poverty eradication – the first of the Millennium Development Goals. Since MCTC's inception, community development, early childhood education, microenterprise development and women's leadership have been its principal priority areas.

The United Nations Millennium Development Goals continue to direct and drive MCTC'S aims. Many of them were anticipated by the Center and have been put into practice in its training activities ever since its establishment 45 years ago!

In addition to its regular program, the Center organizes biennial women leaders' conferences dealing with development issues and women's roles in socio-economic development. For example, the last conference, in September 2005, was organized in cooperation with the International Organization for Migration and dealt with "Migration and Gender Issues within the Millennium Development Goals".

The 25th international conference in the series, marking 50 years of MASHAV activities, will be held on 18-22 November, 2007, in cooperation with UNESCO. The topic will be "Women's Leadership for Sustainable Development" in the context of challenges related to globalization. Among the subjects addressed will be:

- The impact of globalization on production and consumption patterns on the environment – its positive and negative aspects for sustainable development.

- The gender implications of environmental degradation (or, the implications of environmental degradation for women's reproductive, productive, and leadership roles)
- Inclusion of a gender perspective in policies for environmental protection – forests, water, land, biodiversity resource management