

## Implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Africa

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A University of Birmingham research student, Beatrice Duncan has been appointed by the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) to review the Beijing Platform for Action adopted at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women.

In 1995, more than 5,000 women from around the world gathered in Beijing for a conference that addressed the advancement and empowerment of women in relation to women's human rights, women and poverty, women and decision-making, violence against women and other areas of concern.

Beatrice, a PhD student at the University of Birmingham's Centre for West African Studies will study the achievements, challenges and emerging issues in relation to the platform for action adopted at that conference.

She will also assess the various responses from African countries through the enactment and implementation of legislations and the application of gender responsive budgeting.

The work is expected to highlight the challenges facing African countries in their efforts to implement the Beijing Platform for Action. It will also discuss UNIFEM's actions to advance the effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

In 2000, the UN held a Special Session of the General Assembly to review progress in implementing the Platform for Action and a 'Beijing + 15' review process is to be held in 2010.

Result of the findings will be presented in a report entitled, 'From Beijing to Beijing Plus 15: the State of Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in Africa'.

Beatrice has, in the past, carried out work on gender and cocoa farming in Ghana.

According to her: "The UNIFEM job will enable me to determine the extent to which African countries are meeting their individual and collective responsibilities towards women, as provided for under a range of national and international frameworks. I am pleased to be able to carry out the work at the Centre for West African Studies."

The Centre for West African Studies at the University of Birmingham is unique in its interdisciplinary approaches to teaching and research in and of Africa, attracting students and academics from all parts of Africa, Europe, America and the Caribbean.

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### Notes to Editors:

- All staff of the Centre for West African Studies, University of Birmingham have lived and taught in Africa, and continue to carry out research there. It is the only university department in the world to concentrate specifically on West Africa.
- Africa's long history of relations with Europe, the African Diaspora in the Caribbean and the continent's relationships with the Islamic world are also integral aspects of the programmes at the Centre.

Further information:

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