

BRUSSELS 1999: 3-5 March INLW General Meeting

Congress Theme: Globalisation and the Future of the Nation-State

INLW General Meeting 3 March
Approval of INLW Constitution
INLW resolutions submitted and adopted by L.I. Congress

Women

Resolution on the Effects of Current Economic Trends on Women

Liberal International notes with concern that current economic trends often involve environmental damage and the ruin of small communities and enterprises with particularly severe effects upon the lives of women.

Liberal International further notes that the wealth generated by these trends continues to accrue mainly to the more affluent states and sectors in society while the poorest groups benefit little. In all states and societies, the majority of the poor are women, as has been pointed out in the Platform for Action, Beijing 1995.

These ill effects contradict Liberal principles of respect for the individual, encouragement of small enterprises and protection of local communities and the environment.

Liberal International accordingly urges all members to:

Evaluate all international economic regulation in terms of their social and environmental impact and to support only those which promote protection of communities and environments.
Require all initiatives by international bodies such as IMF, World Bank, OECD and G8 to include a description of their effects upon the environment.

Older Women

Resolution on Older Women

Liberal International assembled at Brussels from 3 to 5 March 1999, aware of the problems related to older persons world-wide, considers that:

The proportion of older persons in many societies is steadily increasing, and that given that women live longer, the majority of those increasing number of older persons are women, the relation between poverty and older persons appears as being stronger for women than for men, since their lifetimes were spent in unpaid and unrecognised work in the home and if these women had an income, it was generally lower than men's, partly because their former employment status had been broken by maternity and family responsibilities, the re-entry of the labour market is more difficult for older women, those social security systems based on continuous paid employment, tend to penalise women, who have not been a part of the active labour force on a continuous basis, and therefore do not qualify for a full pension or any pension at all, the pension system based on paid employment, further penalise women who in general earn less than men, even for the same work, the increase of single parent families - mainly mothers- weakens the argument that women will partake in their husband's pensions.

Accordingly welcomes the designation by the United Nations of 1999 as the International Year of Older Persons, the recommendations of the UN 1995 Global Platform for Action, and the UN 1985 Forward Looking Strategies relating to older women, in particular:

Allow women access to social security systems in equality with men throughout the whole life cycle (paragraph 106,d)

Develop information, programmes and services to assist women to understand and adapt to changes associated with ageing and to address and treat the health needs of older women, paying particular attention to those who are physically or psychologically dependent (paragraph 106, n)

Adopt and implement laws against discrimination based on sex in the labour market, especially considering older women workers, hiring and promotion, the extension of employment benefits and social security, and working conditions (paragraph 165, b)

And urges all members of Liberal International to promote legislation to enact those actions proposed to alleviate the effects of ageing upon women.