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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS

Statement submitted by International Network of Liberal Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.6/2009/1.



Statement*

Review theme: “Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels”.

The activities of the INLW are inspired on the principles of the United Nations Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. INLW promotes these principles, which are the basis of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

The INLW’s main objectives are: developing the awareness of women concerning their rights and political, economic, social and cultural responsibilities; reinforcing the relationships and the exchanges among women from all over the world; and promoting the application of the Human Rights Declaration.

The fifty-third session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will deal with the evaluation progress of the implementation of agreed conclusions.

Equal access of men and women to power, decision-making and leadership at all levels is a necessary precondition for the proper functioning of democracy. Equal participation of men and women in political affairs makes Governments more representative of the composition of society; it makes them more accountable in policy-making. Women, however, have in general traditionally been excluded from power and decision-making.

Also, the same under-representation of women in positions of decision-making in spheres of culture and the arts, the sports, the media, the academic domain, religion or legislation, has prevented women from having a significant impact on multiple institutions and essential policies.

Consequently, and following the recommendation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it is necessary:

- To ensure equality of opportunity for women and men to participate in the structures of power and decision-making at the government and public administration level, including the judiciary systems, international and non-governmental organizations, political parties and trade-unions;
- To increase the capacity of women to participate in decision-making processes and leadership positions.

INLW claims equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.

INLW proclaims:

- The need to reach a balanced distribution of the public and political powers between men-women/women-men;

* Issued without formal editing.

- The need of a deep modification of the process structures of decision-making to ensure equality;
- The need of a better conciliation of labour and family life, with more participation of men and children in the promotion of gender equality.

INLW proposes:

- A political agenda by the Governments, public institutions and political parties, to set up **Equality Legislation** and to create independent organisms devoted to guaranteeing the efficient implementation and accomplishment of this legislation;
- That the main responsibility concerning equal opportunities for men and women is carried by Governments. This guarantee has necessarily to have continuity;
- To promote action plans for equal opportunities for men and women in the private and public sector, as well as in the business, trade union and academic domains;
- To establish indicators to evaluate and promote the implementation of equality policies, in order to have a control of this implementation;
- To incorporate the analysis of the gender perspectives in order to allocate the necessary budgets to carry out effective gender policies;
- To promote the participation of young women and men in NGOs and other social, economical, academic and media institutions in order to guarantee their continuity;
- To provide technical and economic support to public and private institutions devoted to their organization, in research and assessment of the activities, which have as main objective the achievement of equality;
- To provide civil society access to public statistics and information concerning the gender perspective of representative and participating processes in political affairs;
- To establish legal rules in order to eliminate the stereotypes, which are published in the media;
- To increase the possibility of access of women to computing and information technology;
- To ensure women an economic independence through the access to the labour market on the basis of equal opportunities with men;
- To promote the participation of women and men, girls and boys, in promoting responsible sexual relations and sharing child care and domestic work and making use of paternal licences.