

Taipei 21 February 2000

-INLW Management Board Meeting

-INLW resolutions submitted and adopted by the L.I. Executive Committee on 19 February 2000.

Eliminating Gender Discrimination

Liberal International notes with concern:

That in this year of review of progress since the 1995 World Conference on the Status of Women, marked gender inequalities continue in almost all countries.

Further notes

That the potential of CEDAW (the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women) as an instrument for the advancement of women remains largely unrealised.

Notes in particular that CEDAW:

Recognises that "the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields"

Requires signatory States to guarantee women's basic human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with men and seeks the elimination of all social and cultural patterns based on notions of the inferiority or superiority of either sex

Defines areas of discrimination on which all subsequent international Conventions, Declarations and World Conferences affecting the status of women have been built

Requires all States which both sign and ratify the Convention to submit to the United Nations Committee on CEDAW open regular reports regarding their progress in achieving gender equality and further encourages non-governmental organisations to submit independent reports

By 30.12.99 had been signed and ratified by 166 countries and is thus the Convention regarding women's human rights which has the largest number of ratifying States world-wide.

Now that the preponderance of States world-wide have signed, serves to highlight those States which remain uncommitted, even in principle, to gender equality.

Remains the Convention with currently the most powerful mechanism for the promotion of implementation of women's human rights world-wide.

Was further strengthened by the adoption by the UN General Assembly in October 1999 of the Optional Protocol giving women the right to appeal to the United Nations once they had exhausted their national legal procedures. This additional power has so far been signed by 23 countries.

Accordingly urges all member Parties:

To encourage awareness of continuing gender discrimination by ascertaining and publicising their country's status with regard to CEDAW

To require their Governments, as necessary, to sign and ratify CEDAW without reservations

Further require that their Governments to sign the Optional Protocol

To establish dates for achievement of these objectives and publicise attainment or failure in meeting these dates

Vigorously to promote the elimination of all areas of gender discrimination in accordance with Liberal principles, whether they are identified by governmental or non-governmental reports to CEDAW or by other means.

The situation in Chechnya

Liberal International

Notes with deep concern the continuing suffering of the civilian population in Chechnya while noting also those in Russia who have criticised the methods used.

Expresses its condemnation of the widespread violation of human rights in Chechnya, such as the decision on January 11th, by the Chief of the Russian troops to consider that all males between the ages of 10 years and 65 can be subject to arrest and detention in camps; the wanton destruction of civilian property, the confiscation and robbery of goods belonging to civilians, destruction of undefended towns and villages, rape, torture.

Condemns terrorist outrages committed by Chechens against both Russians and agents of humanitarian organisations.

Reaffirms the principles of the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights of 1948.

Calls on the Russian government to respect its obligations under the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Geneva Convention, the Paris Charter and its membership of the Council of Europe.

Urges the EU to maintain its diplomatic and economic pressure on the Russian Government while the campaign of brutal repression in Chechnya continues.

Urges the G7 and the United States in particular to make clear to Russia that her role as a great power requires her acceptance of her obligations under international law; and

Urges the need for the rapid ratification of the Rome Treaty establishing the International Criminal Tribunal as a deterrent to crimes against humanity.

Decides to call for 1) Russia to stop military attacks against civilians and to seek for political solution in Chechnya, 2) the establishment of an United Nations Mission to Chechnya to assess the extent of human rights and international law violations, 3) the organisation of a referendum in Chechnya to determine in a democratic way if the majority of them wish to become an independent state, 4) the establishment of an International Criminal Tribunal to judge the violations of humanitarian international crimes of genocide and crimes against humanity.