



International Advocacy Reports and Statements

Joint Statement to the 10th Session of the Human Rights Council General Segment of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Geneva, March 2009

Delivered by Conchita Poncini, Coordinator of Geneva UN Representatives

International Federation of University Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Council of Women, Women's International Zionist Organisation, Women's Federation for World Peace International, Inter African Committee and the International Movement for Fraternal Union Among Races and Peoples, Federation of American Women's Club Overseas, 3HO Foundation, Femmes Africa Solidarite, World Federation for Mental Health, International Alliance of Women, International Council on Social Welfare, Zonta International, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Spanish Society for International Human Rights Law, UNESCO Extea, Women's World Summit Foundation, General Board of Church and Society of The United Methodist Church, Worldwide Organisation for Women, International Council of Jewish Women, Pan Pacific and Southeast Asia Women's Association, International Network for the Prevention of Elderly Abuse.

Mr. President,

- **As the NGO Committee on the Status of Women of CONGO perseveres advocacy in the Human Rights Council to implement government commitments to gender equality and protecting women's rights, we find it fitting to remember that International Women's Day, which we commemorate on 8 March, is a consequence of a movement unanimously adopted in 1908 by 100 women from 17 countries for women's rights in memory of the 15,000 women who marched the streets of New York City on 8 March 1857 demanding shorter work hours, better pay, voting rights and an end to child labour. Over a century, other women's conferences followed. The Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women, where 54,000 participated, was the biggest ever organised world conference by the United Nations. We ask the HRC to help keep the momentum of this world movement so that we could reach the goal of equal rights between women and men of all ages, in all spheres of life and all levels of society.**
- **As we experience another global financial crisis, economics of gender equality remains marginal in the quest to find solutions and models of good practices. Yet, it has been proven that for every economic crisis of the recent past, women have shown capacity, if included in socio-economic planning, budgeting and entrepreneurship development, to find smart and creative solutions and models. in terms of business and trade with ramifications in the protection of women's human rights.. Through micro credits and women's banking systems, many women succeed in getting out of their poverty as in Bangladesh and in India; The informal economy especially in the service sector is predominantly created by women for their families to survive in Africa. Introduction of equal treatment in legislation in parental leave**

International Federation of University Women

Fédération Internationale des Femmes Diplômées des Universités

10, rue du Lac, CH-1207 Geneva, Switzerland; Tel: (+41 22) 731 23 80; Fax: (+41 22) 738 04 40

E-mail: ifuw@ifuw.org Website: <http://www.ifuw.org>

and benefits has given women in the Nordic countries accessibility, opportunity, and choice to reach political leadership and have almost reached an equal level with men in wages according to a survey of the World Economic Forum and in the Philippines powerful entrepreneurial women and government support have gained fifth rank in the latest survey on measurements of gender equality and empowerment by the WEF.

- **We call on the Human Rights Council to continue systematic review of performance on gender equality and women's rights in the UPR and in reports to treaty bodies notably the CEDAW which has legal provisions for temporary measures to reach gender equality, as well as to the Economic, Social and Cultural Committee. Finally, we urge the HRC and financial institutions to keep abreast of each other's programmes to exchange best practices and identify gender equality gaps and women's empowerment.**

Thank you Mr. President

Conchita Poncini 4 March 2009