

Proposed Language Amendments on the Draft Declaration for the UN High-Level Event, 14-16 September 2005

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Women's organizations and networks welcome the statements by governments that reaffirm the critical importance of gender equality, women's empowerment and the promotion and protection of the human rights of women in achieving sustainable development and peace.

However, the Secretary-General in his report "In Larger Freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" and governments in their statements have not sufficiently integrated a gender perspective and women-centered approach in their commitments to development, peace and security, and human rights.

In accordance with the following previously-made governmental commitment, we urge governments to ensure that national statements and the outcome document integrate a gender perspective and incorporate calls for the full participation of women in the commitments to development, peace, human rights and UN governance:

*The General Assembly,
Emphasizes that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the promotion of gender equality and of women's empowerment and participation, together with the mainstreaming of a gender perspective, are among the essential elements for advancing the implementation of the United Nations Millennium Declaration, with a view, in particular, to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration and the outcomes of United Nations summits, conferences and special sessions;
(A/RES/59/168, para 19)*

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DOCUMENT FORMAT

The point of reference for this 9-page proposed language document is the Annex of the Secretary-General's report, *In Larger Freedom*. All proposed language is in bold. References to agreed language are in italics.

i. PREAMBLE

Reaffirm that gender equality, women's empowerment and the promotion and protection of the full enjoyment by women of all human rights and fundamental freedoms are essential to create a world in which all are free from want, free from fear and free to live in dignity.

I. FREEDOM FROM WANT

Accelerating Progress on MDG Implementation

5(c) bis Encourage the Secretary General to further refine the monitoring framework to accelerate progress toward the implementation of the MDGs;

Aid

5(d) bis Call on donor countries to increase the flexibility, coordination, transparency and timeliness of development assistance, and eliminate conditionalities that would require further economic restructuring, or denial of public goods or of reproductive and sexual health services;

5(d) ter Recipient countries should ensure that a necessary amount of the assistance received, agreed to in consultation with women's groups, is earmarked for the implementation of commitments related to achieving gender equality, including the Beijing Platform for Action, ICPD Programme of Action, and Johannesburg Plan of Implementation;

Debt

5(e) bis Agree to unconditional debt cancellation of all illegitimate debts, such as those that cannot be serviced without causing significant harm to women, those incurred by corruption and fraud and those with exorbitant interest rates, taking into account that any 'debt sustainability' analysis must include an audit of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of all previous debts;

5(e) ter Establish an independent, transparent arbitration process for debt cancellation and an ethical lending and borrowing mechanism to prevent further recurrence of the debt crisis;

Trade

5(f) bis Conduct public consultations and policy reviews with relevant sectors, including women's organizations and networks, aimed at anticipating the impact on women of bilateral, regional and international trade agreements, in order to identify potential negative impact on women with respect to earning levels, job security, labor standards, unpaid work burdens and access to productive and natural resources.

Trade cont'd...

5(f) ter Call on ECOSOC to commission a comprehensive social and gender sensitive review of the current process of trade liberalization, trade expansion and intensification and their utility and efficacy for just, equitable and sustainable development, paying particular attention to the concerns of women, and to the impact of the privatization of services under GATS on women;

Innovative Financial Mechanisms

5(g) Decide to launch, in 2005, an International Financial Facility to support an immediate front-loading of official development assistance, underpinned by commitments to achieving the 0.7 per cent ODA target no later than 2015; and to consider other innovative sources of finance for development to supplement the Facility in the longer term, **such as a tax on international financial transactions and other solidarity mechanisms;**

Quick Wins

5(h) Decide to launch a series of "quick win" initiatives so as to realize major immediate progress towards the Millennium Development Goals through such measures as the free distribution of malaria bed nets and effective anti-malaria medicines, the expansion of home-grown school meals programmes using locally produced foods, the elimination of user fees for primary education and health services, **universal access to sexual and reproductive health information and services, including family planning and contraceptive information and services and the closing of existing funding gaps for supplies and logistics, expanded use of proven effective drug combination for AIDS, the launching of national campaigns to stop violence against women, and the collection and disaggregation of data by sex;** (*Millennium Project Overview Report, p. 26*)

HIV/AIDS and Health Systems

5(i) Ensure that the international community urgently provides the resources needed for an expanded and comprehensive response to HIV/AIDS, as identified by UNAIDS and its partners, and full funding for the Global Fund to fight AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria; **including investment in sexual and reproductive health programmes and services as key entry points for HIV prevention, and taking into account the need for a comprehensive and gender-sensitive approach to prevention and treatment, especially in light of the growing impact of the pandemic on women and girls.**

(based on CPD Resolution on HIV/AIDS E/CN.9/2005/L.4)

5(i) bis Strengthen health systems to ensure universal access to basic health services, including services to promote child and maternal health, to support reproductive health and to control killer diseases, such as AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria, by making sufficient investments to provide for motivated and adequately paid health workers, scaled-up infrastructure and supplies, strong management systems and the elimination of user fees. (*In Larger Freedom, para 44*)

Gender Equality and the Elimination of Violence Against Women

5(j) Reaffirm gender equality and the need to overcome pervasive gender bias by: increasing primary school completion and secondary school access for girls, ensuring secure tenure of property **and inheritance rights** (*Beijing Platform for Action, para 61b; CSD 13, April 2005, Decision, para C (r(v))*) to women, ensuring **universal** access to **sexual and reproductive health services, and promoting and protecting the full enjoyment by women of all human rights**, promoting equal access to **sustainable employment** [delete: labour markets] **as well as adequate labour protection**, providing opportunity for **gender balance** [delete: greater representation] in government decision-making bodies, and supporting **the implementation of and provision of resources for comprehensive national plans and** direct interventions to protect women from violence;

5(j) bis Refrain from engaging in violence against women and exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate and, in accordance with national legislation, punish acts of violence against women, whether those acts are perpetrated by the State or by private persons;
(*Beijing Platform for Action, para 124 b*)

Sexual and Reproductive Health

5(j) ter Reaffirm that universal access to sexual and reproductive health by 2015 and protection of reproductive rights are critical for achieving the MDGs, particularly those concerned with maternal health, HIV/AIDS, gender equality and poverty eradication.
(*based on Commission on Population and Development, E/CN.9/2005/L.5, para 2,3*)

Environment

5 (l) Ensure concerted global action to mitigate climate change, including through technological innovation, and therefore **implement the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (Kyoto Protocol) and** resolve to develop an [delete: more inclusive] international framework for climate change beyond 2012, with broader participation by all major emitters and both developing and developed countries, taking into account the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities.

5 (l) bis Support and implement the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and take steps, individually and collectively, to implement the treaty restricting and/or eliminating the use of Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs) and the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Johannesburg commitment to achieve a significant reduction in the rate of loss of biodiversity by 2010;
(*based on In Larger Freedom, paras 58,59*)

5 (l) ter Facilitate and increase women's access to information and education, including in the areas of science, technology and economics, thus enhancing their knowledge, skills and opportunities for participation in environmental decisions;
(*Beijing Platform for Action, para 253 (b)*)

II. FREEDOM FROM FEAR

Women and the New Security Consensus

6 (a) bis **[Reaffirms] the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and commits to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1325 by taking further steps to ensure the integration of gender perspectives and the full and equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making on peace and security;** (*A/RES/59/168*)

Strongly condemns all violations of the human rights of women and girls in situations of armed conflict and the use of sexual exploitation, violence and abuse and commits to establishing and implementing strategies and programmes to prevent and report on gender-based violence. (*S/PRST/2004/40*)

Peacebuilding Commission

6 (i) Agree to establish a Peacebuilding Commission **to mobilize resources, enable coherent and sustained peacebuilding through information-sharing, planning and monitoring, and review and evaluate peacebuilding activities to develop best practices** [~~delete: along the lines suggested in the present report,~~] and agree to establish and support a voluntary standing fund for peacebuilding;

Elimination of Violence Against Women in Situations of Armed Conflict

6j bis Agree to provide gender-sensitive training to all actors, in peacekeeping missions in dealing with female victims of violence, including sexual violence and, in this regard, acknowledges the important role of peace support operations personnel in eliminating violence against women and girls, and calls upon States to promote, and relevant agencies of the United Nations system and regional organizations to ensure full and effective implementation of the Ten Rules Code of Personal Conduct for Blue Helmets; (*E/CN.4/2005/L.51, para 17 (r)*)

6j ter Adopt laws, where necessary, and reinforce existing laws that punish police, security forces or any other agents of the State who engage in acts of violence against women in the course of the performance of their duties; review existing legislation and take effective measures against the perpetrators of such violence; (*Beijing Platform for Action, para 124o*)

For the Annex on the Peacebuilding Commission to the Heads of State Declaration:

Decide that the Peacebuilding Commission should have mechanisms to fully and systematically consult with relevant civil society organizations, and in particular, local and national women's organizations, to ensure that strategies are responsive to the long-term needs of society, in fulfillment of international norms;

Resolve that the coordinated approach to peacebuilding facilitated by the Peacebuilding Commission should take into account women's unique development, economic, and peace and security needs in a post-conflict environment, recognizing that communities are best served when women are full and equal partners in all areas and at all levels of peacebuilding activities;

Members of the United Nations should be able at any stage to appeal for advice to the Peacebuilding Commission or for assistance from a Standing Fund for Peacebuilding. The Peacebuilding Commission and a Standing Fund for Peacebuilding can add an important dimension to the UN's preventive efforts by providing better tools for helping States and societies reduce the risk of conflict including by aiding their efforts to build State capacity, especially in the area of rule of law.

(Explanatory Note of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Commission, p. 4)

Agree that the peacebuilding support office should engage proactively with civil society organizations, especially those from the affected communities, including local women's organizations, and integrate a gender perspective in all of its work, in accordance with ECOSOC Agreed Conclusions 1997/2 and ECOSOC Resolution 2004/4;

III. FREEDOM TO LIVE IN DIGNITY

Human Rights of Women and Rule of Law

7(a) bis Recognize the important role of law, including legislation, in the promotion of gender equality, and calls upon States to continue their efforts to repeal laws and eradicate practices that discriminate against women and to adopt laws and promote practices that protect the rights of women and promote gender equality;

(A/RES/59/168, para 26)

7(d) Commit themselves to supporting democracy in their own countries, their regions and the world, **including by guaranteeing the political rights of women and gender balance in political representation at all levels**, and resolve to strengthen the United Nations capacity to assist emerging democracies, and to that end welcome the creation of a Democracy Fund at the United Nations to provide funding and technical assistance to countries seeking to establish or strengthen their democracy;

Human Rights Education

7(d) bis Commit significant resources to review and revise education curricula, textbooks and teaching aids and teacher training, as well as public education campaigns of all kinds, to ensure that they promote gender equality, respect for human rights and offer alternatives to violence; *(based on Beijing Platform for Action, para 83a)*

Treaty Body System

7(c) bis Ensure that any efforts to “harmonize treaty body reporting” maintain processes through which governments will be required to report with the same specificity as they had in previous documentation to specific Committees, such as those on race (CERD), children (CRC) and women (CEDAW).*

OHCHR Funding

7(f) bis Ensure that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights is strengthened through the provision of increased financial and personnel resources, including through the enhancing of its office in New York, and urge a commitment to gender balance, regional diversity, and thematic expertise in expanding the staffing of any OHCHR offices;*

* The proposed language on treaty body reporting and funding for OHCHR should be taken into account in the *Strengthening the United Nations* section, as well. These two elements are included in the *Dignity* section of this document in order to reflect where they appear in the Secretary-General's report.

IV. STRENGTHENING THE UNITED NATIONS

Role of Civil Society

8(a) bis Support and strengthen meaningful civil society participation and access throughout the UN system, and in particular in connection with General Assembly and Security Council deliberations and decision-making;

Funding for Women-Specific and Gender Mainstreaming Work in the UN

8(a) ter Commit to elevate the status of and increase the allocation of regular and voluntary funds for women-specific entities of the UN, and the women-specific and gender mainstreaming work of all UN entities.

Gender Balance in the UN Secretariat

8(a) quat Urge the Secretary-General to ensure gender balance in the staffing of the Organization, and especially at senior and policy-making levels;
(based on A/RES/59/164, para 6)

Human Rights Council

8(e) bis Ensure that the proposed Human Rights Council or a reformed Human Rights Commission retains and preserves the independence of the special mechanisms of the Commission; that the human rights system retain a permanent location in Geneva, and that the Commission or Council maintains a standing annual session of a period of a few weeks;