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**VIRGINIA VARGAS, WORLD RENOWNED FEMINIST AUTHOR, TO DELIVER  
CONTROVERSIAL SPEECH AT TONIGHT'S CLOSING OF WORLD SUMMIT**

*Gender Monitoring Group of the World Summit Endorses Vargas, One of Only Two Speakers to  
Address World Leaders on Behalf of Civilian Groups*

*United Nations, September 16, 2005* – Internationally recognized Peruvian activist, author, professor and sociologist Virginia Vargas will tonight call on government heads to "challenge the paradigm of development that prioritizes economic growth above human rights" and to recognize the contributions of "civil society and its movements of emancipation (particularly) the fundamental role of women in the productive and reproductive economies."

"True liberty will only be possible if indivisible, universal and interdependent human rights are placed at the centre of the structure and the dynamics of the United Nations and if new structures incorporate the processes of democratisation and the advances made in the arena of human rights."

Vargas is one of only two members of 'civil society' who has been invited to speak before global leaders at the World Summit. As Founding Director of the Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán (Center for Peruvian Women "Flora Tristán") Vargas is widely viewed as an international spokesperson for feminism and social justice. Her speech tonight (attached) is an honest and accurate critique of the current global political climate and the true effects that policies decided by world leaders have on the lives of women and men around the world.

During the 1990s, Vargas worked as an activist and organizer in Latin America, and was actively involved in following the UN conferences and processes. For the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, China in 1995, Vargas was the General Coordinator for the Latin American and Caribbean NGOs at the Global Forum of NGOs. It was in Beijing that UNIFEM honored her with its special recognition award.

**WHO:** Virginia Vargas, Founding Director of the Centro de la Mujer Peruana Flora Tristán  
**WHEN:** *September 16, 2005, After 6pm*  
**WHERE:** United Nations General Assembly Hall

-30-

*The Gender Monitoring Group of the World Summit is a project of the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO); all are NGOs with a long history of advocacy on the issues that the Summit will address and how they affect women around the world. The Gender Monitoring Group has developed a position paper, What's at Stake for Women, which highlights how the key issues are relevant to women and how to implement a gender perspective into proposed policies.*