

GEAR UP NOW!

54th SESSION OF THE UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN
2010 GEAR CAMPAIGN STATEMENT

The Gender Equality Architecture Reform (GEAR) Campaign, a network of over 300 women's, human rights and social justice groups around the world urges UN Member States and the UN Secretariat to move swiftly forward to create the new UN gender equality entity. GEAR also urges the UN to set up a transparent process now for recruiting the best qualified Under Secretary-General to head this agency. On the 15th anniversary of the historic Beijing World Conference on Women, the United Nations must move without further delay to implement changes that it has repeatedly recognized as critical to fulfilling its mandate of working for gender equality as a crucial component of development, human rights, peace, and security.

**UN member states must adopt a resolution setting up the new entity now.
CIVIL SOCIETY SEES THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS AS KEY FOR ITS SUCCESS.**

THE DRIVER IN THE UN SYSTEM FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY WITH STRONG, COUNTRY- LEVEL OPERATIONAL CAPACITY

The resolution should give the new women's agency responsibility for leadership and coordination of the UN system's actions on gender equality and women's empowerment both in the policy arena and at the operational level. This requires both holding the UN system accountable for gender mainstreaming and engaging in its own work on women's rights and empowerment at all levels.

A clear programmatic mandate and substantial operational capacity are crucial for the entity to be effective in delivering for women at the national level. Member states must support the principle of a universal mandate to address women's empowerment in all countries and strategic operational presence at the country level.

AMBITIOUSLY FUNDED WITH STABLE AND PREDICTABLE RESOURCES

To enable the entity to be effective, member states should pledge core, predictable, and multi-year voluntary funds now. The US \$500 million proposed in the UN Secretary-General's comprehensive proposal of January 2010 (A/64/588) can only be understood as resources for the initial phase. A commitment to grow to \$US1 billion and beyond over time is essential; One billion represents less than 0.5% of the expenses of all UN agencies in 2008.

The Under Secretary-General appointed to head this agency should be provided with delegated authority on financial matters and human resources, similar to that of other funds and programmes, in order to operate effectively at the country level.

TO JOIN THE GEAR CAMPAIGN, EMAIL gearcampaign@gmail.com

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**THE ENTITY NEEDS MEANINGFUL, SYSTEMATIC AND DIVERSE
CIVIL SOCIETY PARTICIPATION**

Civil society has played a vital role in work on women's rights and it is critical to devise creative ways for the new UN women's agency to partner with us and tap into the expertise and insights of a diverse and wide-ranging NGO constituency, particularly women's organizations and grassroots women.

Civil Society should hold official seats at the governing board level, and should also be included in advisory bodies at global, regional and national levels. These should be comprised of representatives from diverse NGOs, especially women's organizations.

**A TRANSPARENT RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR THE
UNDER SECRETARY-GENERAL THAT BEGINS NOW**

We urge Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon to initiate a global and transparent recruitment process now, in consultation with member states and civil society, in order to appoint the new USG as soon as possible.

The GEAR Campaign has proposed criteria to identify the best person to lead the entity. A strong leader is needed who combines a global vision with gender equality expertise and experience in working for women's human rights and empowerment on the ground, as well as the ability to secure funding and lead the organizational transition process.

The 15th anniversary of the Beijing World Conference on Women is a unique opportunity for the United Nations to recapture the galvanizing role it has played in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment over the past 60 years. To close the gap in realizing women's rights, the UN has recognized the need for a strong, well resourced coordinated body to be a driver for these goals at the highest levels of leadership.

The time to act on realizing this possibility is now.

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