



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission on the Status of Women

#### Fifty-fifth session

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Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

#### **Statement submitted by the International Network of Liberal Women, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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\* E/CN.6/2011/1.

## Statement\*

1. Important progress has been made towards achieving equality between women and men. Women's access to education and participation in the paid labour force has grown and legislation has been adopted for gender mainstreaming and equal opportunities.

2. Women have contributed significantly to the expansion of world economic growth in the last decades and their income has become also an important factor for their households. However, women are still largely excluded from economic decision-making. They face low wages, poor working conditions and limited employment and professional opportunities. The fact that domestic and community work does not figure in national accounts is reason enough for gender-responsive budgeting to be used in all countries.

3. Also cultures, customs and beliefs make many women and girls worldwide ignorant of their lawfully guaranteed rights and opportunities. Also universal primary education is far from being solved, especially in Africa and Southern Asia, where a vast majority of children, mostly girls, are out of school. Also due to the economic crisis there are more women in vulnerable employment and more wage differences between women and men.

4. International Network of Liberal Women (INLW) considers:

- To keep girls in school incentives have to be provided.
- Gender-based violence at and on the way to school has to be eliminated.
- Primary and secondary schools, training centres and universities have to be gender sensitive.
- Girls have the same right as boys to a good quality education.
- Gender stereotypes have to be removed in regard to women's and to girl's access to science and technology. The media can play a key role in showing a non-stereotyped portrait of women.
- Decent work is equal pay for equal work.
- Customs and cultures cannot restrain women from employment.
- Promotion of equal sharing of family responsibilities is basic for women's employment.

5. INLW considers that the newly created UN-Women has to play a key role in the implementation of women's rights, equality and gender mainstreaming and therefore stresses that:

- The four United Nations entities that are now part of UN-Women are the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women (OSAGI) and the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM).

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\* Issued without formal editing.

- UN-Women should take the leadership in coordinating the United Nations work on gender equality and gender mainstreaming.
  - UN-Women should have a global civil society Advisory Board, in order to create partnerships, as well as to benefit from expertise and knowledge.
  - UN-Women should create systematic and formal collaboration mechanisms with civil society, i.e. women's organizations in countries where the entity is also present, in order to coordinate the implementation of projects, programmes, activities and policies on the ground and at the same time managing more efficiently the funds.
  - UN-Women should have close contact with all Member States of the United Nations offering action plans and guidelines of gender mainstreaming for their countries.
  - UN-Women should start a worldwide media campaign together with civil society for worldwide education for women and girls, like that of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).
  - UN-Women should adopt the same system of funding like that of UNICEF.
  - UN-Women should have a close relationship with UNICEF because of their overall activities, with children and their families.
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