



August 8, 2008

Dear Colleagues:

The **Center for Asia-Pacific Women in Politics (CAPWIP)** in partnership with the **United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (UN/ISDR)** and the **Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)** is pleased to invite you to the **Third Global Congress of Women in Politics and Governance** which will be held on **October 19-22, 2008** at the Dusit Thani Hotel, Makati City, Metro Manila, Philippines. **The theme of the congress is "Gender in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction."**

Women and environment experts have raised concern over the absence of women in the discourse and debate on climate change and disaster risk reduction, both of which are global mainstream issues that are currently impacting the entire world. The involvement of women in areas of environmental management and governance should not be perceived as an afterthought. Women's roles are of considerable importance in the promotion of environmental ethics.

The **current imperative** is for women to understand the phenomenon of climate change and disaster risk reduction and their impacts and implications at the individual, household, community and national levels. Studies show that women have a definite information deficit on climate politics, climate protection, and preparedness through disaster risk reduction. Only with this information can women take their proper, significant and strategic role in the issues of climate change and disaster risk reduction.

Invited to this congress are **parliamentarians, decision – makers in national governments, environment ministries/ organizations, National Disaster Organization/Councils, Disaster Relief Organizations, Red Cross Societies, youth leaders, media practitioners, funding/donor agencies/organizations. (Female and male participants are welcome).**

The Congress will have the following objectives:

**Overall Purpose:** To provide a forum for legislators and decision-makers in national governments and leaders at all levels in formulating gender-responsive legislation and programs related to gender in climate change and disaster risk reduction.

**Specific Objectives:**

- a) to understand the phenomenon of climate change, its impacts, and its implications and study the appropriate risk reduction strategy;
- b) to review and examine the gender aspects in climate change and disaster risk reduction and formulate appropriate actions to address these;
- c) to define the roles women can play in addressing the impacts of climate change and disaster risk reduction programs and policies at the global, national and sub-national levels; and

d) to identify and define the action agenda for parliamentarians, policy advocates, and women leaders to support global and national actions to adapt gender responsive legislation and programs related to gender in climate change and disaster risk reduction.

### **Congress Proceedings:**

The discussion on gender in climate change and disaster risk reduction will be organized around identifying the challenges to action as well as defining the appropriate responses to effectively address the impacts of climate change and disaster risk reduction. Inputs to the discussion will be collected and organized around: 1) geographic location and 2) types of actions: i.e. preparedness, risk reduction: building community resilience; adaptation; and mitigation. Cross cutting these discussions will be the identification of technologies in aid of responding to climate change and preparedness thru disaster risk reduction.

The focus of the discussions will revolve around defining and elaborating actions (i.e. preparedness, disaster risk reduction, adaptation, and mitigation) to cope with climate change and its impacts and preparedness and disaster risk reduction.

Preparedness and disaster risk reduction is about building individual and community capacities to position themselves and their communities so that the likelihood of climate change-induced disasters is reduced; the intensity or adverse impacts of disasters are cushioned and that inhabitants are able to respond promptly, expeditiously and effectively. Adaptation entails actions that moderate harm, or exploit benefits, of climate change. Mitigation entails actions that minimizes or cushions the adverse impacts of climate change.

In all of these actions, special attention will be given to defining how women and gender could be mainstreamed. In other words, the Congress should define how women can be given the social space to participate, influence, and benefit from global and local responses to climate change.

The registration fee for the four day congress is One thousand five hundred fifty US Dollars (US\$ 1,550.) per person for twin room sharing accommodations (two persons in one room) and one thousand nine hundred fifty US Dollars (US\$ 1,950.) per person for single room accommodations (one person in one room).

The congress will be held on Oct 19-22, 2008. However, the participants will be requested to be in Manila the day before, October 18, 2008 and leave Manila only on October 23, 2008. The overnight hotel accommodation on October 18, 2008 is already included in the fee. Participants will be billeted in the DusitThani Hotel, the venue of the congress and hotels near the Dusit Thani Hotel, accessible within walking distance. Room accommodations in the Dusit Thani Hotel, the venue of the Congress will be on a first come - first served basis.

### **Importance of the Congress**

Today, on the average, one person out of nineteen in a developing country will be hit by a climate disaster, compared to 1 out of 1,500 in an OECD country. Climate change creates life time traps: in Niger, a child born during a drought is 72 percent more likely to be stunted than a child born during a normal season.

We hope that you can help us generate more interest in the Third Global Congress of Women in Politics and Governance. The Theme of "Gender in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction" is the first time this will be discussed in a forum whose objective is to formulate gender responsive legislation and policies for national governments and parliaments. We hope that you will find the

Congress a good venue for deepening your commitment to including the gender perspective in climate change and disaster risk reduction in your country.

We also hope that the environment organizations in your country will likewise find this forum a good opportunity to advocate gender and climate change policies and programs through gender responsive legislation to the women parliamentarians, decision makers, the youth leaders, media and the funding agencies/organizations who are expected to attend the congress. Let us join hands in promoting gender responsive governance through transformative leadership and citizenship. We are looking forward to your participation.

Please download the full information sheet and registration form for this Third Global Congress of Women in Politics and Governance from our website, <http://www.capwip.org/3rdglobalcongress.htm>

We will be happy to discuss details of your participation anytime. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Very truly yours,**

(Signed)

**Dr. Jung-Sook Kim**

President

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