

Beretning om Kvindekommissionens 55. samling

New York, den 22.februar - 4.marts 2011

Emne:

Kvindekommissionens 55. samling (CSW 55) fandt sted i New York fra den 22. februar til den 4. marts 2011. Samlingens tema var ”Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”.

Højniveau-rundbordsdrøftelsen fokuserede på hovedtemaet, og desuden var der følgende ekspertpaneldrøftelser, som tog udgangspunkt i Samlingens hovedtema.

Panel 1: *Key policy initiatives and capacity-building on gender mainstreaming: focus on science and technology.* I dette panel drøftedes betydningen af at fremme videnskab og teknologi med henblik på opfyldelse af MDG-målene. Piger og kvinder var fortsat underrepræsenteret på videnskabs- og teknologiuddannelserne. Kønsstereotyper udgør de grundlæggende årsager til beskæftigelsesmæssig segregation inden for videnskab og teknologi såvel i uddannelserne som på arbejdsmarkedet.

Panel 2: *Key policy initiatives and capacity-building on gender mainstreaming: focus on education and training.* I dette panel drøftedes bl.a. manglen på finansielle ressourcer til opfølgning på nationale principper og standarder, som findes inden for de fleste nationale undervisningssystemer. Kønsstereotyper i formelle pensum og lærebøger medvirkede til kønsbetinget segregation i mandlige og kvindelige studerendes studievalg.

Panel 3: *Evaluation of progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on “The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child”.* Med udgangspunkt i mange regeringers indførelse af lovgivning, som skal eliminere vold mod piger, FGM, tidlige ægteskaber og tvangsægteskaber samt trafficking, drøftedes den fortsatte voldsanvendelse mod piger og behovene for at komme volden til livs.

Panel 4: *Gender equality and sustainable development.* I dette panel drøftedes bl.a. integrering af kønspektivet i bæredygtig udviklingspolitik, herunder navnlig hvordan kvinder kan deltage i beslutningstagning på alle niveauer.

Panel 5: *Elimination of preventable maternal mortality and morbidity and the empowerment of women*. I panelet drøftedes årsagerne til den høje dødelighed og sygelighed i forbindelse med fødsler, navnlig i udviklingslandene samt hvordan man vil kunne begrænse eller eliminere disse forhold.

Panel vedr. det overordnede tema for CSW 56 (2012): *The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges*. På programmet for drøftelsen var nye overordnede policytiltag, der ville kunne fremme målelige og accelererede fremskridt med hensyn til reduktion af kvinders fattigdom i landområder, som vil være temaet for CSW 2012.

Samlingen afsluttedes med vedtagelsen af hoveddokumentet med konklusioner - Agreed Conclusions - om hovedtemaet, og desuden blev der vedtaget tre resolutioner. Konklusionerne vedhæftes som bilag 1.

Den danske delegation bestod af repræsentanter for Udenrigsministeriet, Minister for Ligestilling, Beskæftigelsesministeriet, Venstre og Socialistisk Folkeparti, Kvinderådet og Kvindernes U-landsudvalg. Vedhæftet som bilag 2.

Det nationale danske indlæg er vedhæftet som bilag 3.

Dokumenter vedrørende den 55. samling kan findes på Kvindekommissionens hjemmeside – <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/55sess.htm>

Resumé

Det lykkedes først sent på aftenen den 4. marts 2011, efter at Samlingen officielt var suspenderet, at nå til enighed om Agreed Conclusions (AC), som derfor blev vedtaget i udkast. Samlingen blev genoptaget mandag den 14. marts 2011, hvor konklusionerne blev endeligt vedtaget.

Konklusionerne repræsenterer et forsigtigt skridt fremad, på trods af religiøst funderede kræfters ihærdige forsøg på at rulle sprogbruget tilbage til tiden før Beijing Deklarationen. Det lykkedes dog at opnå enighed om en relativt progressiv tekst bl.a. om retten til seksualundervisning og om fjernelse af barrierer for uddannelse i seksuel og reproduktiv sundhed, om nødvendigheden af at nedbryde køns-stereotyper i undervisningsmateriale og læreruddannelse samt ift. anerkendelse af problemerne med det kønsopdelte arbejdsmarked, hvor kvinder er undertallige i naturvidenskabelige fag og mænd i omsorgssektoren.

Under årets samling gik en række lande, anført af Vatikanet, skarpt i rette med flere centrale elementer i det internationale ligestillingsarbejde. Det drejede sig bl.a. om en række afrikanske lande, herunder Benin (som var hovedforhandler for den Afrikanske Gruppe) samt Pakistan, Iran og Yemen. Som del af denne alliance indtog bl.a. Qatar og Singapore en mere kompromissøgende linje. Alliancen fremførte velkendt modstand mod seksuel og reproduktiv sundhed, sundhedsydelse (health services, der anses som synonym for abort) og mænds og kvinders arbejdsdeling i hjemmet. Dette år skabte modstand mod ordet ”gender” dog yderligere problemer. Anfægtelsen af begrebet skal ses i tæt sammenhæng med den meget vanskelige

diskussion, der kører i andre FN fora vedr. primært homoseksuelles (LGBT - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) adgang til menneskerettighederne, særligt ikke-diskrimination og beskyttelse mod vold. En nylig afstemning i FN's Generalforsamling førte til en sejr for de lande, der kæmper for LGBT rettigheder, hvilket lande fra den religiøst funderede blok, herunder de mest religiøst funderede afrikanske lande, har opfattet som et stort nederlag.

Der blev vedtaget tre resolutioner, hvoraf der kun blev stemt om den palæstinensiske kvinderesolution (EU-landene i CSW afstod).

Det nationale indlæg blev givet af FN-ambassadør Carsten Staur, som i talen understregede vigtigheden af lige adgang for kvinder, piger, mænd og drenge til uddannelse samt mænds rolle som beslutningstagere for fremme af kvindernes rettigheder.

Danmark deltog desuden med indlæg i to fællesnordiske sideevents og var medvært for et sideevent om betydningen af bæredygtighed og ligestilling for genopbygning af den globale økonomi.

CSW's 55. samling

Kvindekommissionens 55. samling (CSW 55) i New York fra den 22. februar til den 4. marts 2011 med hovedtemaet "Access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work" fik vedtaget hoveddokumentet, Agreed Conclusions, men forhandlingerne var vanskelige og blev først afsluttet efter at samlingen officielt var suspenderet.

Konklusionernes overordnede budskab er, at traditionelle forestillinger om kønnene fører til en uhensigtsmæssig opdeling af uddannelsesvalg og specialisering. Der er særligt brug for, at piger og kvinder får bedre adgang til naturvidenskab, matematik og teknologi. Resultatet er et kønsopdelt arbejdsmarked, hvor kvinder mangler i de naturvidenskabelige fag, og dermed ikke bidrager i tilstrækkelig grad til udviklingen af fremtidens grønne teknologi, mens der er mangel på mænd i omsorgssektoren. Køns-stereotyper og fortsat ulige fordeling af arbejdsbyrden i hjemmet er hovedårsager til dette problem.

Seksuel og reproduktiv sundhed og rettigheder (SRSR) er de seneste år blevet genstand for en tilbagevendende strid mellem progressive og religiøst funderede kræfter i FN-regi. Emnet har tidligere ført til splittelse indenfor EU, men i år valgte Malta at afgive nationalt indlæg efter EU's indlæg ved Samlingens åbning. Til gengæld blev der indgået kompromis i EU-kredsen ifm. forhandlingen af EU's indspil til Agreed Conclusions. Her måtte Danmark opgive at fastholde rettighedsaspektet. I stedet valgtes en ny strategi, hvor like-mindede lande (SE og NL) stillede tekstforslag, der 'foldede begrebet ud'. Det lykkedes på den måde tidligt at opnå EU-enighed gennem indgåelse af et kompromis, hvor ordet 'rettigheder' udgik til gengæld for maltesisk og irsk accept af to relativt progressive paragraffer, hvis tekst lyder: "Remove legal, regulatory and social barriers, where appropriate, to sexual and reproductive health education, within formal education programmes regarding women's health issues." samt "Take steps to ensure access to life skills and sex education, including education in sexual and reproductive health, in schools in order to support young people in developing knowledge and skills to

enable them to make informed and responsible decisions to help reduce early marriage and early child bearing and to combat sexual harassment and gender based violence.” Den førstnævnte paragraf kom med i de endeligt vedtagne konklusioner, hvorimod den sidste kom med uden henvisningen til uddannelse i seksuel og reproduktiv sundhed og med tilføjelse af to modererende sætninger, som bl.a. stadfæster forældres rolle som deres børns vejledere på området.

Det nationale indlæg blev givet af FN-ambassadør Carsten Staur, som i talen understregede vigtigheden af lige adgang for kvinder, piger, mænd og drenge til uddannelse. Der lagdes vægt på mænds rolle som beslutningstagere for fremme af kvindernes rettigheder. Mændene havde central betydning og ansvar for opnåelse af kvinders ligestilling. I denne sammenhæng måtte undervisningssystemet indrettes således, at drenge og piger får gensidig respekt for hinandens værdi og kapacitet. Man måtte derfor imødegå kønsbetingede uddannelsesmønstre, som var til skade for både kvinder og mænd. Indlægget omfattede ligeledes omtale af nødvendigheden af at fremme kvinders seksuelle og reproduktive sundhed og rettigheder. Endelig hilstes etableringen af UN WOMEN velkommen, idet Danmark tilsagde sin fulde støtte til organisationens normative og operative indsats. (Talen er vedhæftet som bilag 3).

Den tidlige EU-enighed skabte mulighed for opbyggelsen af et stærkt og tæt samarbejde i EU-gruppen, som var nyttigt. EU-landenes fælles linje var afgørende, særligt ift. at imødegå en tilbagerulning af fastlagt sprogbrug (agreed language) fra Beijing Deklarationen.

Det blev **begrebet ”gender”** som førte til de mest ophedede, intense og trættende drøftelser under Samlingen. Modstanden mod begrebet, der blev betegnet som ’omstridt’ og ’under omdefinering’, blev anført af Vatikanet og Benin på vegne af Afrikanske Gruppe og med støtte fra Pakistan. Det blev gentagne gange fremført, at ordet ”gender” var blevet brugt i sammenhæng med diskussionen om homoseksuelles rettigheder. Man mente derfor ikke længere at have ’garanti’ for, at ”gender” kun refererede til kvinder og mænd, men mistænkte begrebet for også at indbefatte LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender). Det skal tilføjes, at Vatikanet ikke generelt anerkender den sociale konstruktion af køn, som begrebet ”gender” beskriver. Man forsøgte derfor over en bred kam (men uden held) at indsætte sprog, som definerede kvinder og mænds iboende kvaliteter og biologiske forskellighed.

Der var særlig modstand mod begrebet ”gender stereotypes”, som ifølge den religiøst funderede blok konnoterer diversitet i seksuel orientering. Man ønskede derfor at benytte ”the stereotyped roles of women and men”, som er den definition, der bruges i CEDAW Konventionen (1979). At man på den måde skulle rulle sprogbruget tilbage fra før Beijing Deklarationen (1995), var helt uacceptabelt for EU. Det lykkedes i slutfasen af forhandlingerne, gennem målrettet kontakt til bl.a. moderate afrikanske lande, at formå den Afrikanske Gruppe til at dæmpe deres modstand. Også NGO’erne bl.a. fra den danske delegation fik - med held - engageret afrikanske NGO’er. En bred vifte af like-mindede delegationer gav udtryk for dyb frustration over, at Samlingen ikke blev brugt på at skabe fremskridt på ligestilling og uddannelsesområdet, men på at diskutere definitionen af hævdevundne begreber.

Det lykkedes til sidst, efter at Samlingen officielt var suspenderet, at opnå enighed om at bruge begrebet ”gender stereotypes” to gange i teksten, til gengæld for tilføjelsen af en paragraf, som understregede sammenhængen mellem kvinder, mænd og stereotyper.

Der blev afholdt 5 ekspertpaneler under samlingen. De nordiske lande indgik i samarbejde om disse ekspert-paneler, således at ét nordisk land talte på hvert af panelerne med fremhævelse af praksis i de nordiske lande og nordiske holdninger til det pågældende emne. Det skete for at sikre, at en nordisk stemme blev hørt i alle paneldiskussioner. Danmark førte ordet i panel II om “Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”.

Resolutioner

1. ”Women, the girl child and HIV/AIDS”. Resolutionen, der var en proceduremæssig opdatering af sidste års resolution, blev vedtaget ved konsensus. Resolutionen var fremlagt af Namibia på vegne af SADC landene og blev co-sponsoreret af alle EU-lande.
2. “Situation of and assistance to Palestinian women”. Resolutionen var fremlagt af Argentina på vegne af G-77 gruppen og var den eneste, der blev stemt om. EU-landene i CSW afstod fra at stemme, 26 lande stemte for, 2 (USA og Israel) imod. På dansk initiativ afgav EU et indlæg inden afstemningen, der fremhævede, at EU ikke finder, at resolutionen skal behandles i CSW, og at den endvidere ikke i tilstrækkelig grad tager højde for indholdet i FN-generalsekretærens rapport om palæstinensiske kvinders forhold i OpT.
3. ”Mainstreaming gender equality and empowerment of women in climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies”. Resolutionen var fremlagt af Filippinerne og blev co-sponsoreret af alle EU-lande.

Om de enkelte resolutioner kan især bemærkes:

1. Om vedtagelsen af HIV-AIDS resolutionen kan bemærkes, at såvel Chile som Vatikanet tog ordet efter vedtagelsen. Chile påpegede, at resolutionsvedtagelsen ikke kunne ses som legalisering af abort. Vatikanet påpegede, at abort i deres øjne ikke er omfattet af begrebet family planning og at brug af kondomer ej heller kunne endosseres, ligesom al uddannelse indenfor seksualitet forudsatte forældrenes godkendelse.

2. Heller ikke på den 55. samling kunne der opnås enighed mellem EU og PA om en udfasning af PA-kvindersresolutionen i CSW, hvorfor de 5 EU-medlemmer af CSW – Belgien, Tyskland, Italien, Spanien og Sverige – var enige om at afstå i forbindelse med afstemningen om resolutionen.

Resolutionen blev vedtaget med 26 ja-stemmer, 2 nej-stemmer (Israel og USA) og 8 afståelser.

Der var blandt EU-medlemmerne bred enighed om, at resolutionen ikke hører til i CSW, og at resolutionsteksten ikke i tilstrækkeligt omfang tog indholdet af Generalsekretærens rapport om palæstinensiske kvinders situation i OpT til indtægt. Der blev derfor, på dansk initiativ, opnået enighed om et EU-indlæg, der indeholdt disse to budskaber.

3. Kvindekommissionen vedtog ved konsensus en helt ny resolution om mainstreaming af ligestilling og fremme af empowerment af kvinder i politikker og strategier vedr. klima. Det er første gang, at dette emne behandles i en tematisk resolution i FN. Initiativet blev taget af Filippinerne.

Resolutionen har to hovedspor: Integrering af et ligestillingsperspektiv samt effektiv deltagelse af kvinder og piger i alle aspekter af klimapolitik og strategiudvikling. Stater, FN's fonde og programmer og andre aktører anmodes om at sikre træning vedr. kvinders og pigers behov og rettigheder, og staterne anmodes om at sikre en ligestillingsorienteret ressourceanvendelse i klimakontekster og en forøgelse af kvinders ressourcekontrol gennem land- og ejendomsrettigheder.

Forhandlingerne var vanskelige – ikke mindst fordi initiativet var nyt. Filippinerne havde gjort et godt forsøg på at kombinere klima og ligestillingsrelevant sprog fra Beijing Handlingsplanen, Cancun-aftalen og tidligere acquis fra Kvindekommissionen. En hyppig indsigelse var, at det skulle undgås at teksten blev for ”klimateknisk” eller på nogen måde åbnede op for tidligere vedtagelser på klimaområdet.

EU var en proaktiv og konstruktiv spiller og en lang række af EU's forslag blev indarbejdet i teksten, hvilket resulterede i, at samtlige 27 EU lande co-sponsorerede resolutionen.

Staterne og FN systemet har nu for første gang agreed language på emnet, som formentlig vil dukke op allerede under næste års samling af Kvindekommissionen, hvor temaet er ”Empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges”.

Side-events

Den danske delegation deltog dagligt i side events, i flere som aktive deltagere. Kst. kontorchef Kira Appel deltog som stedfortræder for Ligestillingsministeren i den nordiske side event ”Why access for girls and boys to education pays off”. Kira Appel talte desuden på EU side-eventen ”New skills for green jobs: where are the women?”, mens Janice Førde, forkvinde for KULU, talte på Nordisk Ministerråds ekspert side-event ”Elimination of violence against girls and boys”.

Danmark var, sammen med Sydafrika og UNDP, medværter for side-eventen ”Rebuilding the global economy: Towards sustainable and gender equitable development”. FN-ambassadør Carsten Staur påpegede i sit indlæg, at kvinder er nøgleaktører f.s.v. angår forandringer, og at de har en multipliseringseffekt på den økonomiske vækst og på udviklingsresultaterne, hvorfor ”investering i kvinder betaler sig”. Han henviste endvidere til Verdensbankens konklusion om, at investering i kvinder er den bedste måde, hvorpå man kan investere i udviklingen af samfund. Det anførtes endvidere, at en effektiv imødegåelse af miljømæssige udfordringer ikke

kunne lykkes uden større social lighed og inddragelse af kvinder. Derfor ydede Danmark – sammen med de øvrige nordiske lande – en betydelig finansiel støtte til FN's kvinde- og ligestillingsaktiviteter.

Vurdering af Kvindekommissionens 55. samling

Et af Kvindekommissionens vigtigste formål er at følge op på gennemførelsen af sluterklæringen og handlingsplanen fra den fjerde verdenskvindekonference i Beijing i 1995 og den 23. særlige samling af FN's Generalforsamling i 2000 (Beijing +5). På det grundlag arbejdes der for at styrke og udvide den internationale enighed om denne politiske og normsættende ramme for forbedring af kvinders og pigers status og rettigheder.

For den danske delegation var og er udgangspunktet for arbejdet i Kvindekommissionen gennemførelsen af Beijing-erklæringen, handlingsplanen samt Beijing +5. Fra dansk side lægges især vægt på en styrkelse af kvinders rettigheder, herunder særligt kvinders seksuelle og reproduktive sundhed og rettigheder, kvinders muligheder (empowerment), inklusiv kvinder i ledelse, bekæmpelse af feminiseringen af HIV/AIDS, styrkelse af arbejdet for at bekæmpe vold mod kvinder – det være sig i fredstid eller i forbindelse med konflikter – samt kvinders økonomiske muligheder som ”agents of change”.

Det har gennem de senere år været tydeligt, at dele af Beijing-deklarationen, AfP samt Beijing +5 er under pres, da politiske og religiøst funderede kræfter i Syd og Nord er blevet mere ”aggressive”. Den nye amerikanske administrations tiltræden og dens mere åbne holdning til kvinders seksualitet og reproduktive rettigheder har skabt bedre muligheder for at få udbygget og styrket den internationale enighed om at fremme kvinders rettigheder og status, men det har også øget incitamentet blandt de religiøst funderede kræfter til at mobilisere sig.

På den 55. Samling så man en styrket alliance mellem Vatikanet, amerikansk baserede anti-abortorganisationer, Pakistan, Benin og et par andre religiøst funderede delegerede som Yemen og Iran udfolde sig med intensiveret modstand mod alle formuleringer vedr. seksuel og reproduktiv sundhed, sundhedsydelser (’health services’, der i de kredse anses som synonym for abort) og mænds og kvinders arbejdsdeling i hjemmet. Hertil kom modstanden mod ordet ”gender” i det hele taget.

I lighed med det foregående års beretning må det igen konkluderes, at de resolutioner, der blev opnået konsensus om, ikke repræsenterede afgørende fremskridt. De udelod snarere kontroversielle fremskridt for at undgå deciderede tilbageskridt i forhold til tidligere enighed.

EU-koordineringen

EU-koordineringen foregik som i tidligere samlinger i tematiske parallelle forhandlingsforløb, hvor man drøftede de forskellige resolutionsforslag. Koordineringen er tidskrævende og lægger beslag på mange ressourcer.

Forhandlingerne om Agreed Conclusions gennemførtes med EU-delegationen som forhandlingsleder. EU-delegationen havde denne rolle både under den interne EU-koordination og under selve forhandlingerne i ”informals”. I overensstemmelse med praksis

post-Lissabon havde det ungarske EU-formandskab ingen særlig rolle i forhandlingerne af konklusionsteksten.

Under generaldebatten leverede den ungarske ligestillingsminister et indlæg på vegne af EU, hvori han betonede EU-landenes stærke støtte til fuld gennemførelse af Cairo Programme of Action og andre centrale politikker vedr. ligestilling og beskyttelse af kvinder, herunder UNSCR Resolution 1325. Desuden henvistes til EU's Action Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development for 2010–2015.

EU-delegationen leverede indlæg under ekspertpanelerne på vegne af EU-medlemslandene.

Nordisk samarbejde

Det nordiske samarbejde forløb godt og blev som nævnt udvidet gennem samarbejdet omkring de fem ekspertpaneler. I februar 2011 var Sverige vært for et nordisk forberedelsesmøde i Stockholm, hvor man drøftede mulighederne for øget samarbejde, planer for nordiske side-events og Nordisk Ministerråds to side-events.

USA

Forrige års markante holdningsskift i forhold til SRSR hos den amerikanske delegation der til tider medførte, at USA blev opfattet som mere progressiv end EU, var mindre synligt i år.

Baggrund om FN's Kvindekommission

FN's Kvindekommission blev oprettet i 1946 som en funktionel kommission under det Økonomiske og Sociale Råd (ECOSOC) med henblik på at udarbejde anbefalinger og rapporter til ECOSOC om styrkelse af kvinders rettigheder i politisk, økonomisk, civil, social og uddannelsesmæssig sammenhæng. Kvindekommissionen samles normalt en gang om året i marts måned.

Målet med Kvindekommissionens virke er gennemførelsen af princippet om, at kvinder og mænd skal have lige rettigheder. Efter den 4. Verdenskvindekonference i Beijing i 1995 blev Kvindekommissionen af FN's Generalforsamling pålagt at medvirke til gennemførelsen af konferencens resultater ved regelmæssigt at gennemgå de 12 kritiske områder i handlingsplanen (Platform for Action (PFA)). Disse temaer blev gennemgået i perioden 1996-1999, mens Kvindekommissionen i 2000 havde en samlet gennemgang af handlingsplanen på dagsordenen som forberedelse af den 23. særlige samling af FN's Generalforsamling i juni 2000 "Kvinder 2000: Ligestilling, udvikling og fred i det 21. århundrede" - populært kaldet Beijing +5. Under den 49. samling, der markerede 10-året for Beijing, lykkedes det kun efter svære forhandlinger at få genbekræftet Beijing-rammeverket.

Kvindekommissionen består af 45 medlemmer, som vælges for fire år ad gangen. Den aktuelle sammensætning af kommissionen kan findes på Kvindekommissionens hjemmeside - <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/csw/index>. Danmark var medlem til og med den 48. samling. De nordiske lande er normalt repræsenteret ved ét medlem i Kvindekommissionen. Island blev den 29. april 2003 i ECOSOC for første gang valgt til den "nordiske plads" fra 2004-2008. Nu har Sverige pladsen.

Kvindekommissionens 56. samling

Efter afslutningen af CSW 55 samledes Kvindekommissionen for at ”åbne” den 56. samling i CSW.

Ved åbningen blev den foreløbige dagsorden godkendt. Hovedemnet for næste års samling er ”Empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges”.

United Nations

E/CN.6/2011/L.6



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: Limited
8 March 2011

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Fifty-fifth session

22 February-4 March 2011

Agenda item 3

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"

**Draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Chair of the Commission
on the Status of Women on the basis of informal consultations**

Access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the declarations adopted by the Commission on the occasion of the tenth and fifteenth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women.
2. The Commission reiterates that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocols thereto, as well as other conventions and treaties, such as the relevant conventions of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and the International Labour Organization, provide a legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for the promotion of gender equality in education and employment.
3. The Commission recalls the United Nations Millennium Declaration and General Assembly resolution 65/1 of 22 September 2010, and recognizes the interdependence of all the Millennium Development Goals. The Commission also recalls the ministerial declaration of the 2010 high-level segment of the Economic and Social Council on implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and empowerment of women. It takes note of the Budapest Science Agenda-Framework for Action, adopted at the World

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Conference on Science in 1999, and of the Dakar Framework for Action: Education for All, adopted at the World Education Forum in 2000.

4. The Commission welcomes the establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and its operationalization, which will strengthen the ability of the United Nations to support the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women, and welcomes the appointment of Michelle Bachelet as the first Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women.

5. The Commission acknowledges the important role of national machineries for the advancement of women, which should be placed at the highest possible level of government, the relevant contribution of national human rights institutions where they exist, and the important role of civil society, especially women's organizations, in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and in promoting the full and equal access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology.

6. The Commission stresses that education is a human right, and that equal access to education, training and science and technology empowers women and girls in the context of global economic and technological changes and promotes development, all human rights, human rights education and learning at all levels, as well as gender equality, the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and the eradication of poverty.

7. The Commission reaffirms that the best interest of the child shall be the guiding principle of those responsible for his or her education and guidance in the exercise by the child of his or her rights and that responsibility lies in the first place with his or her parents or legal guardians.

8. The Commission welcomes the progress made in increasing women's and girls' access to and participation in education and training, including science and technology education. The Commission recognizes the potential of education and training and science and technology, to contribute to the economic empowerment of women, which also leads to accelerating progress towards achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, by 2015.

9. The Commission notes that quality education and full and equal access and participation in science and technology for women of all ages are imperative for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women, and an economic necessity, and that they provide women with the knowledge, capacity, aptitudes, skills, ethical values and understanding necessary for lifelong learning, employment, better physical and mental health, including the prevention and control of maternal mortality, HIV and AIDS and other communicable and non-communicable diseases, as well as for full participation in social, economic and political development.

10. The Commission welcomes the important contribution that women make to all fields of education, training, science and technology, and recognizes their work in the full spectrum of professions in science and technology. The Commission also acknowledges that women and men should continue to contribute to the promotion of the ethical dimensions of scientific and technological progress.

11. The Commission recognizes that research and development in science and technology, and its dissemination, have insufficiently responded to women's needs. The Commission stresses the need for increased cooperation among countries, including through international cooperation and transfer of technologies on mutually agreed terms, especially to developing countries, in order to enhance equal access of women to science and technology and their participation in science and technology education.
12. The Commission expresses continued concern at the negative impact of the global crises, such as the financial and economic crisis, the food crisis and continuing food insecurity, and the energy crisis, as well as the challenges posed by poverty, natural disasters and climate change, on the empowerment of women and girls, including their access and participation in education, training, science and technology.
13. The Commission expresses concern at the serious and persistent obstacles that still hinder the advancement of women and further affect their participation in decision-making, including the persistent feminization of poverty, the lack of equal access to health, education, training and employment, as well as armed conflict, lack of security and natural disasters.
14. The Commission acknowledges that men and women continue to face gender stereotypes, as well as challenges and obstacles to changing discriminatory attitudes, and stresses that challenges and obstacles remain in the implementation of international standards and norms to address the inequality between men and women.
15. The Commission expresses deep concern about all legal, economic, social and cultural barriers that prevent women and girls from having equal access to education and training, and recognizes that some women and girls face multiple discrimination and disadvantages that prevent their participation in education, training and employment.
16. The Commission recognizes that the upbringing of children requires the shared responsibility of parents, women and men and society as a whole, and that maternity, motherhood, parenting and the role of women in procreation must not be a basis for discrimination nor restrict the full participation of women in society.
17. The Commission expresses deep concern that discrimination and violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment and bullying, continue to occur in all parts of the world, including in education and in the workplace. The Commission notes that those are obstacles to the achievement of women's and girls' equal access to and participation in education, including in science and technology education, and training, as well as impediments to the development of their full potential as equal partners with men in other aspects of life, including full employment and decent work.
18. The Commission also expresses concern that inadequate educational opportunities and low quality education reduce the benefits of education and training for women and girls, men and boys, and that women's educational gains are yet to translate into equal access to full employment and decent work, with consequent long-term adverse effects on the development of any society. It remains deeply concerned by the persistence of high female illiteracy rates and gender stereotyped roles of women and men, which inhibit women's equal participation in

employment, leading to occupational segregation, including the widespread underrepresentation of women and girls in many fields of science and technology, which represents a loss of talent and perspectives, hinders economic development and women's economic empowerment and can contribute to the gender pay gap.

19. The Commission expresses concern about high drop-out rates from school of female students in many parts of the world, especially at the secondary level, and including at the tertiary level, owing to multiple discrimination and factors that impede girls' participation in education.

20. The Commission expresses concern that the unequal sharing of responsibilities of daily life, including caregiving between women and men, girls and boys, has a disproportionate impact on women's and girls' access to education, training and science and technology, and on their economic empowerment and long-term economic security.

21. The Commission underlines that addressing the barriers to equal access of women and girls to education, training and science and technology requires a systematic, comprehensive, integrated, sustainable, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach, including policy, legislative and programmatic interventions and, as appropriate, gender-responsive budgeting, at all levels.

22. The Commission urges Governments, at all levels, including local authorities and national machineries for the advancement of women, and/or, as appropriate, the relevant entities of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates and bearing in mind national priorities, and invites national human rights institutions where they exist, and civil society, including non-governmental organizations, academia, educational, scientific research and funding institutions, the private sector, employer organizations, trade unions, professional associations, the media and other relevant actors, to take the following actions, as appropriate:

Strengthening national legislation, policies and programmes

(a) Mainstream a gender perspective in legislation, policies and programmes within all governmental sectors, including education, training, science and technology, academia, research institutions and research funding agencies, in order to address unequal access and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work;

(b) Strengthen capacities to ensure that science education policies and curricula are relevant to the needs of women and girls so that developments in science and technology can directly benefit them;

(c) Improve and systematize the collection, analysis and dissemination of sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data; enhance capacity development in this regard; and develop relevant gender-sensitive indicators to support legislative development and policymaking on education, training and science and technology;

(d) Encourage the provision of institutional and financial support for academic studies that can produce gender-specific knowledge and feed into all policies and programmes on education, training and research and support research, including longitudinal policy research, to identify specific gaps in education and

career pathways, so as to promote the retention of women and girls in different fields of science and technology and in other relevant disciplines;

(e) Strengthen the monitoring and evaluation and, where appropriate, the review of existing policies and programmes to promote gender equality and the empowerment of women in education, training, science and technology, and access to full employment and decent work, in order to assess their effectiveness and impact, ensure a gender perspective in all policies and programmes and strengthen accountability;

(f) Encourage and, as appropriate, increase public and private investment in education and training to expand women's and girls' access to quality education and training throughout their life cycle, including, inter alia, through the provision of scholarships for study in science and technology in secondary and tertiary institutions, and to ensure that research and development in the field of science and technology directly benefits women and girls;

(g) Incorporate systematically a gender perspective into budgetary policies at all levels to ensure that public resources in education, training, science, technology and research equally benefit women and men, girls and boys, and contribute to the empowerment of women and girls in particular;

(h) Urge developed countries that have not yet done so, in accordance with their commitments, to make concrete efforts towards meeting the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance to developing countries and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national product for official development assistance to least developed countries, and encourage developing countries to build on the progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help meet development goals and targets and help them, inter alia, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(i) Strengthen international cooperation in the area of access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work and the promotion of women's participation in the exchange of scientific knowledge, and welcome and encourage in this regard South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation and recognize that the commitment to explore opportunities for further South-South cooperation entails not seeking a substitute for but rather a complement to North-South cooperation;

(j) Prioritize and encourage enhanced funding and capacity development efforts for the education and training needs of girls and women in development assistance programmes;

(k) Continue to strengthen policies relevant for women's economic empowerment aimed at addressing inequality affecting women and girls, in access to and achievement in education at all levels, including in science and technology, in particular to eliminate inequalities related to age, poverty, geographical location, language, ethnicity, disability, and race, or because they are Indigenous people, or people living with HIV and AIDS;

(l) Strengthen national efforts, including with the support of international cooperation, aimed at addressing the rights and needs of women and girls affected

by natural disasters, armed conflicts, other complex humanitarian emergencies, trafficking in persons and terrorism, within the context of access and participation of women and girls to education, training and science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work. Also underline the need to take concerted actions in conformity with international law to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the rights of women and girls living under foreign occupation, so as to ensure the achievement of the above-mentioned goals;

Expanding access and participation in education

(m) Ensure women's and girls' full and equal access to quality formal, informal and non-formal education and vocational training at all levels, including to free and compulsory primary education, and provide educational opportunities, including in science and technology, from early childhood and throughout the life cycle, including lifelong learning and retraining, human rights education and learning, and adult and distance education and e-learning, including in information and communications technology and entrepreneurial skills, in order to promote the empowerment of women, inter alia, through enhancing and facilitating women's access to full and productive employment, in particular to careers in science and technology;

(n) Improve and expand women's and girl's access to distance education, e-learning, tele-education and community radio, including in rural and remote communities, owing to the important role they play in women's development, including, inter alia, in helping to overcome issues related to time constraints, lack of accessibility, lack of financial resources and family responsibilities;

(o) Increase enrolment and retention rates of girls in education, inter alia, by: allocating appropriate and adequate budgetary resources; enlisting the support of parents and the community, including through campaigns and flexible school schedules; providing financial and other incentives targeted at families, including access to free education at the primary level, and at other levels where possible, and scholarships; and providing teaching, learning and hygiene and health supplies, as well as nutritional and academic support, in order to minimize the costs of education, in particular to families, and to facilitate parents' ability to choose education for their children;

(p) Ensure that pregnant adolescents and young mothers, as well as single mothers, can continue and complete their education, and design, in this regard, implement and where applicable, revise educational policies to allow them to return to school, providing them with access to health and social services and support, including childcare facilities and crèches, and to education programmes with accessible locations, flexible schedules and distance education, including e-learning, and bearing in mind the challenges faced by young fathers in this regard;

(q) Condemn all forms of violence against women and girls and take appropriate action to strengthen and implement legal, policy, administrative and other measures to prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence in order, inter alia, to ensure access and participation in education, training, full employment and decent work;

(r) Improve the safety of girls at and on the way to school, including, inter alia, by improving infrastructure such as transportation, providing separate and adequate sanitation facilities, improved lighting, playgrounds and safe environments, conducting violence prevention activities in schools and communities and establishing and enforcing penalties for all forms of harassment and violence against girls;

Strengthening gender-sensitive quality education and training, including in the field of science and technology

(s) Improve the quality of education at all levels for both girls and boys, including in science and technology education, through improving learning conditions, continuous teacher training, teaching methodologies and curriculum development, implementing programmes to improve achievements for the most disadvantaged learners and expanding recruitment and support for teachers, in particular for women teachers in scientific and technological disciplines;

(t) Ensure that education results in the acquisition by women and girls of literacy and numeracy skills, knowledge and other skills that enhance and broaden their employment opportunities;

(u) Expand and improve teacher education and training and systematically integrate a gender perspective in such programmes in order to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls and to overcome gender stereotypes;

(v) Develop gender-sensitive curricula for educational programmes at all levels and take concrete measures to ensure that educational materials portray women and men, youth, girls and boys in positive and non-stereotypical roles, particularly in the teaching of scientific and technological subjects, in order to address the root causes of segregation in working life;

(w) Remove legal, regulatory and social barriers, where appropriate, to sexual and reproductive health education within formal education programmes on women's health issues;

(x) Ensure women's and girls' right to education at all levels as well as access to life skills and sex education based on full and accurate information and, with respect to girls and boys, in a manner consistent with their evolving capacities, and with appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, in order to help women and girls, men and boys, to develop knowledge to enable them to make informed and responsible decisions to reduce early childbearing and maternal mortality, to promote access to pre- and post-natal care and to combat sexual harassment and gender-based violence;

(y) Take steps to promote access for women and girls to education and training, including human rights education and learning at all levels, which can foster tolerance and mutual understanding and respect for all human rights, so that they can realize their full human potential by learning about the comprehensive framework of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;

(z) Provide quality education in emergency situations that is gender-sensitive, centred on learners, rights-based, protective, adaptable, inclusive, participatory and reflective of the specific living conditions of women, children and

youth, and that pays due regard, as appropriate, to their linguistic and cultural identity, mindful that quality education can foster tolerance and mutual understanding and respect for the human rights of others;

(aa) Improve hands-on experimentation and collaborative work in science and technology classes, highlight the broad societal applications of science and technology in curricula and educational material and expose girls and boys, women and men, to female role models in science and technology, in order to make science and technology, including engineering and mathematics, more attractive for girls and women;

(bb) Promote a positive image of careers in science and technology for women and girls, including in the mass media and social media and through sensitizing parents, students, teachers, career counsellors and curriculum developers, and devising and scaling up other strategies to encourage and support their participation in these fields;

Supporting the transition from education to full employment and decent work

(cc) Address the different barriers women and girls face in the transition from school to work by: expanding the scope of education and training opportunities that are relevant to employment opportunities and aligned with rapidly changing labour market needs, particularly in emerging, new and non-traditional fields; helping women acquire business, trade, information and communications technology and entrepreneurship skills; raising awareness of such opportunities and of their suitability to both women and men, particularly among parents, teachers, career counsellors and other advisers; and encouraging interaction between educational systems, the private sector and civil society, as appropriate;

(dd) Adopt policies and mechanisms to recognize women's prior learning and management skills, including those gained from informal and/or unpaid work, especially for women who discontinued their education or employment for various reasons, so as to facilitate their access to education, training and employment opportunities;

(ee) Improve access to gender-sensitive career counselling and to job search support services and include job readiness and job search skills in curricula for secondary and higher education and vocational training, in order to facilitate the transition from school to work and re-entry into the labour market for women of all ages;

(ff) Work to eliminate occupational and sectoral segregation and the gender pay gap by recognizing the value of sectors that have large numbers of women workers, such as care and other service areas, improving career pathways and working conditions and undertaking, evaluating and, where necessary, reviewing legislation, policies and programmes, public awareness campaigns and other measures, such as career management, to promote women's entry into non-traditional sectors;

(gg) Promote the reconciliation of work and family responsibilities for women and men, as well as the equal sharing of employment and family responsibilities between women and men, including by: designing, implementing and promoting family-friendly legislation, policies and services, such as affordable, accessible and quality care services for children and other dependent persons and parental and

other leave schemes; undertaking campaigns to sensitize public opinion and other relevant actors to these issues; and promoting measures that reconcile care and professional life and emphasize men's equal responsibilities with respect to household work;

(hh) Develop or strengthen policies and programmes to support the multiple roles of women in society, including in the fields of science and technology, in order to increase women's and girls' access to education, training, science and technology, while acknowledging the social significance of maternity and motherhood, parenting and the role of parents and other guardians in the upbringing of the children and caring for other family members, and ensure that such policies and programmes also promote shared responsibility of parents, women and men and society as a whole;

(ii) Encourage employers and research funding agencies to establish flexible and non-discriminatory work policies and arrangements for both women and men, such as time extension on research grants for pregnant researchers, leave schemes, quality care services and social protection policies, in order to improve the retention and progression of women in science and technology;

(jj) Implement gender-sensitive policies and programmes for women migrant workers and provide safe and legal channels that recognize their skills and education and fair labour conditions, facilitate their productive employment and decent work and integration into the labour force, including, inter alia, in the fields of education and science and technology, and ensure that all women, including care workers, are legally protected against violence and exploitation;

Increasing retention and progression of women in science and technology employment

(kk) Encourage workplace environments and institutional practices that value all members and offer them equal opportunities to reach their full potential, ensuring that gender equality and gender mainstreaming are considered a necessary dimension of human resources management, in particular for the modernization of scientific and technological organizations and institutions, both in the public and private sectors;

(ll) Encourage the use of clear and transparent criteria for, and promote the achievement of gender balance in, recruitment, promotion and recognition in science and technology, both in the public and private sectors; train and sensitize leadership and staff, at all levels, in gender mainstreaming and gender equality issues and prevent direct and indirect discrimination against women; and support the building of leadership skills for women;

(mm) Develop career advisory, networking and mentoring programmes, including programmes that utilize information and communications technology; support role models and facilitate programmes that link women scientists around the world; and promote measures to improve female retention and progression in the fields of science and technology, with a special focus on women scientists in tertiary education and early-stage career and women re-entering science and technology careers;

(nn) Take steps to ensure that science, technology and innovation policies take into account and address the specific constraints faced by women entrepreneurs and

facilitate their access to credit, training, information and business support services, including those provided in technology parks and business incubator centres;

(oo) Set concrete goals, targets and benchmarks, as appropriate, while supporting a merit-based approach, to achieve equal participation of women and men in decision-making at all levels, especially in science and technology institutions, such as science academies, research funding institutions, academia and the public and private sectors, as well as in the design of science and technology policies and research and development agenda-setting;

Making science and technology responsive to women's needs

(pp) Utilize the full potential of science and technology, including in engineering and mathematics, and their innovations to deliver improvements in infrastructure and sectors such as energy, transportation, agriculture, nutrition, health, water and sanitation and information and communications technology, in order, inter alia, to eradicate poverty, promote social development and achieve women's economic empowerment;

(qq) Create awareness of the needs of women in science and technology, including by encouraging the media to sponsor popular science programming, and report on the differential impact of science and technology on women and men;

(rr) Encourage the integration of a gender perspective in the science and technology curricula throughout all stages of education and continuous learning, and the use of gender-based analysis and gender impact assessments in research and development in science and technology, and promote a user-driven approach to technology development in order to increase the relevance and usefulness of advancements in science and technology for both women and men;

(ss) Respect, preserve and maintain women's traditional knowledge and innovation while recognizing the potential of rural and indigenous women to contribute to the production of science and technology and of new knowledge to improve their lives and those of their families and communities;

(tt) Formulate and implement public policies that increase women's and girls' access to digital technologies, including through conducting local communications campaigns.

23. The Commission recognizes the need for the compilation and sharing of good practice examples and lessons learned in mainstreaming a gender perspective into science, technology and innovation policies and programmes, with a view to replicating and scaling up successes, and in this regard looks forward to any steps or actions that could be taken by the relevant United Nations bodies, especially the Commission on Science and Technology for Development.

Den danske delegation til Kvindekommissionens 55. samling

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STATEMENT BY MR. CARSTEN STAUR, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF DENMARK TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AT THE SIDE-EVENT REBUILDING THE GLOBAL ECONOMY: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE AND GENDER EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT, 23 FEBRUARY 2011.

Check against delivery.

The theme of this side-event – how do we utilize the crisis as a starting point to better achieve sustainable and gender equitable development? I shall address that only in global terms, and of course rather briefly. To answer the question, we first of all need to sharpen our analysis of the crisis. Secondly, we need to utilize the instruments at our disposal, primarily the MDG vehicle. And thirdly, we need to look beyond the MDG's towards the post-2015-regime.

1) The crisis analysis: We are facing a 3-headed crisis. The food crisis, the energy crisis and the financial and economic crisis since 2008 have had heavy consequences for the global economy. The multiple crises have hit the poorer countries a bit later than others, but when it hit, it hit that much harder. At the same time, climate change has exacerbated the effects of the multiple crises, as extreme weather conditions have dramatically affected the world's food supply and security. Climate change has thus become a crisis multiplier. From the onset, it has been clear that the burden of the three of fourfold crisis is primarily falling on women. In many developing countries, women provide up to 80 % of agricultural labor. They produce the bulk of domestically consumed food. As managers of households they are the ones who experience how climate change negatively affects daily life. And being employed predominantly in the informal economy – and in low-paid, service sector jobs – women are also heavily affected by cut-downs and lay-offs.

But there is another multiplier, which have become much clearer over recent years, and which paints a less depressing picture. We know that women are key drivers of change. We know that the active engagement and participation of women can have a multiplier effect on both economic growth and development outcomes. And we know that investments in women pay off. There's ample proof of that assertion.

It is there more pressing than ever to achieve MDG3 and to advance Women's Economic Empowerment – both as a goal in itself and as a means to achieve all the other MDGs. Denmark has been pursuing these ambitious goals through our MDG3 Call to Action Campaign – the Torch Campaign – which was launched in 2008 and has solicited important commitments for gender equality around the world.

2) This takes me to my second point: The MDG context.

I had the privilege of co-facilitating the negotiations of the outcome document, emerging from the MDG Review Summit last September. The outcome document clearly recognized the critical importance of investing in expanded opportunities for women and girls as a basis for sustainable development. It is in my view a fairly good outcome – both in general and in relation to the specific MDG's. Especially MDG 4 and 5 attracted a lot of political attention, with the SG's initiative on "Every Woman, Every Child" being able to generate a substantial amount of new resources for intensifying the effort to combat maternal and child mortality.

At the same time, the discussions revealed a substantial weakness in the MDG concept. The MDG's are primarily about social development and about access to service delivery – about health services, access to education, access to water

and sanitation. It doesn't capture the economic underpinnings of this service delivery – at least not to the same degree. Poverty reduction and the economic empowerment of women are, of course, important in this regard, but the balance is slightly skewed. The clearest targets, the best defined indicators, and the strongest political will pertain to the social service delivery parts of the MDG's.

3) This takes me to the way forward – the post MDG-regime. How do we prepare for goals beyond 2015 – globally and/or nationally – which takes into account social delivery as well as the inclusive growth underpinnings necessary to sustain improved social service delivery? Goals that at the same time reflects the need for a global low-carbon trajectory and 'green growth' aspirations, reducing the carbon footprints and the other negative ecological effects usually associated with growth? And Goals which takes into account a higher degree of gender equality, and increased participation of women in all aspects?

This discussion is just starting up now. The most important immediate element in the shaping of the discussion will be the Rio Summit – Rio + 20 – next Spring. The preparatory process for this is just getting into gear. The next prepcom will take place in two weeks time – and it will, of course be important to assure that the process will not only focus on growth – and green growth – but also on the gender aspect of achieving growth – and on the gender aspect in relation to utilizing growth, including for improved social services.

The SG's Panel on Global Sustainability, chaired by presidents Zuma and Hallonen - in one of their working papers published last week - asserted that over half of the poorest people are women who are dependent on their natural

environment to earn a living and feed their families. Women have exercised and passed on their skills in water, forest, and biodiversity management thereby contributing to climate change adaptation. Ensuring women's social and economic rights, their access to resources and their full participation in decision-making is crucial to reduce poverty, leads to sustainable natural resources management, and strengthens social resilience to climate change.

It is clear that responding effectively to environmental threats cannot be accomplished without greater social equality and engagement of women. It's about very practical issues: Food security, energy access, forest and land restoration, and new socially and environmentally sustainable business enterprises. It's about men and women as farmers, land managers, community leaders, technology designers, and entrepreneurs.

Women hold the key to development. Unleashing women's potential and providing women with the space to share and utilize their creative solutions, is the single most important contribution we can make to foster – and accelerate – green and sustainable growth; nationally and worldwide. But it will only happen, if women engage heavily in the preparations for Rio. Rio will not be the end of the road, but it will be the first step in a long journey towards 2015 and beyond.