

ORAL STATEMENT ITEM 8:
ANNUAL DISCUSSION ON GENDER PERSPECTIVE
12TH HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL SESSION



Women's International League
for Peace and Freedom
Est. 1915
www.wilpf.ch

On behalf of **22** co-signers:

- ASIA Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)
- Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University
- Cordaid Netherlands
- CREA
- Femmes Africa Solidarité
- Interfaith International
- International Alliance of Women
- International Council of Nurses
- International Council of Women
- International Network of Liberal Women
- International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAP Asia Pacific)
- International Youth and Student Movement United Nations (ISMUN)
- Soko Gakkai International
- Solar Cookers International
- The Tandem Project
- Women's Federation for World Peace
- Women's World Summit Foundation
- World Alliance of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCAs)
- World Alliance of Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA's)
- World Federation for Mental Health
- Worldwide Organisation of Women
- ZONTA International

Thank you Chairperson.

I would like to convey the appreciation of 22 organisations to this annual discussion to integrate a stronger gender perspective in the Council's work and request the Council's attention.

On the 15th of September, just over two weeks ago, all UN Member States unanimously passed a resolution to establish a new UN agency for women. The Council should act and support this major development by strengthening the Women's Rights and Gender Unit within the OHCHR and facilitate information sharing with this new agency. The Council should in addition push for an effective mandate and sufficient funding to ensure the new agency's success and send a message to the General Assembly to this effect.

Secondly, although some efforts have been made by the Council to mainstream gender concerns in the follow-up to the UPR, the Council should reiterate CEDAW's Concluding Observations more strongly and focus on the level of CEDAW compliance by the State. Greater interconnectedness is needed between the Council, Treaty Bodies and the UPR. In addition, all Member and Observer States should ratify CEDAW and its optional protocols without any reservations.

Lastly, a follow-up is needed on the Annual Day on Women's Rights held in June 2009. The Council should install a Special Procedure to Research and Make Known the Continued Discrimination and Inequality of Women Before the Law, to show its willingness to end impunity of discriminatory actions against women.

In June, the High Commissioner for Human Rights recalled that inequality between men and women in domestic law is one of the root causes for violence against women. Repealing unequal legislation is a commitment States already made in the 1995 Beijing Declaration, which will be reviewed in 2010 during the Beijing +15 Conference.

Another follow-up action for the Council is to push for greater representation of women in the Treaty Bodies.

WILPF and the 21 cosponsors of this statement urge the Human Rights Council to support the new UN agency for women, to improve the incorporation of CEDAW's Concluding Observations in its work, to install a Special Procedure to Research and Make Known the Discrimination and Inequality of Women Before the Law and to strengthen the Women's Rights and Gender Unit within the OHCHR.

Thank you, Chairperson.