



LOBBY EUROPEEN DES FEMMES EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY

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CONTRIBUTION OF THE EUROPEAN WOMEN'S LOBBY CONCERNING THE BEIJING+10 REVIEW AND OUTCOME OF THE 2005 COMMISSION OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN

On the occasion of the 49th session of the United Nations Commission of the Status of Women in March 2005 meeting to review the progress made globally in ensuring the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, the European Women's Lobby (EWL) highlights the following areas of concern:

1) Fulfillment of existing global commitments by governments

There is an urgent need for governments to reaffirm their support for and commitment to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, the Beijing + 5 Political Declaration and Outcome Document of the twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations, as well as the Cairo Programme of Action and the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women.

2) Gender mainstreaming and the Millennium Development Goals

The five year review of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) could represent a unique opportunity to both tackle global poverty and to begin to transform the lives of hundred of millions of women and girls living in poverty whose basic human rights are systematically denied. EWL therefore calls on the Member States' governments to ensure that all strategies adopted to achieve the 8 MDGs fully integrate a gender equality analysis including setting specific targets and indicators.

3) Women and the economy

Women's economic independence is at the very core of achieving equality for women and men. A gender perspective must be fully integrated in the planning, implementation and evaluation of: 1) macro-economic policies, including gender budgeting; 2) labour market policies; 3) social protection and taxation policies; 4) all policies that support health and social provision including care services for children and other dependents.

4) Women's sexual and reproductive rights

EWL recalls that "*The human rights of women include their right to have control over and **decide freely and responsibly** on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, **free of coercion, discrimination and violence***", Beijing Platform for Action 1995 (art.96). EWL therefore demands that these human rights be fully respected and implemented, including that the right to a **safe abortion** for all women and free access to **all forms of safe contraception** be ensured.

5) Women's health and HIV/AIDS

Urgent action is required to ensure that women's experience and the promotion of gender equality must be central to the development and implementation of all

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prevention and treatment programmes that support those affected by HIV/AIDS. Special attention must be paid to the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and girls as well as to the links between violence against women and the HIV pandemic.

6) Violence against women

The Beijing Platform for Action has defined violence against women as a manifestation of **the unequal power relations between women and men** and the institutionalisation of these power relationships in all areas of public and private life. EWL therefore calls for strategies to be developed and implemented to address violence against women in a comprehensive way, including enabling women to resist and to survive male violence, and in the setting of public policy priorities by governments and the allocation of adequate resources.

7) Trafficking in women and prostitution

In recent years, trafficking in women has dramatically increased all over the world it is linked to the increase in global poverty, to the poor social and economic condition in which millions of women and their families live and to the development of the global sex-industry. Anti-trafficking strategies must recognise the link between trafficking, prostitution and all other forms of violence against women and must address the root causes of trafficking by adopting preventive measures, aimed at the improvement of women's economic and social situation in countries of origin and at the reduction of the demand in the countries of destination.

8) Parity in decision-making

The equal representation of women and men in decision-making at all levels is crucial to the achievement of democracy. EWL calls for binding measures, such as the implementation of parity laws, in order to respect the commitments made in the BPfA and the requirements of the CEDAW Convention.

9) Women in conflict resolution and peace building

In situations of conflict worldwide, women and their children form the vast majority of civilian casualties and refugees; frequently women are widowed and suffer from continuing discrimination on the basis of their marital status as well as other and multiple discriminations. EWL calls for the implementation of international instruments such as the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, which demands equal participation of women in decision-making in conflict resolution and peace building.

10) Women and the media

The representation of women in the media plays a key role in reinforcing gender stereotypes. There must be a strong political commitment and actions to introduce Zero-tolerance for sexist insults and degrading images of women in the media.

11) The role of women's non-governmental organisations

Women's organisations have been and are playing a crucial role in advancing gender equality at all levels and in providing services for the empowerment of women. EWL stresses the need for governments to continue to recognise the vital role of women's organisations and civil dialogue and to continue to support women's NGOs.

12) A Fifth World Conference on Women and other mechanisms

EWL supports the organisation of a Fifth World Conference on Women before 2010. Moreover, a new mechanism is needed to carry forward the process of eliminating legalised discrimination against women. EWL therefore supports the appointment by the CSW of a Special Rapporteur on Laws that Discriminate Against Women.