

TALKING POINTS: Women's Demands for UN Reform

10 January 2007

We Support

- The Panel's proposal to establish an independent women-specific entity that will combine OSAGI, DAW and UNIFEM, have both normative and operational responsibilities, be better resourced, and be led by an Under-Secretary General. These recommendations are in line with what civil society, and in particular women's groups, have been calling for to enable governments and the UN system to better achieve their goals on gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights.

Key Demands

- The Gender Equality Recommendations must be adopted regardless of what happens with the rest of the Coherence Panel report.
- The high-level USG leadership is key to the success of the new agency. There must be an open, transparent and global search for a candidate who has substantive expertise in gender equality. We urge that civil society be consulted during this open search process.
- The new women's agency must be "fully and ambitiously funded" – most importantly we need to keep pressure on donors to make sure they do not short-change this. (at least \$500million – \$1billion)
- The new agency must have in-country operations/programs. Every UN Country Team must include senior-level gender equality experts with adequate resources and support who can lead the team's efforts to fulfill and promote UN and government commitments to women's human rights. => There must be an efficient accountability mechanism, with the requisite authority, put in place.
- Ensure that the definition of the mandate of the new entity has a relevance to the needs and concerns of all women of ALL regions, especially those in which it will have operations. Ensure that the working group of UN officials set up an open and inclusive process to consult with women's rights groups and include their perspectives in shaping the structure of the women's entity. (this was specifically demanded by African Women's Forum)

Next Steps

- The timetable for the GA process is still not set. However, we need to be prepared for any informal discussion that could begin in February or March. The GA process is likely to be a long process: anywhere between 6 months – 1 year.

Key Actions

- **Send messages of congratulations and welcome to Ban Ki-Moon.** Show him our eagerness to work with him during his tenure to make gender equality a reality, starting with adopting and implementing the Coherence Panel recommendations. Women's groups need to flood him with messages to be really effective.
- **Find out where governments stand on the Gender Equality Architecture reforms. Also find out about broader issues within the Coherence Panel report.** Share this information with women's groups. Write to unreform@wedo.org or post information on the UN Reform wikispace <https://unreform.wikispaces.com/>. Key states and alliances on Coherence Panel issues include G77 (especially former chair South Africa and current chair Pakistan).
- **Lobby your local governments and UN officials to support this issue.** Talk to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Ministry for Women's Issues and other relevant bodies. In addition to ensuring their support, some governments and officials are not aware of the importance of the Coherence Panel's recommendations on gender equality.
- **Engage with a variety of interest groups** – not only those in the women's movement – in order to have greater impact, more influential voices, and demonstrate linkages to more issues.

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