

# Statement on Reforming the Gender Equality Architecture of the United Nations

9 November 2006

Women's groups and other NGOs from around the world welcome the recommendations on strengthening the gender equality architecture of the UN in the report released November 9, 2006 by the Secretary-General's High-Level Panel for UN System-wide Coherence. We urge member states to adopt these recommendations during the 61<sup>st</sup> session of the General Assembly and to set up a process to ensure their full and timely implementation.

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.

We are pleased that the Panel adopted the recommendation for a USG to head the new entity, as it will guarantee organizational stature and a voice for women at the UN decision-making tables. Women's groups called for an open, transparent and global search for a candidate who has substantive expertise in gender equality and we are pleased that the report includes this recommendation. We urge that civil society be consulted during this open search process.

The dual mandate of the new entity, which will include both policy and country-level functions, will strengthen the effectiveness of the gender mainstreaming work of other UN agencies, as well as advance women's rights directly. For this entity to function as a driving force throughout the UN system, and for it to better address women's experiences at the country level, 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.

A strong and well-resourced institutional accountability mechanism that enables women's participation and addresses women's rights in activities at the country level was one of the critical needs presented to the Coherence Panel.

The time to show support for a reformed and strengthened women's entity is now. Women's groups urge governments to demonstrate political will during the General Assembly by endorsing the Coherence Panel's recommendations on creating a stronger gender equality architecture at the UN, and by establishing and adhering to a process and time frame for implementation.

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## Signatories as of February 12, 2007

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Asia Pacific Women's Watch  
Asociacion Chilena de Proteccion de la Familia (APROFA), Chile  
Asociación de Especialistas Universitarias en Estudios de la Mujer, Argentina  
Asociación de Planificación de la Familia (PLAFAM), Venezuela  
Asociación Panameña para el Planeamiento de la Familia, Panama  
Association Ennakhil pour La Femme el L'Enfant, Morocco  
Association of War Affected Women, Sri Lanka  
Association of Women's NGOs of Uzbekistan  
Associazione Italiana Donne per lo Sviluppo (AIDOS), Italy  
Australian Reproductive Health Alliance  
AWID  
Baha'i International  
Bem-Estar Familiar no Brasil (BEMFAM), Brazil  
Business and Professional Women, Nepal  
Canadian Union of Public Employees  
Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir/Bolivia  
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Center for Reproductive Rights  
Center for Women and Development  
Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL)  
Centre for Policy Research and Analysis (CPRA), Nepal  
Centro de la Mujer Peruana "Flora Tristan"  
CENWOR, Srilanka  
CEPIA- Cidadania Estudos Pesquisa Informaçao Ação, Brazil  
Coalition Against Trafficking in Women Asia Pacific  
Coalition on Violence Against Women (COVAW), Kenya  
Colectiva Mujer y Salud, Dominican Republic  
Communication Foundation for Asia  
Community Action Centre (CAC), Nepal  
Concertación Interamericana de Mujeres Activistas (CIMA), Costa Rica  
Coodinacion de Mujeres del Paraguay  
DAWN

Didi Bahini, Nepal  
El Closet de Sor Juana, Mexico  
Equal Access, Nepal  
Equality Now  
Federation of Women Entrepreneurs Association, Nepal  
Feminist Caucus of the American Humanist Association  
Feminist League, Kazakhstan  
Foro de Mujeres y Política de Población, Mexico  
Fundacion Arcoiris, Mexico  
Fundacion Mexicana para la Planeacion Familiar (MEXFAM), Mexico  
Fundacion para Estudio e Investigacion de la Mujer (FEIM), Argentina  
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Gender at Work  
Global Campaign for Microbicides  
Global Fund for Women  
Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida (GIRE)  
HIVOS, The Netherlands  
Homenet, Nepal  
Human Rights Watch -- Women's Division  
India Women Watch  
Indonesian Center For Women in Politics (ICWIP)  
INFORM, Sri Lanka  
Institute for Reproductive Health, The Philippines  
Instituto de Estudios Comparados en Ciencias Penales y Sociales, Argentina  
InterAction  
International Center for Research on Women  
International Federation for Human Rights (FIDH)  
International Federation of Women against Fundamentalism and for Equality (WAFE)  
International Gender Policy Network  
International Indigenous Women's Forum (FIMI)  
International Planned Parenthood Federation  
International Rescue Committee (IRC)  
International Women's Development Agency (Asia-Pacific)  
International Women's Health Coalition  
International Women's Rights Action Watch - Asia Pacific  
International Women's Tribune Center (IWTC)  
IPAS  
Isis International  
Japan Women's Watch  
K.U.L.U. Women and Development, Denmark

KARAT Coalition, Poland  
Korea Women's Associations United  
Korea Women's Political Caucus  
Kvinna till Kvinna, Sweden  
Kvinnoforum, Sweden  
Legal Aid and Consultancy Center (LACC), Nepal  
MADRE  
MamaCash, The Netherlands  
Mujer y Salud en Uruguay (MYSU)  
Mulabi- Espacio Latinoamericano de Sexualidades y Derechos, Argentina  
Nagarik Aawaz, Nepal  
National Network against Girl Trafficking, Nepal  
Nepal Institute of Development Studies (NIDS)  
Network of NGOs of Trinidad and Tobago  
Network of Women in Politics, Indonesia  
New Era, Nepal  
New Zealand Council for International Development  
New Zealand Family Planning Association  
Nile Basin Initiative  
Nobel Women's Initiative  
North East Network, India  
Norwegian Network for Women and the UN  
Oxfam International  
Pathfinder International  
Positive Womens Network South Africa  
Pourakhi, Nepal  
Public Services International  
Radio Internacional Feminsita (FIRE)  
Red de Educacion Popular Entre Mujeres de America Latina y el Caribe (REPEM)  
Red de Salud de las Mujeres Latinoamericanas y del Caribe (RSMLAC)  
Red Latinoamericana de Católicas por el Derecho a Decidir  
Red por los Derechos Sexuales y Reproductivos en México  
REDESS Jovenes, Peru  
Rights & Democracy - Droits et Démocratie, Canada  
Riverdale Immigrant Women's Centre, Toronto, Canada  
Rozan, Pakistan  
Saathi - South Asia  
Saathi, Nepal  
Sancharika Samuha, Nepal  
Shirkat Gah-Women's Resource Center, Pakistan

Sisters Beyond Boundaries, Kenya  
South Asia Campaign for Gender Equality, South Asia  
South Asia Forum of Professionals Against Trafficking (SAPAT)  
SouthEast Asia Women Watch (SEAWWatch)  
Sri Lanka Women's NGO Forum  
Stri Adhar Kendra, India  
Temiksaming Native Women's Support Group, Canada  
Thai Women Watch  
The Center for Development and Population Activities  
The GRAIL  
The Open Society Institute  
Toronto Women's Call to Action, Canada  
Transition House Association of Nova Scotia, Canada  
UNIFEM Canada  
UNIFEM/USA  
Union de L'Action Feminine, Morocco  
Urgent Action Fund -- Africa  
WIDE (Europe)  
WOMANKIND Worldwide  
Women & Environments International Magazine -- Editorial Board, Canada  
Women and Media Collective, Sri Lanka  
Women and Philanthropy  
Women for Change, Zambia  
Women for Human Rights Single Women's Group, Nepal  
Women for Women, Bangladesh  
Women in Law and Development in Africa (WiLDAF)  
Women in Peacebuilding Network -- Africa (WIPNET-A)  
Women's Intercultural Network (WIN)  
Women's Advocacy Coalition, Vanuatu  
Women's Edge Coalition  
Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)  
Women's Feature Service Philippines  
Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF)  
Working Women's League of Lebanon  
World Population Foundation  
Yellowknife Women's Society, Canada  
Yukon Status of Women Council  
YWCA Canada  
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