

## Joint Statement to the Human Rights Council, 9th session, September 12, 2008

### PANEL ON WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

Delivered by Conchita Poncini, President, Geneva NGO Committee on the Status of Women

The Women's and Girls' Caucus facilitated by the three centres in Geneva, New York and Vienna of the NGO Committees on the Status of Women of CONGO, where some 50 women (and a few men) participating at the DPI Conference last week to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the UN Declaration of Human Rights in Paris, made this summary statement:

We urge

1. that women's rights and gender equality and discrimination be addressed, using the insistence on substantive equality of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women);
2. strengthening the interconnection between human rights mechanisms and the Commission on the Status of Women;
3. expanded opportunities and financial resources to promote human rights education for women and girls;
4. that all human rights principles and instruments apply a life span perspective for women and girls;
5. increasing awareness and use of human rights complaints mechanisms and implementation of monitoring procedures

In addition, the 15 undersigned NGOs of the Geneva NGO CSW request the Council, when preparing commemorative events of the UDHR, that Eleanor Roosevelt be spotlighted as the First Chair of the Commission on Human Rights, who led the 17-member drafting group in successfully completing the Declaration as it stands.

We fully support the statement of the new High Commissioner for Human Rights, where she asked that we look at human rights as a whole and not one right against another. This is particularly true of women and girls whose rights are violated just because they are female. We strongly endorse what she said, that no effort should be spared to "persuade countries to repeal laws and practices that continue to reduce women and girls to second-class citizens despite international standards and despite the specific commitments that have been made to throw out these laws and customs."

Lastly, we ask for a regular impact assessment on the implementation of Resolution A/HRC/6/L32 on Integrating the human rights of women and mainstreaming a gender equality perspective throughout the United Nations system and in this respect to ask the Advisory Committee to undertake the task of evaluation including providing gender-disaggregated indicators and benchmarks that would holistically look at economic, social and cultural rights as indivisible, interdependent and interrelated with civil and political rights and to assess how women's right to development and their empowerment over their life span are being incorporated in law and practice. We are encouraged to learn that the UNCT has established a **Scorecard** Performance Indicators for Gender Equality, an accountability framework for assessing the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming by the UN Country Team's (UNCT) and be used as model for other UN bodies and government entities

SIGNATURES RECEIVED:

- 1. INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY WOMEN
- 2. ZONTA INTERNATIONAL
- 3. WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL LEAGUE FOR PEACE AND FREEDOM
- 4. WOMEN'S FEDERATION FOR WORLD PEACE INTERNATIONAL
- 5. SOLAR COOKERS INTERNATIONAL
- 6. FEMMES AFRICA SOLIDARITE
- 7. INTERNATIONAL NETWORK FOR THE PREVENTION OF ELDER ABUSE
- 8. INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN
- 9. INTERNATIONAL ALLIANCE OF WOMEN
- 10. WORLD STUDENTS CHRISTIAN ASSOCIATION
- 11. WOMEN'S WORLD SUMMIT FOUNDATION
- 12. WOMEN'S INTERNATIONAL ZIONIST ORGANISATION
- 13. WOMEN'S ORGANIZATION WORLDWIDE
- 14. FEDERATION OF AMERICAN WOMEN'S CLUBS OVERSEAS
- 15. INTER-AFRICAN COMMITTEE
- 16. INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GERONTOLOGY AND GERIATRICS