

**POLICY RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED TO
THE 30TH IFUW CONFERENCE
MEXICO CITY, MEXICO
10-16 AUGUST 2007**



STATUS OF WOMEN, EQUALITY AND WORK

**1. WORK-LIFE BALANCE FOR WOMEN BETWEEN PROFESSIONAL CAREERS
AND FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Proposed by the Swiss Association of University Women

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

- 1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their governments to ratify ILO Convention 156 on Workers with Family Responsibilities (1981);**
- 2. NFAs urge their governments and the private sector to introduce more flexible labour market policies and practices to provide better employment opportunities and career development for women;**
- 3. NFAs urge their governments to introduce state-funded nursery and childcare placements to allow women to continue in their professional life after starting a family;**
- 4. NFAs urge their governments to provide state-funded assistance to allow women to continue in their professional life when undertaking the care of elderly relatives;**
- 5. NFAs encourage co-operation with other women and men's organizations to promote a more equal society, with men taking their equal share of caring responsibilities;**
- 6. NFAs encourage all generations to support each other so that each develops their full potential, both intellectually and professionally; and**
- 7. NFAs, understanding the pressures of academic life, encourage young women embarking on academic careers to make full use of mentoring schemes and mutual support networks.**

PLAN OF ACTION

1. IFUW leaders should gather information on models of parental leave and caring facilities that have proven successful, notably in the Nordic countries, in providing a positive work-life balance for women between professional careers and family caring responsibilities.
2. IFUW leaders should form a network of NFAs and members to make a comparative world survey of the situation in different countries in order to identify gaps and best practices that will promote a positive work life balance for women between their professional fulfillment and their personal family responsibilities, and to factor in the social and economic implications of women's unpaid work.
3. IFUW leaders should encourage NFAs to share best practice models with each other.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

In some European countries, more than 50% of students are now women. Unfortunately, many women stay at home after the birth of one or more children, because no public institutions give them the opportunity to work outside the home. Private nurseries are extremely expensive. Parents are often too far away or too old to take care of their grandchildren. Re-entering the job market is extremely difficult for women in many professions. It is often too late for a successful career and re-entry is only possible in positions with little advancement opportunity. IFUW recognized this, and passed resolutions 1934 (No.1), 2001 (No. 2) and 1971 (No.10), to encourage women with family responsibilities to play a full part in the intellectual life of their countries. Economically, it makes no sense to prepare so many people for a profession in which they later cannot work; much knowledge gets lost in this way.

EDUCATION

2. NUMERACY AND WOMEN

British Federation of Women Graduates (BFWG)

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

- 1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to encourage the promotion of numeracy, particularly among girls and women;**
- 2. NFAs research the provision of numeracy training within their countries and seek to assist where appropriate;**
- 3. IFUW utilise its standing committees and its consultative status with appropriate United Nations' bodies to implement this resolution.**

PLAN OF ACTION

1. NFAs should urge their respective governments to focus on numeracy, as well as literacy, and regularly to publish information and statistics about achievements, including gender analysis of data.
2. Members of NFAs should assist in gathering information about the provision and take-up of primary and remedial training, especially among women and girls.
3. NFAs should assess the data collected about the adequacy of the provision, and where there are gaps they should assist in setting up extra training, either professionally through the education system or on a voluntary basis. In some circumstances, this may mean running workshops or courses themselves.
4. IFUW leaders should utilize committees and information technology to suggest ways for NFAs to implement this resolution.
5. IFUW representatives to the United Nations should present this resolution at appropriate meetings with relevant commissions.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Numeracy is defined as a combination of mathematical knowledge, problem-solving and communication skills required to function successfully within our technological world. It is considered an important aspect of literacy. Literacy has been the focus of many resolutions in the past and of much of the global attention on education. Many UN-sponsored projects are based on the admirable aim of improving literacy. Numeracy is similarly important to achieving improved chances for business, education and self-sufficiency, and as with literacy, it is girls and women who are further behind in most parts of the world.

In many cultures, maths and sciences have been traditionally viewed as inappropriate for girls and this attitude is slow to change. Women are encouraged to move into small businesses and to be entrepreneurial in providing for their families, but they need better grounding in numeracy to succeed. Numeracy opens doors for women and girls to careers in economics and technology, which are still very much limited to men. The Millennium Development Goals Report 2009 indicates that there is still a long way to go in ensuring even basic numeracy in some countries, but even UNESCO appears to be very short of specific numeracy data.

Apart from UNESCO, other appropriate UN bodies should include the Human Rights Council treaty bodies, notably the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ECOSOC). Other UN appropriate UN agencies are the International Labour Organization (ILO) for employability training, the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for example for competency in the use of computers as they relate to banking and financial transactions, the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Bank.

3. FINANCIAL LITERACY

Proposed by the Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

- 1. IFUW recognize “financial literacy” as an essential life-skill that includes amongst its critical components:**
 - (a) financial knowledge and understanding,**
 - (b) financial skills and competence,**
 - (c) financial decision-making responsibility,**
 - (d) understanding of credit and money management,**
 - (e) understanding of taxes, pensions, benefits and savings,**
 - (f) understanding of the legal and financial implications of one’s civil status.**
- 2. IFUW and its National Federations and Associations (NFAs) strongly support the immediate development and implementation of national strategies for financial literacy, with public consultation.**
- 3. IFUW and its NFAs urge their respective governments to allocate resources to the promotion and implementation of financial literacy programs to be delivered to all adults, especially to women of all ages and all circumstances, by government agencies, employers and not-for-profit community organizations.**

PLAN OF ACTION

1. NFAs should call on their respective governments to develop and implement immediately a national strategy for financial literacy, with public consultations.
2. NFAs should call on their respective governments to allocate resources for promoting and implementing financial literacy programs.
3. NFAs should urge their respective governments to ensure that financial literacy programs are delivered to all adults, especially to women of all ages and all circumstances.
4. IFUW representatives to the United Nations should present this resolution at appropriate meetings with relevant commissions.
5. IFUW members should keep each other informed, via the IFUW networks, on the progress of their national governments in achieving the goals of this resolution.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Financial literacy has three components: financial knowledge and understanding, financial skills and competence, and financial responsibility. Many adults, including a disproportionate number of women, lack the basic financial literacy and numeracy skills to support successful financial decision-making and planning. An individual who lacks financial literacy skills may rely heavily on inadequate or untrustworthy sources of financial information.

National financial literacy programs could address topics related to money, credit, planning and other financial matters, as well as enhance an individual's ability to make informed financial decisions. Literacy programs could explain and demystify financial language, household budgeting, spending, saving, borrowing, protecting and insuring the family, planning for retirement and understanding tax and welfare benefits. Financial literacy includes an understanding of personal and broader financial matters, and the ability to apply that knowledge and assume responsibility for one's financial decisions. This important life skill empowers individuals to make sound financial decisions and is an important tool for poverty reduction.

HUMAN RIGHTS

4. ABUSE OF FEMALE MIGRANTS

Federación Mexicana de Mujeres Universitarias (FEMU)

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

- 1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to review migratory legislation in defense of human rights and, due to the increasing numbers of migrant women, specifically introduce legislation to protect women from intersectional discrimination, abuse and exploitation;**
- 2. NFAs urge their respective governments to ratify and implement existing international conventions and instruments on the subject of migration;**
- 3. IFUW use its social networks to discuss the issue and introduce further actions that will help to draw attention to the plight of migrant women; and**
- 4. IFUW use its consultative status to urge the International Organization for Migration, the International Labour Organization, the Human Rights Council and ECOSOC to urge Member States to eradicate all forms of discrimination, including racism, xenophobia, related intolerance, and abuse of women and child migrants.**

PLAN OF ACTION

1. NFAs should urge their respective governments to ratify and/or implement international conventions, and introduce national legislation, education and practices to eradicate all forms of abuse of migrant women.
2. Members of NFAs should urge their respective governments to ensure gender equality in the conditions and terms of employment for all women workers, regardless of their migration status.
3. Members of NFAs should urge governments to inform local authorities about international conventions and instruments and oblige them to enforce existing national and local legislation concerning migrants, specifically women and children.
4. IFUW leaders should use committees and information technology to suggest ways for NFAs to implement this resolution.
5. IFUW representatives to the United Nations should present this resolution at every opportunity.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

In the past, most women migrated to reunite their families; currently, an increasing number of women are migrating, either singly or with children, for lack of employment in their countries. Women and children constitute the most vulnerable migrant population, usually unaware of their human rights and prone to exploitation (lower wages, accepting jobs that other workers do not accept), trafficking and prostitution, rape, HIV infection, other health issues and all types of abuse, and they are often subjected to xenophobia and racism. As a supporting example, the number of women migrating from Mexico to the USA has doubled in the past decade to an average of 160,000 women per year (representing 6.4% of the total, as opposed to 3.5% in the past decade). Increasing global economic crises and unemployment are especially critical for migrants, who find themselves defenseless or ignorant of their human rights. IFUW has consistently defended the issue of women refugees in past resolutions: 1939, 1948, 1992, 1995 and 1998; however current migration conditions due to globalization, economic crises and criminal actions create the need for a higher priority for this issue. This resolution highlights the need to enforce legal, cultural and social measures to eradicate all forms of abuse of migrant women.

5. HUMAN TRAFFICKING VIOLATES HUMAN RIGHTS

Proposed by Women Graduates-USA

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

- 1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) educate their members about the issue of trafficking as it relates to their countries, including addressing the primary causes that contribute to the practice;**
- 2. NFAs urge their respective governments to ensure that they have not only signed, but have also ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (2003); if their countries have done so, NFAs monitor the status of their government's implementation of the Protocol and take appropriate action where needed; and**
- 3. IFUW utilize its standing committees, its consultative status with ECOSOC, its website and member networks to advocate for measures that would reduce the incidence of trafficking.**

PLAN OF ACTION

1. Status of Women Committee and Resolutions Committee should develop a list of websites and a bibliography for NFAs to educate themselves and their communities about human trafficking issues and laws that exist in their countries.
2. NFAs should identify existing national laws and policies that support the UN Protocol Against Trafficking in Persons; to the extent possible, evaluate the effectiveness of these laws at the national level; and propose better methods of implementation when necessary.
3. NFAs should work at the community level to identify which agencies and organizations are responsible for enforcing human anti-trafficking laws in their countries; determine how serious the problem is at the community level; partner with other NGOs involved in human anti-trafficking efforts, including rehabilitation of victims; and publicize the issue through the local media and public forums, such as parents and education groups.
4. IFUW representatives to the United Nations should present this resolution at appropriate meetings with relevant bodies, especially the International Labour Organization (ILO).

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Human trafficking is a violation of human rights that destroys the lives of its victims, 80% of whom are women and children, while creating a 32 billion-dollar business each year. Trafficking is, in many

cases, a trans-border crime that affects all regions of the world. According to a 2006 UN global report on trafficking, 127 countries have been documented as countries of origin, and 137 as countries of destination. However, most exploitation still takes place close to home. The increasing ease and frequency of international travel, together with the growing phenomenon of temporary migration for work, has increased the opportunities for trafficking. There are almost no reliable estimates on the number of women who are trafficked or data on the point of origin and destination, which hinders development of strategies to combat trafficking.

Since the United Nations Protocol on Trafficking in Persons (Palermo Accord) passed in 2003, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) indicates that most of the 155 signatories are “seriously implementing the Protocol”, but the need remains to address root causes of trafficking, such as economic and social powerlessness, subordination, statelessness, and gender discrimination. From a February 2009 UN Report from the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, a mandate emerged stating that “the real challenge is not just in adopting strategies that will effectively lead to catching the perpetrators and punishing them. Rather, it is preferable to put in place strategies that will focus equally on the victim by recognizing and redressing the violations suffered.”

This is a global issue that affects all countries that are members of IFUW. As early as 1968, IFUW passed a Resolution related to Slavery (1968 No. 13). Yet according to UNODC estimates, today there are 27 million people involved in modern-day slavery. IFUW Resolutions on Trafficking and Exploitation of Women and Children (1998 No. 6) and Commercial Exploitation of Children (2004 No.6) added emphasis to issues of slavery. The IFUW Resolutions referred to are listed under Resolutions on Human Rights. Both the current IFUW Board’s programme focus and the results of this triennium’s consultation with members, branches and NFAs, identified “the empowerment of women” as one of the four areas of study and action.

POPULATION AND HEALTH

6. BIOETHICS AND WOMEN

Proposed by Association française des Femmes diplômées des Universités (AFFDU)

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

- 1. National Federations and Associations (NFAs) initiate and/or contribute to the ongoing debate on bioethics, keeping in mind that scientific progress should be for the benefit of individuals and should respect human rights, in accordance with the principles set out in the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (2005).**
- 2. NFAs urge their governments to raise awareness of the specific importance for women of the issues covered by the Declaration, which include respect for human vulnerability and personal integrity, equality, justice and equity, and social responsibility and health.**

PLAN OF ACTION

1. NFAs should raise awareness of their members on issues relating to bioethics and their implications for women’s health and human rights.
2. NFAs should play a monitoring role with regard to the issue of bioethics and human rights in their countries.
3. NFA members should seek to educate themselves on issues of bioethics at all levels and participate in appropriate partnerships and networks concerning bioethical issues.
4. NFAs should urge their respective governments to establish National Ethics Committees that use as their mandate Article 19 of the UNESCO Universal Declaration on Bioethics and Human Rights (2005).
5. NFAs should urge their respective governments to participate in the implementation of the recommendations being drawn up by UNESCO and other institutions in this field.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

As French legislation on bioethics is currently being reviewed, the French Association (AFFDU) is particularly aware of the problems created by the evolution of science, and of the consequences for bioethics. AFFDU therefore wishes to draw the attention of IFUW affiliates to the subject and to the need for women to monitor developments and to participate in action plans. The scope of Resolution 5 of the 29th IFUW Conference, which advocated that women and girls be comprehensively educated in all facets of health, hygiene and disease prevention, needs to be broadened to recognize the impact of bioethics on human rights issues, particularly women's human rights.

ENVIRONMENT

7. ADDRESSING CLIMATE CHANGE – GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

- 1. IFUW and its National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to act immediately to create national climate action plans that would:**
 - (a) set strong short-term targets for reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, with the goal of achieving a 30 percent reduction below 1990 levels by 2020, and a reduction of 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050;**
 - (b) utilize every means including policy and programme development, legislation and regulations, taxation mechanisms, legal enforcement, market incentives and inter-governmental agreements to support the achievement of this goal; and**
 - (c) provide ongoing support for research and education concerning all aspects of climate change.**
- 2. IFUW and its NFAs urge their respective governments to reaffirm their commitments to their signed international agreements on climate change, including the Kyoto Protocol; to ratify the successors to the Kyoto Protocol; and to work with other countries to achieve reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.**

PLAN OF ACTION

1. NFAs should urge their respective governments to act immediately to create a comprehensive national climate action plan that includes the targets and mechanisms included in this resolution, and to include women in the planning, decision-making, implementation and follow-up processes.
2. NFAs should monitor the progress of their respective governments and hold them to account in implementing and achieving the national climate action plan.
3. NFAs should urge their respective governments to provide support for research and education on climate change, including its impact on women.
4. IFUW representatives to the United Nations should present this resolution at appropriate meetings with relevant commissions.
5. NFAs should be encouraged to set up climate change study and action groups within their own countries.
6. IFUW members of the Environment and Development Network should keep each other informed on the climate change issues specific to their countries and on the progress of their national governments in achieving the goals of this resolution.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Climate change presents serious global risks that demand an urgent global response. Between 1850 and 2005, global average temperatures rose by 76 degrees Celsius, and in areas of the Arctic by 3 degrees Celsius. Atmospheric carbon dioxide increased from 280 parts per million (ppm) to 378 ppm, the highest level in half a million years, exceeding the 350 ppm that is considered “the red line for human beings”. There are additional changes: rising ocean levels, shrinking ice fields, more frequent bleaching of coral, more extreme weather events, the spread of pests and diseases, increased losses of species and growing habitat degradation. Most scientists agree that these changes are largely due to human activity and that the effects will be negative and severe. There is the possibility of a tipping point at which the earth moves to a new environmental regime – one less hospitable to sustaining life on the planet. In many areas of the globe, devastating effects of climate change already disproportionately affect women and children. IFUW and its NFAs are well positioned to advocate for immediate worldwide action on climate change.

8. CLUSTER MUNITIONS

Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

IFUW and its National Federations and Associations (NFAs) urge their respective governments to ratify and take concrete action to implement the Convention on Cluster Munitions (Dublin Convention).

PLAN OF ACTION

1. NFAs should urge their respective governments to ratify the Convention on Cluster Munitions (2008).
2. When the Convention comes into force, NFAs should urge their respective governments to implement the agreements of the Convention, including stopping the manufacture and use of cluster munitions, destroying any stockpiles of such weapons, and providing programmes to rehabilitate survivors and those affected by these weapons.
3. IFUW and NFAs should educate their members and encourage the implementation of this Convention as part of an overall strategy in seeking peaceful societies, free of such destructive weapons and respectful of human rights.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Cluster munitions, large weapons deployed from the air and the ground, pose the gravest danger to civilians since antipersonnel landmines were banned in 1997. Cluster munitions release dozens or hundreds of smaller “submunitions” or “bomblets” that spread over a large area, causing great civilian damage because of their widespread and unguided dispersal that does not distinguish between military and civilian targets. Unexploded submunitions kill and maim people, including women working and children playing in fields and other vulnerable or exposed areas.

At least 14 countries have used cluster munitions. The weapon caused more civilian casualties in Iraq in 2003 and Kosovo in 1999 than any other weapon system.

As of February 2010, 30 countries have ratified and 104 have signed the agreement from the Dublin Convention that basically:

1. *Prohibits the use, production, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions that cause unacceptable harm to civilians, and*
2. *Establishes a framework for cooperation and assistance that ensures adequate provision of care and rehabilitation to survivors and their communities, clearance of contaminated areas, risk education, and destruction of stockpiles of prohibited cluster munitions.*

The Convention will come into force in August 2010 now that 30 countries have ratified it. IFUW needs to advocate for commitment to the Dublin Convention by all the countries represented in IFUW.

PEACE

9. PEACEKEEPING

Association française des Femmes diplômées des Universités (AFFDU)

The 30th IFUW Conference resolves that:

- 1 IFUW re-affirm Resolution 2007/N°8 calling for IFUW, through its representatives at the United Nations, to argue that increased training in sensitivity to gender issues and to women's and children's rights be given to all UN peacekeeping personnel, and that implementation of UN Security Council Resolution (SCR) 1325 be strictly enforced, particularly with regard to its directions giving women an enhanced role in peacekeeping contingents; and**
- 2. IFUW through its representatives at the United Nations, urge the implementation of UNSCRs 1820, 1882, 1888 and 1889.**

PLAN OF ACTION

- NFAs should monitor progress at national level on the implementation of UNSCR 1325,1820,1882,1888 and 1889.
- NFAs should encourage the creation and updating of databases of qualified women for decision-making posts related to peace processes.
- NFAs should encourage their respective governments to develop national action plans with timetables and benchmarks for actual progress, to ensure the implementation of these resolutions.

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Peace has been a theme since IFUW was created. It is important that NFAs continue to lobby their governments, especially those who have not adopted a national action plan, because this year will see the 10th anniversary of the adoption of UNSCR 1325, a resolution that calls for the involvement of women in post conflict processes.

UNSCR 1820 calls for the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls as a weapon of war. UNSCR 1882 deals with children and armed conflict. It stresses the primary role of national governments in providing protection, relief and rehabilitation to all children affected by armed conflict and calls on governments to prosecute the perpetrators of egregious crimes against children. UNSCR 1888 deals with specific commitments to the prevention of sexual violence in conflict through the maintenance of peace and security for women and girls.

UNSCR 1889 reaffirms UNSCRs 1325, 1820, 1882 and 1888. It calls for

- Women's involvement and perspectives in the development and implementation of post-conflict strategies*
- Gender mainstreaming in all peace building and recovery processes*
- The participation of women in post-conflict economic and political decision-making*
- Funding and program activities for women's empowerment in post-conflict situations*
- The input of civil society, including women's organizations, in the planning, oversight and tracking of funding and program activities for women in the post-conflict phase*