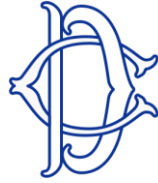




Senato della Repubblica



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WOMEN IN PARLIAMENTS
GLOBAL FORUM (WIP)
WIP MEETING AT THE EXPO MILANO 2015

FINAL DECLARATION

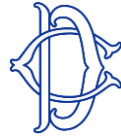


MILANO 2015

13 OCTOBER 2015

EXPO 2015, MILANO, ITALY

THE SPIRIT OF WOMEN IN PARLIAMENTS: ADVANCING SOCIETY



October 13, 2015 - Milano, Italy

Declaration

The participants at the meeting of female Parliamentarians at the EXPO Milano,

HAVING SPECIFIC REGARD TO:

- the post-2015 development agenda launched at the UN Summit in September 2015;
- the conclusions of the second International Conference on Nutrition, held in November 2014 at the FAO in Rome;
- the initiatives linked to the 2014 International Year of Family Farming, focused on the role of young farmers and women in agricultural, food security and rural development;
- the past 20 years since 189 governments agreed on a roadmap to achieve gender equality with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995;
- the topics that are being addressed at this Universal Exposition,
- Addis Ababa Action Agenda adopted at the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, 13–16 July 2015) and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 69/313 of 27 July 2015.

RECOGNIZING:

- The worldwide consensus on the fact that women's roles in food and nutrition security - as producers, income earners, and caregivers – are essential for development;
- the progress and remarkable gains on improving women's status and power in agriculture and development, nutrition and wealth, and on the correlated positive effects on people health, nutrition, and agricultural productivity;
- the fact that, between 1991 and 2015, the proportion of women in vulnerable employment as a share of total female employment has declined 13 percentage points represents an important success in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment;



- the fundamental policy legacy of the MDGs, as they have been crucial for development strategies in recent years, by placing women's empowerment at the top of international priorities;

AWARE:

- that the MDGs challenges have not been fully accomplished, and more effort is still needed to complete the job;
- that development progress has been uneven and tends to bypass women and those who are discriminated, as well as disparities between rural and urban areas persist and remain pronounced: globally, about three quarters of working-age men participate in the labour force, compared to only half of working-age women; women earn 24 per cent less than men globally (according to the UN MDGs Report 2015);
- that women account for two thirds of those who live in extreme poverty and suffer from hunger, even if they cultivate more than half of all grown food. According to FAO projections, the global trend is for women to take on increased responsibilities within agricultural production. Despite their role, women often lack productive resources, legal rights and entitlements, and have little decision-making power over agricultural production. Gender violence is one of the worst forms of inequality and discrimination.
- that looking ahead to the next fifteen years, there is no question that we can all deliver on our shared responsibility to support women's empowerment in agriculture and development, nutrition and wealth;
- that increasing women's use, control, and ownership of resources and assets, improving their capabilities and agency, orienting institutions to support this transformative agenda, and gaining successful results is a complex endeavour;

EMPHASISING:

- that the Universal Exposition of Milan on "Feeding the planet, energy for life" held from May to October 2015 in Milan has contributed considerably to a global awareness, galvanizing public opinion on the relevance of women's empowerment in agriculture and development, nutrition and wealth;
- that the Charter of Milan, representing the cultural legacy of Expo Milano 2015, is an innovative, participatory and shared document that calls on every citizen, association, company and institution to assume their responsibility;



- the importance of the *Women for Expo Alliance* for strengthening the role of women in agriculture and for addressing the food waste
- that the 21st Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 11th session of the meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto protocol due to be held in Paris in December 2015 (COP21) will be an essential step for improving women's empowerment in agriculture and development
- that the year 2016 will be crucial for translating the landmark commitment entered into the post-2015 sustainable development goals into a systematic and continuous process of implementation, monitoring and evaluation through the definition of measurable, nationally and locally indicators;
- that gender mainstreaming is not about adding women, but about rethinking development narrative, strategies and goals in gender terms;

HAVING FOCUSED:

Their debate on 'Women in agriculture and development', 'Fight against food waste' and 'Nutrition and wealth';

DECLARE/STRESS:

1. A strong and explicit focus on gender equality necessarily requires a “**twin track approach**”, setting gender equality as a specific area of interest, but also mainstreamed in indicators across various targets and goals. This approach is the most likely to address the structural inequalities, which persist for women and girls, and to foster the necessary political will, resources and national ownership to create sustainable and effective action on gender equality.
2. **Women's rights to land, property, inheritance and control of natural resources** that are the basis of their livelihoods have to be prioritized.
3. The acknowledgement of women's agency in rural development is a crucial step to improve women's condition in life and work and, thanks to their participation, facilitate the achievement of the more general goals of sustainable development. With reference to sustainable agriculture and food and nutrition security, the international community too often considers women only as a specific vulnerable group to be addressed, without considering the issues of **food sovereignty and food security** from a specific gender-based perspective and therefore without clearly recognizing women's vital role as key actors involved in food-related processes, especially at household level, securing and promoting healthy diets.



4. In order to promote a vision of women as active key development actors and support the implementation of these principles, besides policies for small farmers focusing on the different roles and tasks of women and men inside the households, support to strategies integrating social protection of women and girls with food interventions, and plans to address specific needs and vulnerabilities of women within different contexts (e.g. crisis and post-conflict situations), certain indicators can be helpful: assessment of the **gender impact of policies** for food security, support to the production of **gender statistics** and the creation of databases at global level with gender indicators in rural contexts.
5. A twin-track approach implies the adoption of measures specifically aimed at addressing gender inequalities, to be integrated into all aspects of development policies. The definition of effective measures to ensure that gender mainstreaming is an integral part of the political and budgeting dialogue becomes increasingly important. In order to achieve such a result, there are two key actions to pursue: the involvement of all relevant institutional actors at local, national and international level, in order to foster an effective and efficient **action and resources' planning**; the processing of **innovative methodologies** for testing the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming and promoting the systematization of monitoring and evaluation methods, such as **gender budgeting**.

AS PARLIAMENTARIANS, WE COMMIT:

- To orient **national legislation**, as well as with the challenging task of helping to design policies that may convert legal rights/opportunities into real options of life, by confronting nominal rights to the concrete constraints on specific grounds in order to implement post 2015 development agenda and the specific international commitments on women's empowerment.
- To constantly work towards gender mainstreaming within the multiple national policies, identify and promote interlinkages among diverse national legislative frameworks and institutions through the establishment/setting up of **permanent gender empowerment commissions** within national governments.
- To **monitor governments' actions**. The SDGs agenda indicates the tailoring of measurement indicators as an essential target and Parliaments have the task of implementing such monitoring system both on the level of legislation and on the level of national budgeting.
- To support and implement innovative initiatives aimed at tracking the effectiveness of gender mainstreaming and promoting the systematization of



monitoring and evaluation methods, such as **gender budgeting**, by adopting the principles of the “twin track approach”.

- To **disseminate gender empowerment policies** and goals through the organisation of public hearings and initiatives as well as encouraging a more structured, **continuous and sustainable dialogue** with women's associations and other women's organizations, in order to promote women's awareness of their rights and entitlements and potentialities.
- To encourage and implement innovative mechanisms of **inter-Parliamentarian means of partnership** in the world on women's empowerment, based on the voluntary cooperation of its members. These soft mechanisms, such as guidelines and indicators, benchmarking and sharing of best practice, systematic exchange of information, are aimed at improving the quality of Parliamentary activities on the **normative**, concrete application, results in terms of factual transformations and general perceptions on the specific issue of women's empowerment in agriculture and development, nutrition and wealth.
- To promote and monitor policies for development cooperation aimed at supporting the role of women in all fields and at all levels and at removing obstacles, including social and cultural norms, for women's access to and control over land, water and resources in general as a means to stop climate change and create conditions for a peaceful world where human rights and a decent life are guaranteed for all women and men.