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BEIJING + 10: AN EVALUATION FROM A PARLIAMENTARY PERSPECTIVE

Revised draft resolution prepared by the co-Rapporteurs
Mrs. Margreth Mensah-Williams (Namibia) and Mr. Josef Philip Winkler (Germany)

The 111th Inter-Parliamentary Assembly,

- (1) *Mindful* of the Declaration and Platform for Action adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, and of the outcome document adopted at the United Nations General Assembly Special Session, Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the 21st Century (Beijing+5),
- (2) *Recognising* the comprehensive nature of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 12 critical areas of concern highlighted, relating to the social, cultural, economic and political status of women worldwide,
- (3) *Cognisant* of the national action plans developed by 119 Member States, outlining their governments' progress in implementing the commitments announced at the Beijing Conference,
- (4) *Reaffirming* the United Nations Millennium Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals contained therein, in particular, the goal of gender equality and the empowerment of women, without which development cannot be sustained,
- (5) *Recalling* paragraph 4 of the IPU Universal Declaration on Democracy (1997), which states that "The achievement of democracy presupposes a genuine partnership between men and women in the conduct of the affairs of society in which they work in equality and complementarity, drawing mutual enrichment from their differences",
- (6) *Recalling* the IPU's Plan of Action to correct present imbalances in the participation of men and women in political life, adopted by the Inter-Parliamentary Council (Paris, March 1994), and the Beijing Parliamentary Declaration, adopted by participants to the Parliamentarians' Day on the occasion of the Fourth World Conference on Women,
- (7) *Reaffirming* relevant IPU resolutions, particularly,
 - Education and culture as essential factors in promoting the participation of men and women in political life and as prerequisites for the development of peoples (Havana, April 2001);

- Promoting greater respect and protection of human rights in general and in particular for women and children (Beijing, September 1996);
- Parliamentary action for women's access to and participation in decision-making structures aimed at achieving true equality for women (Madrid, April 1995); and
- Policies to put an end to violence against children and women (Pyongyang, May 1991),

(8) *Underscoring* the fundamental role played by women in all sectors of society,

(9) *Noting* that ten years after the Beijing Conference, women continue to be underrepresented in decision-making positions in government, public administration, justice systems and the economy, and that an equal participation of both genders in positions of power is urgently needed for reasons of human rights, justice, democratic legitimacy and efficacy of public policy,

(10) *Dismayed* that ten years after the Beijing Conference, effective equality is still far from being a reality: women continue to be paid less for work of equal value, more often than men are victims of poverty and unemployment, and are more frequently subjected to violence, and *further dismayed* by discrimination faced by the girl child in the fields of education, health and personal development,

(11) *Stressing* the key role of parliaments in promoting gender equality through their legislative, budgetary and oversight functions and by mobilising public opinion and support,

Measures to strengthen parliamentary action in these fields

1. *Calls for* a commitment of both men and women parliamentarians to strengthen parliamentary action to achieve gender equality both internationally and nationally, and to monitor progress on the commitments made at the Beijing Conference;
2. *Recommends* that parliamentarians be adequately represented at the 49th Commission on the Status of Women, to be held from 28 February to 11 March 2005 in New York, which will review the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session held in 2000;
3. *Urges* parliaments to hold a debate on the status of national implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action before the 49th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) to be held in 2005, allowing for adequate input from women's organisations and non-governmental organisations; *urges* parliamentarians of States that have not yet submitted their responses to the *Questionnaire to Governments on Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and the Outcome of the Twenty-third Special Session of the General Assembly (2000)* to enquire about the reasons for this delay and to arrange for their Governments to present their responses as soon as possible; and *further urges* parliaments to debate the results of the 49th Session of the UNCSW to ensure adequate parliamentary follow-up;

4. *Encourages* parliaments to become more gender-sensitive by establishing parliamentary committees on gender issues composed of both men and women, implementing the tools of gender budgeting analysis, and allocating sufficient resources to these activities;
5. *Recommends* that the number of women in committees dealing with foreign affairs, the budget, security, and justice increase, aiming for a target of at least 30 per cent, so that women can bring about changes in the approaches to these subjects and the legislation prepared, and also, but not solely, incorporate their specific perspectives and concerns;
6. *Highlights* the need to strengthen gender expertise to support and provide advice to parliamentarians and parliamentary bodies in ensuring the development of effective and sustainable gender equality initiatives;
7. *Calls upon* men to play a more active role in the process of gender mainstreaming in every area of life;
8. *Further encourages* national parliaments as well as governments, in the framework of systematic gender mainstreaming efforts, to ensure that all government policies and programmes are analysed from a gender perspective, for example, through the use of gender impact statements for proposed legislation; and *also calls upon* legislatures to adopt the practice of reviewing all legislation, including the budget, from a gender perspective, and to this end, to ensure that sex-disaggregated data is collected and analysed;
9. *Calls upon* parliamentarians, as overseers of their governments, to ensure that international commitments are upheld and implemented, particularly those that fall under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW);
10. *Invites* all parliamentarians, men and women, to establish strong links with existing institutions and mechanisms working for women's rights and women's organisations in finding innovative solutions to the problems of gender inequality;

Addressing specific areas of concern

Political sphere

11. *Calls upon* heads of State and Government as well as leading figures in political parties to make strong, public commitments to gender equality and to make gender issues a permanent priority, as having more women in all positions of decision-making will draw attention to the impact of public policies on women's diverse situations in life;
12. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to address the social construction of gender-specific roles with a view to improving policies for women and men;
13. *Strongly urges* parliamentarians to promote a stronger presence of women in political parties and at all levels of decision-making through the adoption of quota systems or other forms of affirmative action; and *also urges* parliamentary committees to hold

public inquiries to determine why women are underrepresented in electoral politics and to devise recommendations for their governments;

14. *Requests* governments to establish and make public specific annual objectives for ministers and administrators in respect of the advancement and training of women in government and gender implications in policies and programmes, and to report annually and publicly on how these objectives have been met;
15. *Emphasises* the need to create a more supportive environment for women in parliament through an examination and, where required, a revision of standing orders and rules of debate and the establishment of gender-sensitive codes of conduct; and *encourages* the development of more family-friendly sitting hours;
16. *Requests* parliaments to take into account the question of the political responsibilities and family obligations of women and men and to provide them with the necessary facilities and support to reconcile both roles;
17. *Encourages* the development of training programmes for journalists and other media staff on the importance of the non-stereotypical portrayal of women and men and boys and girls;

Economic sphere

18. *Calls upon* national parliaments to ensure that national laws enable women to participate in the economy, for example by ensuring that they can freely purchase and sell property, own and manage business enterprises, and have access to loans;
19. *Endorses* the United Nations Millennium Development Goal of halving poverty by 2015; and *recommends* that governments do everything in their power to ensure that women's particular needs are taken into account in formulating poverty reduction strategies;
20. *Encourages* governments and intergovernmental organisations, in particular the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to promote the independence of women entrepreneurs in small enterprises, by providing them with micro credits;
21. *Calls upon* parliaments to take appropriate legislative, budgetary and fiscal measures to improve the balance between work and family and to ensure that sufficient child-care facilities are available;
22. *Urges* parliaments and governments to promote the equality of women on the basis of the following supplementary measures:
 - passing comprehensive anti-discrimination laws;
 - broadening the spectrum of training opportunities available to women and girls;
 - supporting business start-ups for women;
 - guaranteeing equal pay for equal work, as well as promoting gender partnership on the basis of relevant public information efforts at schools and in the media;
 - developing legislation governing gender issues in the private sector;
 - linking public contract awards to compliance with gender equality criteria;

Human security

23. *Underscores* the need for parliaments and governments to ensure the protection of everyone, especially women and children, from any threats to their survival, dignity, and livelihood, particularly in the form of poverty, hunger, infectious diseases including HIV/AIDS, and a lack of education;
24. *Strongly endorses and encourages* further implementation of national reforms to broaden women and girl's access to education and literacy programmes, improve reproductive health services, reduce poverty, and combat all forms of violence, including through programmes emphasising the critical role of men;
25. *Calls upon* parliaments to ensure that the laws they pass protect victims and punish perpetrators of violence against women, to monitor the implementation and enforcement of such legislation and to allocate resources to programmes targeted at eradicating violence against women;
26. *Encourages* governments to consider the ratification and enforcement of international covenants on trafficking in persons, including the 2000 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, to address the factors that encourage trafficking in women, to increase collaboration among law enforcement agencies to dismantle networks in trafficking, and to allocate resources to rehabilitate victims of trafficking in society;
27. *Encourages* the media to enhance public knowledge and information about women's human rights and sustainable development, to support a culture of gender equality, and to combat discrimination and violence;

Conflict resolution, reconciliation and post-conflict reconstruction

28. *Strongly endorses* United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, and *encourages* all parties involved to fully implement its recommendations;
29. *Recognises* the key role played by women as peace educators and caretakers of families and communities in conflict resolution and reconciliation; and *calls for* their active involvement in the development of democratic institutions once conflicts cease and during reconstruction processes with a view to ensuring that sustainable peace can be built based on mutual respect, cultural diversity and gender equality;

The girl child

30. *Urges* all parliamentarians to ensure that where stringent laws protecting children and their rights do not yet apply, such legislation is enacted;
31. *Calls for* a special focus on, and a more sensitive framework for, dealing with the problems of the girl child in reviewing the impact of programmes, laws and proposed bills; more gender-disaggregated and gender-sensitive data, methods and research; monitoring of the girl child's education, health and employment and monitoring of

cultural communities and migration; and further awareness of, and concern for, the girl child in all advocacy efforts for children;

32. *Recommends* that penal systems should ensure that appropriate protection is afforded to girl child criminal offenders, and that their rights are guaranteed, including the right to personal integrity and personal development;
33. *Recommends*, where these do not exist, that girl child movements or organisations be established, as these serve as networks for sharing information and can call into question customs and practices that discriminate against girls;

General

34. *Recommends* that international treaties and commitments related to gender issues, including the CEDAW, be widely disseminated in all communities, and that they be translated into national, ethnic and indigenous languages;
35. *Calls upon* parliaments of States that have not yet done so to ensure ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and its Optional Protocol, and *encourages* the IPU to continue promoting the role of parliament in the CEDAW process through its awareness campaigns and seminars;
36. *Calls upon* governments as well as international organisations, including the IPU, to collect and distribute sufficient statistical data to be able to analyse the gender-specific distribution of power – both in quantitative and qualitative terms – and to disaggregate all statistical data by gender, providing gender breakdowns;
37. *Calls upon* parliamentarians to encourage the development of leadership skills and to strengthen strategic partnerships for gender equality at the local/national, regional and international levels, so as to mainstream gender perspectives in their legislatures;
38. *Undertakes*, through the IPU Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, on a regular basis to monitor progress made by parliaments on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.