



Draft declaration

Draft Declaration of Mexico, 1975 on the Equality of Women and their Contribution to Development and Peace

The World Conference of the International Women's Year,

Aware that the problems of women, who constitute half of the world's population, are the problems of society as a whole, and that changes in their present economic, political and social situation must become an integral part of efforts to transform the structures and attitudes that hinder the genuine satisfaction of their needs,

Recognizing that international co-operation based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be developed and strengthened in order to find solutions to world problems and to build an international community based on equity and justice,

Recalling that in subscribing to the Charter, the peoples of the United Nations undertook specific commitments: "To save succeeding generations from the scourge of war ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom",

Taking note that since the creation of the United Nations very important instruments have been adopted, among which the following constitute landmarks: the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples, the International Development Strategy for the Second United Nations Development Decade, and the Declaration and Programme of Action for the Establishment of a New International Economic Order based on the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States,



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Taking into account that the United Nations Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women considers that: "discrimination against women is incompatible with human dignity and with the welfare of the family and of society, prevents their participation, on equal terms with men, in the political, social, economic and cultural life of their countries and is an obstacle to the full development of the potentialities of women in the service of their countries and of humanity",

Recalling that the General Assembly proclaimed 1975 as International Women's Year and that the Year should be devoted to intensified action with a view to: promoting equality between men and women, ensuring the integration of women in the total development effort, and increasing the contribution of women to the strengthening of world peace,

Recalling further that the Economic and Social Council in its resolution 1849 (LVI) adopted the Programme for International Women's Year, and that the General Assembly in its resolution 3275 (XXIX) called for full implementation of the Programme,

Taking into account the role played by women in the history of humanity, especially in the struggle for national liberation, the strengthening of international peace, and the elimination of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, alien domination, racism and apartheid,

Stressing that greater and equal participation of women at all levels of decision-making shall decisively contribute to accelerating the pace of development and the maintenance of peace,

Stressing also that women and men of all countries should have equal rights and duties and that it is the task of all States to create the necessary conditions for their attainment and their exercise thereof,

Recognizing that women of the entire world, whatever differences exist between them, share the painful experience of receiving or having received unequal treatment, and that as their awareness of this phenomenon increases they will become natural allies in the struggle against any form of oppression, such as is practised under colonialism, neo-colonialism, zionism, racial discrimination and apartheid, thereby constituting an enormous revolutionary potential for economic and social change in the world today,

Recognizing that changes in the social and economic structure of societies, even though they are among the prerequisites, cannot of themselves ensure an immediate improvement in the status of a group who has long been disadvantaged, and that urgent consideration must therefore be given to the full, immediate and early integration of women into national and international life,



Emphasizing that under-development imposes upon women a double burden of exploitation which must be rapidly eliminated and that full implementation of national development policies to this objective is seriously hindered by the existing inequitable system of international economic relations.

Aware that the role of women in child-bearing should not be the cause of inequality and discrimination, and that child-rearing demands shared responsibilities among women, men and society as a whole,

Recognizing also the urgency of advancing the status of women and finding more effective methods and strategies which will enable them to have the same opportunities as men to participate actively in the development of their countries and to contribute to the attainment of world peace,

Convinced that women must play an important role in the promotion, achievement and maintenance of international peace, and that it is necessary to encourage their efforts towards peace, through their full participation in the national and international organizations that exist for this purpose,

Considering that it is necessary to promote national, regional and international action in which the implementation of the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference of International Women's Year, should make a significant contribution, for the attainment of equality, development and peace,

Decides to promulgate the following principles:

1. Equality between women and men means equality in their dignity and worth as human beings as well as equality in their rights, opportunities and responsibilities;
2. All obstacles that stand in the way of enjoyment by women of equal status with men must be eliminated in order to ensure their full integration into national development and their participation in securing and in maintaining international peace;
3. It is the responsibility of the State to create the necessary facilities so that women may be integrated into society while their children receive adequate care;

4. National non-governmental organizations should contribute to the advancement of women by assisting women to take advantage of their opportunities, by promoting education and information about women's rights, and by co-operating with their respective Governments;

5. Women and men have equal rights and responsibilities in the family and in society. Equality between women and men should be guaranteed in the family which is the basic unit of society and where human relations are nurtured. Men should participate more actively, creatively and responsibly in family life for its sound development in order to enable women to be more intensively involved in the activities of their communities and with a view to combining effectively home and work possibilities of both partners;



6. Women, like men, require opportunities for developing their intellectual potential to the maximum. National policies and programmes should therefore provide them with full and equal access to education and training at all levels, while ensuring that such programmes and policies consciously orient them towards new occupations and new roles consistent with their need for self-fulfilment and the needs of national development;
7. The right of women to work, to receive equal pay for work of equal value, to be provided with equal conditions and opportunities for advancement in work, and all other women's rights to full and satisfying economic activity are strongly reaffirmed. Review of these principles for their effective implementation is now urgently needed, considering the necessity of restructuring world economic relationships. This restructuring offers greater possibilities for women to be integrated into the stream of national economic, social, political and cultural life;
8. All means of communication and information as well as all cultural media should regard as a high priority their responsibility for helping to remove the attitudinal and cultural factors that still inhibit the development of women and for projecting in positive terms the value to society of women's assumption of changing and expanding roles;
9. Necessary resources should be made available in order that women can participate in the political life of their countries and of the international community since their active participation in national and world affairs at decision-making and other levels in the political field is a prerequisite of women's full exercise of equal rights as well as of their further development, and of the national well-being;
10. Equality of rights carries with it corresponding responsibilities; it is therefore a duty of women to make full use of opportunities available to them and to perform their duties to the family, the country and humanity;
11. It should be one of the principal aims of social education to teach respect for physical integrity and its rightful place in human life. The human body, whether that of woman or man is inviolable and respect for it is a fundamental element of human dignity and freedom;
12. Every couple and every individual has the right to decide freely and responsibly whether or not to have children as well as to determine their number and spacing, and to have information, education and means to do so;
13. Respect for human dignity encompasses the right of every woman to decide freely for herself whether or not to contract matrimony;
14. The issue of inequality, as it affects the vast majority of the women of the world, is closely linked with the problem of under-development, which exists as a result not only of unsuitable internal structures, but also of a profoundly unjust world economic system;
15. The full and complete development of any country requires the maximum participation of women as well as men in all fields: the under-utilization of the



16. The ultimate end of development is to achieve a better quality of life for all which means not only the development of economic and other material resources but also the physical, moral, intellectual and cultural growth of the human person;
17. In order to integrate women into development, States should undertake the necessary changes in their economic and social policies because women have the right to participate and contribute to the total development effort;
18. The present state of international economic relations poses serious obstacles to a more efficient utilization of all human and material potential for accelerated development and for the improvement of living standards in developing countries aimed at the elimination of hunger, child mortality, unemployment, illiteracy, ignorance and backwardness, which concerns all of humanity and women in particular. It is therefore essential to establish and implement with urgency the New International Economic Order of which the Charter of Economic Rights and Duties of States constitutes a basic element, founded on equity, sovereign equality, interdependence, common interest, co-operation among all States irrespective of their social and economic systems on the principles of peaceful co-existence and on the promotion by the entire international community of economic and social progress of all countries, especially developing countries; and on the progress of States comprising the international community;
19. The principle of full and permanent sovereignty of every State over its natural resources, wealth and all economic activities as well as its inalienable right of nationalization as an expression of this sovereignty, constitute fundamental prerequisites in the process of economic and social development;
20. The attainment of economic and social goals, so basic to the realization of the rights of women, do not, however, of themselves bring about the full integration of women in development on a basis of equality with men unless specific measures are undertaken aimed at the elimination of all forms of discrimination against them. It is therefore important to formulate and implement models of development that will promote the participation and advancement of women in all fields of work, provide them with equal educational opportunities, and such services as would facilitate housework;
21. Modernization of the agricultural sector of vast areas of the world is an indispensable element for progress, particularly as it creates opportunities for millions of rural women to participate in development. Governments, the United Nations, its specialized agencies and other competent regional and international organizations should support projects designed to utilize the maximum potential and to develop the self-reliance of rural women;
22. It must be emphasized that, given the required economic, social and legal conditions as well as the appropriate attitudes conducive to the full and equal participation of women in society, efforts and measures aimed at a more intensified integration of women in development can only be successfully implemented if made an integral part of over-all social and economic growth. Full participation of women in the various economic, social, political and cultural sectors, is an important indication of the dynamic progress of peoples and their development. Individual human rights can only be realized within the framework of total development;



23. The objectives considered in this Declaration can be achieved only in a world in which the relations between States are governed, inter alia, by the following principles: the sovereign equality of States, the free self-determination of peoples, the unacceptability of acquisition or attempted acquisition of territories by force and the prohibition of recognition of such an acquisition, territorial integrity, and the right to defend it, and non-interference in the domestic affairs of their States, in the same manner that relations between human beings should be governed by the supreme principle of the equality of rights of women and men;
24. International co-operation and peace require the achievement of national liberation and independence, the elimination of colonialism and neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, zionism, apartheid, racial discrimination in all its forms as well as the recognition of the dignity of peoples and their right to self-determination;
25. Women have a vital role to play in the promotion of peace in all spheres of life: in the family, the community, the nation and the world. As such, women must participate equally with men in the decision-making processes which help to promote peace at all levels;
26. Women as well as men together should eliminate colonialism, neo-colonialism, imperialism, foreign domination and occupation, zionism, apartheid, racial discrimination, the acquisition of land by force and the recognition of such acquisition, since such practices inflict incalculable suffering on women, men and children;
27. The solidarity of women in all countries of the world should be supported in their protest against violations of human rights condemned by the United Nations. All forms of repression and inhuman treatment of women, men and children, including imprisonment, torture, massacres, collective punishment, destruction of homes, forced eviction and arbitrary restriction of movement shall be considered crimes against humanity and in violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international instruments;
28. Women all over the world should unite to eliminate violations of human rights committed against women and girls such as: rape, prostitution, physical assault, mental cruelty, child marriage, forced marriage and marriage as a commercial transaction;
29. Peace requires that women as well as men reject any type of intervention in the domestic affairs of States, whether it be openly or covertly carried out by other States or by transnational corporations. Peace also requires that women as well as men also promote the respect for the sovereign right of a State to establish its own economic, social and political system without undergoing political and economic pressures or coercion of any type;
30. Women as well as men should promote real, general and complete disarmament under effective international control, starting with nuclear disarmament. Until genuine disarmament is achieved, women and men throughout the world must maintain their vigilance and do their utmost to achieve and maintain international peace.



WHEREFORE,

The World Conference of the International Women's Year,

1. Affirms its faith in the objectives of the International Women's Year which are equality, development and peace;
2. Proclaims its commitment to the achievement of such objectives;
3. Strongly urges Governments, the entire United Nations System, regional and international inter-governmental organizations and the international community as a whole to dedicate themselves to the creation of a just society where women, men and children can live in dignity, freedom, justice and prosperity.

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