

**Remarks by Carolyn Hannan, Director  
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**At the parallel event  
Investing in Decent Work for Women**

**Organized by  
The International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC)  
Education International (EI)  
Public Services International (PSI)**

**Friday 29 February 2008**

I am delighted to have the opportunity to make some opening remarks at this important event on Investing in Decent Work for Women, organized by the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Education International (EI), and Public Services International (PSI).

The priority theme of this Commission - “Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women” – is a critical one. It is particularly timely for two reasons. Firstly, the Commission will directly address the gap between the achievements at global policy level and implementation at national level which was highlighted in the ten-year review of implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in 2005. Access to resources is clearly one of the critical elements in ensuring the accelerated implementation the Commission has called for.

Secondly, the Commission’s deliberations are well-timed to further explore the gender implications of financing for development, and to bring greater attention to gender perspectives in all six action areas of the Monterrey Consensus in the preparations for and outcome of the Follow-up International Conference on Financing for Development to Review the Implementation of the Monterrey Consensus, to be held in Doha later this year.

Global leaders at the 2005 World Summit acknowledged that “progress for women is progress for all”. There is strong evidence that investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity and sustained economic growth. Increasing resources for gender equality and women’s empowerment would contribute significantly to achieving all the development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Despite all the calls to mainstream gender perspectives in economic policies and public finance management, adequate resources have not been systematically allocated to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment. We see the results of this failure to back policy commitments with resources in many different areas. Many excellent gender equality policies, strategies and action plans are developed without adequate attention to the resources needed for their full implementation. Insufficient budgetary resources

continue to undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of both national mechanisms for the advancement of women and women's organizations and networks in civil society in advocating for, supporting and monitoring the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. And important work on all critical areas of concern is impeded by lack of resources.

Although the Beijing Platform for Action and many of the agreed conclusions of the Commission adopted since 1995, have raised resource needs in many sector areas, this is the first time that the Commission looks specifically at the issue of resources for critical areas for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Secretary-General's report on this priority theme, and the Expert Group Meeting report raised the particular needs for increased resources in some institutional contexts, for example for national machineries for the advancement of women, for the women's movement and for the gender equality work of the United Nations itself. The reports did not, however, go into details on resource constraints in particular areas.

During the on going discussions at the Commission, however, the critical needs in specific contexts are being raised by Member States, UN entities and NGOs – for example the constraints in financing for implementation of Security Council resolution 1325, for the empowerment of girls and many other areas. I am pleased that you have taken the initiative to raise the need for increasing investment in decent work for women as constraints in this area have major implications for the achievement of gender equality and empowerment of women.

There are a number of critical lessons learned from the research and analysis done in preparation for the Commission which might be usefully applied in your focus on decent work. Firstly, that the costs of continuing inequality in this area need to be clearly elaborated and the resource needs for addressing this inequality assessed. All strategies and actions plans to mainstream gender perspectives into decent work must be costed and the budget requirements for their full implementation made clear. Gender analysis of all budget proposals on decent work must be mandatory, as part of gender-responsive budget initiatives.

In your discussions this morning I hope that you will not only focus on how to influence the negotiation of the agreed conclusions on financing for gender equality and empowerment of women, but will also include consider how the agreed conclusions can be disseminated and used after the CSW, in particular in the context of preparations for the follow-up to the Monterrey Consensus in Doha later this year, as well as how we can begin immediately to prepare for the review of implementation of these agreed conclusions in the Commission on the Status of Women, two to three years after this session.

Thank you.