



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
[date]

Original:

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### **Commission on the Status of Women**

#### **Fifty-fifth session**

22 February -4 March 2011

Item 3 (a) (i) of the provisional agenda\*

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work**

### **Statement submitted by the International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** has analyzed the priority theme of the 55<sup>th</sup> C.S.W. Session – “Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women’s equal access to full employment and decent work”.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** reaffirms that the right

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\* E/CN.6/2011/1

to education is a fundamental human right, as consecrated in article 26° of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, articles 13° and 14° of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, articles 5° and 10° of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and articles 28° and 29° of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** considers the women and girls education as the most powerful tool in order to obtain Empowerment of Women and Gender Equality, and consequently to combat Gender Violence.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** reaffirms that in order to attain the Millennium Goals, namely n°2 and 3, it will require the total eradication of all discrimination towards Women and Girls and their total participation in all decision-making process.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** regards as essential, in order to achieve the above mentioned goals, that sexism, all kind of stereotypes related to the traditional roles of women and men and gender bias should be eradicated from all educational programmes.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** wants, therefore, to reaffirm the stated on General Recommendation n° 3 (sixth session, 1987) of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women : “(...) Further considering that, although the reports have come from States with different levels of development, they present features in varying degrees showing the existence of stereotyped conceptions of women, owing to socio-cultural factors, that perpetuate discrimination based on sex and hinder the implementation of article 5 of the Convention, urges all States parties effectively to adopt education and public information programmes, which will help eliminate prejudices and current practices that hinder the full operation of the principle of the social equality of women.”

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** thinks, consequently, that Equality and its values should be taught since childhood, in every school degree, as Education for Equality is the major instrument to fight Gender Violence.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** believes that it is the establishment of conditions to an economic, social and cultural development everywhere in the world, which make possible the exercise and enjoyment of all the Human Rights for Women and Men in Liberty and Equality.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** thinks that all States should take all appropriate measures in order to guarantee that all professors, at all educational degrees, must have an instruction on Women Human Rights, Equality and, in the countries with a strong immigration, knowledge of the different cultures.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** considers, also, that all States should take all appropriate measures in order to guarantee a mandatory girl's school attendance, especially in cases of pregnancy, aids or extreme poorness.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** has examined the documents produced by the Expert Group Meeting on Gender, Science and Technology, and wants to express its concordance with the background paper presented by UNESCO - Women's and Girls' Access to and Participation in Science and Technology - , namely when stated that: "Access to formal education, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and non-formal education should be promoted as the essential foundation for women's careers in science and technology.

Teacher education policies should be reviewed to i) provide quality pre-service and in-service gender sensitive training opportunities in science and mathematics for a greater number of teachers to match the rising demands for science and mathematic education; ii) ensure gender balance with regard to teaching personnel in science and mathematics.

Socio-cultural factors, that may disadvantage girls from entering and pursuing a career in the sciences or technology both implicit and explicit, must be taken into

account when formulating policies, including how gender may combine with other factors of inequality and which may leave girls doubly disadvantaged.

Science and technology should be integrated into Non-formal Education (NFE), supported by the appropriate policy-frameworks, capacity-development programmes and trained teaching personnel, to reach out to girls and women in rural or depressed urban areas in particular.

Effective, high-quality science and technology education programmes should be developed in order to foster personal and societal interest in these disciplines and to ensure that curricula are socio-culturally and environmentally relevant.

Negative gender-stereotypes concerning the perceived suitability of women in science and technology careers must be tackled at all levels:

- Via the media, at national and international levels: the transformative power of the media to shift negative stereotypes should be harnessed. Specifically, science journalists, alongside science communicators more broadly – including scientists themselves - should be sensitized to the non-‘technical’ issues (democracy, development, gender equality) at stake in their communication with the aim of promoting a positive image of women and girls as scientifically and technologically competent and capable.

- Via national education policies, in particular through gender-sensitive teacher training and educational material – education materials including text-books should be gender-sensitive; teachers should receive gender-sensitive courses as part of their professional development to ensure that negative representations perpetuating inequality not retransmitted in the classroom.

Positive female role models should be enlisted, starting in the classroom; it is important to address the under representation of female science and technology teachers in this light.

Girls should be encouraged to go into careers in science and technology by developing support structures, including mentoring programmes. Career guidance should encourage girls into these careers, with the support of their families and local communities,

including via post-course job placement services. Gender-sensitive career information should be provided on possible careers in sciences and technology and appropriate materials developed in this light.

Relevant, internationally comparable sex-disaggregated statistics are essential. Efforts should continue to encourage and accelerate the development of these statistical indicators and data to allow for more nuanced tracking of these goals; in this spirit, UNESCO continues its efforts to assist countries to improve their data collection capacities.”

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** regards, consequently, given the actual economic and financial crisis, as more important than ever all States to make an effective commitment to the creation of vehicles for full employment and decent work.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** sends an appeal to all the States to give social and responsible investing more priority and to allocate the due resources for women and girls to have access to credit and financial assets, to promote their education in all areas, namely in the financial industry, so that women can advance to leadership positions within it.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** recommends the drafting of an international convention that will establish some new rules regarding financial transactions in order to give security and transparency to the financial markets.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** exhorts them equally to direct the competent executive, legislative and judicial authorities to take all necessary means and to assign adequate budgetary funds to effectively promote and protect the Human Rights of Women and Girls.

Lisbon, November 2010

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