

Presentation of WSIS Gender Caucus at Civil Society Plenary on 21 February 2003

1. The WSIS-Gender Caucus (GC) endorses the proposal for the formation of the Civil Society Bureau as this mechanism has the potential to improve the basis of participation of civil society as an equal partner within the WSIS process.
2. The WSIS GC has organised meetings and consulted with gender equality advocates present in Geneva and online during PrepCom2 and confirms that it is prepared to play the facilitation role for the gender equality family within the proposed Civil Society Bureau.
3. We welcome the expanded definition of families that has seen a distinct seat established for representatives of women's rights and gender equality advocates.
4. The WSIS GC has the following strategic objective:

"The strategic objective of the WSIS-Gender Caucus is to ensure that gender equality and women's rights are integrated into WSIS and its outcome processes."

In agreeing to move forward we make the following recommendations:

1. Efforts be made to ensure active participation from organisations and individuals who are not physically present in Geneva, particularly by increasing availability of funding for women's participation.
2. We strongly urge that on-line tools be used for all consultation processes including for confirmation of nominations of focal points to the Executive Secretariat of the Bureau.
3. Clarification on the role and responsibilities of Executive Members in the Bureau.
4. Improvements in provision of timely access to information particularly on speakers lists, bookings for facilities, interpreting services, visa arrangements, fellowships, travel arrangements etc.
5. Proposes the following as core functions and critical requirements for Executive Members
 - Serve as *organisational focal points* for their family grouping or constituency on the Executive of the Bureau
 - Actively encourage representative participation in WSIS, including by organising satellite events to increase participation
 - Regularly share information among its constituency
 - Possess the functional expertise, relevant to the constituency to be an effective organisational focal point.

6. Participate in meetings in and have an infrastructural base in Geneva

The WSIS GC would like to table the following reservations around the function of the Bureau:

- The function of the Executive Members of the Bureau are inadequately spelt out;
- The lack of clarity on the role of the Bureau in mobilising and allocating financial resources to facilitate the participation of families in the Bureau and
- The current proposal inadequately spells out how the Bureau will be provided with adequate secretariat services especially during the precoms and the Summits.

Noting that if these matters are not adequately attended to as a matter of extreme urgency the interests of Southern women and women from poor countries and small organisations will be negatively affected.

Organisational Focal Point: WSIS Gender Caucus

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