

**Statement of the Participants to World Water Forum V Women and Water Preparatory Conference on 14 and 15 March 2009**

*To be presented at Special Session on Health Dignity and Economic Progress: Way Forward for Gender Equity*

*Location: Ayvansaray, Sutluce, 16 March 14.30-19.00*

We, participants of the "World Water Forum V Women and Water Preparatory Conference on the 14 and 15 March 2009" acknowledge that the present global crisis threatens the survival of our societies; will deepen the poverty, threaten food security and undermine biodiversity and ecosystems unless immediate democratic and people centred measures are implemented. Critical to this is equal participation of women in decision making at all levels.

Good management of water resources and the provision of water and adequate sanitation are also vital for recovery of our economies and for addressing the needs of the people themselves. We are committed to concentrate on specific actions for integrated sustainable water management at all levels, as follows:

- Create awareness and mobilise different groups in societies for concerted actions
- Lobby for the acknowledgement of the right to basic services for safe water and sanitation in national policies and legislation
- Lobby for the recognition and implementation of land rights and safe tenure for women
- Take affirmative actions for enhancing participation of women in decision-making bodies at all levels including setting quotas and creating an enabling environment for participation
- Build and strengthen alliances from local to global levels to sustain cooperation in the field of gender, water and sanitation. This will include governments and all major groups notably local government, women's organisations and other civil society bodies, farmers, youth, indigenous people, academic community, business and technology, labour unions.
- Ensure capacity development activities at all levels for women in particular, in order to provide them with knowledge and experience in order to make informed choices, develop careers and contribute concretely to solving the problems in their own environments. This includes training on water technologies, safe sanitation, water resources management and promoting behavioural change.
- We continue to contribute to the development of sustainable water management for food production within our capacities including sound irrigation management, the use of alternative water resources and traditional practices.

We recognise that despite the best efforts and the strongest commitments of civil society achieving integrated water resources management and sustainable development has not taken place. For example the International Year of Sanitation brought the issue of sanitation on the agenda but this is not yet transferred into concrete and demand-driven actions.

The distinct and complementary roles of governments and civil society in achieving sustainable development and the Millennium Development Goals have been stressed in

in previous World Water Fora and numerous United Nations and other international policies and agreements.

We request Heads of States and ministers, all leaders in the water and sanitation sector and beyond, here present to go from commitment to action in the following field.

- Provide support and resources to act out the roles and activities as stated above
- Revisit and implement gender responsive budgeting in water and sanitation
- Increase and allocate water and sanitation budgets based on informed choices of the people involved
- Dedicate budget to demand driven gender sensitive capacity development
- Guarantee transparent and accountable expenditures for research, development, management and implementation, based on gender sensitive criteria that reflect the impact of water and sanitation policies and projects on the ground

Finally, we urge the Heads of States and ministers, all leaders in the water and sanitation sectors and beyond, here present, to adhere to the overarching principle of equity and gender mainstreaming as a prerequisite for sustainable and equitable development. We urge you to fully commit yourselves to action; to ensure, within your respective jurisdictions, a level playing field for the different major groups in society by creating an enabling environment to fulfil their specific roles.

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