

## **MOZAMBIQUE DECLARATION ON WOMEN & DEVELOPMENT**

On occasion of the International Women's day and within the framework of the "Meeting of Women for a Better World", held at Maputo on 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> March, 2006 on the initiative of the Governments of Mozambique and Spain, African and Spanish women recall that women's rights are fundamental human rights and reiterate their commitment to the promotion of gender equality and women's autonomy.

Considering the commitments made in the Beijing Platform for Action, the Declaration of the Commission on the Status of Women in its 49<sup>th</sup> session, the Millennium Development Goals and the African Union's Protocol on the Rights of Women in Africa;

Considering the need to develop ambitious strategies to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015 and that Africa is the fundamental reference to achieve those objectives;

Aware of the structural problems of the African continent and its potentialities to face new challenges;

Aware of the feminisation of poverty and the leadership of African women to confront the future;

The women participating in the Meeting of Maputo hereby declare:

1. To protect women's rights and to strengthen their capacities is the best way to fight for the eradication of poverty. We shall not advance in terms of equality without a true empowerment of women.
2. To end illiteracy and to guarantee universal access to education for girls is a crucial condition to succeed in the fight for equality. We shall not advance in the fight for equality as long as women do not have full access to education.
3. To improve the access of women to sanitary services and resources in order to promote higher standards of health and welfare and to adopt measures for the alleviation of the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and children. The feminisation of this pandemic constitutes an obstacle to the full enjoyment of women's rights and to their active participation in the social and economic development of the continent. We shall not advance in the fight for equality as long as women are not guaranteed the right to health.
4. To reinforce patterns and modalities of production and consumption of women that are respectful with the environment is essential for sustainable development. Natural disasters in the African continent aggravate the vulnerability of women in that they constitute an obstacle for the use and exploitation of the soil, which is the source of subsistence for most African women and their families. We shall not advance in the fight for equality as long as women are not involved in environmental management and in the protection of the environment.

5. Constant violence against women is the most flagrant violation of their human rights and continues to be an unsustainable obstacle, whose eradication falls upon all Governments in the world. We shall not advance in the fight for equality until all forms of violence against women are not eradicated.
6. Armed conflicts in general, and in Africa in particular, turn women, girls and boys into the most vulnerable victims and provoke massive exoduses. We shall not advance in the fight for equality without an adequate protection of women, girls and boys in armed conflicts.
7. To actively participate in decision-making forums is a fundamental objective to advance in the consolidation of democracy and to achieve that equality is set as a priority in public policies. We shall not advance in the fight for equality without the full participation of women in political power.
8. To promote the economic self-sufficiency of women, to promote their integration in economic activities, including access to rural financing, and to make available to women the necessary instruments and public policies to achieve this objective. Moreover decent work in which rights are protected is essential to guarantee the rights of women and to correct wage discrimination. We shall not advance in the fight for equality as long as women do not have access to and control of productive resources.
9. To promote equal autonomy of women in the media is essential to combat gender stereotypes. We shall not advance in the fight for equality as long as women's presence and professionalism in the media is not increased.
10. This Declaration shall be disseminated as widely as possible and all women shall be invited to adhere to it, with a view to promote concrete and real progress in all these matters. The participants entrust Spain and Mozambique to co-ordinate efforts towards preparing specific programmes of action to respond to the challenges identified at this Meeting.

#### **IT IS THEREFORE AGREED:**

1. New technologies, as mentioned at the Meeting, offer multiple possibilities. In order to keep alive the spirit of the meeting, it is hereby agreed to create a network of African and Spanish women, co-ordinated by the Governments of Mozambique and Spain, to allow women attending the meeting at Maputo to continue with the agenda and the common work initiated and to share experiences with other women of the world who join.
2. Access to education is one of the fundamental pillars on the road towards equality. In order to advance in this direction, it is hereby agreed to create a working group, made of women, to draft an educational map of girls in Africa. This educational map will allow the adoption of strategies that improve education levels from a common diagnosis.

3. Improved access to sanitary systems and the fight against transmissible and tropical diseases, especially HIV/AIDS, constitute key factors in order to achieve equal rights. It is therefore hereby agreed:
  - To create a working group to analyse the possibilities to enter into agreements with pharmaceutical companies for the manufacture and distribution of low-cost generic antiretroviral drugs;
  - To create a working group to submit to the next Meeting a report with specific programmes to improve maternal and child health;
  - In order to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, to organise, through the Network, an extensive campaign for the massive distribution of condoms.
4. There is no doubt that the personal and financial independence of women need to be promoted in order to continue on the path towards equality. It is therefore hereby agreed to promote specific entrepreneurial support projects, geared towards small economic projects, and to support women entrepreneurs to allow them to develop entrepreneurial activities from the beginning to the end.
5. In order to give continuity to the fruitful work initiated these days at Maputo, it is hereby agreed to celebrate in a year's time the second Meeting of African and Spanish Women, to evaluate the work accomplished in the future months and to propose new actions.

Maputo, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2006, International Women's Day.