

## **Seoul-Gyeonggi Declaration on the Equal Participation of Women in the Information Society**

We, the participants in the Forum on Gender and ICTs for the World Summit on the Information Society 2005, representing 36 countries assembled in Seoul from 24 – 25 June 2005, with affiliations in academia and NGOs as well as government, international agency, and industry.

Reaffirming the principles outlined in the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women,

Noting paragraph 12 of the Declaration of Principles of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), adopted in Geneva in December 2003, viz: “We affirm that development of ICTs provide enormous opportunities for women, who should be an integral part of, and key actors, in the Information Society. We are committed to ensuring that the Information Society enables women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society and in all decision-making processes. To this end, we should mainstream a gender equality perspective and use ICTs as a tool to that end:”

Noting that the WSIS Plan of Action refers to the special needs of women in relation to capacity building; enabling environment; ICT applications; cultural diversity and identity; media; and follow-up and evaluation,

Noting that the second phase of WSIS focuses on monitoring and implementation of the progress of feasible actions laid out in the Geneva Plan and a concrete set of deliverables that must be achieved by the time the Summit meets again in Tunis in November 2005,

Noting that, this will involve:

- . developing a core set of benchmarks or indicators that can be used to evaluate ICT for Development initiatives
- . surveying and presenting ‘best practices’ and ‘lessons learned’ from ICT projects and initiatives
- . presenting recommendations from the working groups on Financing Mechanisms and Internet Governance

Noting that the current debate on financing in the WSIS process puts disproportionate emphasis on private investment to achieve ICT for Development goals,

Recognizing that since the first phase of WSIS, governments, international bodies, academia, and civil society organizations have implemented actions as follow-up to the WSIS Action Plan,

Recognizing that the most critical aspects in the follow up of the implementation of the WSIS Plan of Action are:

- Developing sex-disaggregated statistics and gender indicators
- Integrating a gender perspective in national ICT policies and strategies
- Ensuring ICT training and capacity building for women
- Promoting the economic empowerment of women
- Ensuring that women benefit from financing of ICT for Development
- Facilitating gender equality in Internet and ICT governance

Noting the growth of cyber pornography, trafficking, exploitation, violence against women and sexism on the Internet, and recognizing that the Information Society provides both threats and opportunities,

1. Recommend, based on these priorities, the following to all stakeholders;
2. Emphasize the gender component in ICT financing discussions, including principles of gender budgeting, with linkages made between investment in physical and social infrastructure development;
3. Ensure that financing ICT for Development projects account specifically for women's development priorities and their information and communication rights;
4. Take into account the particular needs of indigenous, elderly, rural and marginalized women everywhere, including those in developing countries and the least developed countries, and earmark a fair percentage of the Digital Solidarity Fund for projects aimed at bridging the gender digital divide;

5. Ensure women's participation in the establishment, administration and monitoring of any fund that supports the use of ICTs for Development;
6. Establish national level multi-stakeholder level Internet governance mechanisms, independent of political and market interests, to adopt agendas commensurate with a development-oriented Internet Governance, create gender working groups, and provide a platform for ICT policy and Internet governance capacity building;
7. Create opportunities for the participation of women in international and intergovernmental organizations involved in Internet governance;
8. Ensure access to meaningful participation and equal representation of all people, communities and groups, including women, in the creation of any new global mechanism to address Internet governance. Appropriate relationships should be established with UN bodies connected with development, with culture and education, and with the special needs and interests of women;
9. Support the collection of sex-disaggregated data on access and use of ICTs at the regional and international levels;
10. Emphasize the need for women's increased presence at all levels of decision-making and in the implementation of policies, both in NGOs and in government bodies responsible for information and communication. This includes the provision of

appropriate training, and monitoring of impact, for female public servants;

11. Mobilize resources to fund capacity building programmes at national, regional and global levels, to address ICT policy and Internet governance issues, taking into account the needs of women, excluded communities, especially those from developing countries. In implementing such capacity building programmes, the e-readiness of the community should be adequately assessed;

12. Create opportunities for employment for women in the ICT sector, especially in areas of management, decision-making, and hardware and software design and production;

13. Invest in and support ICT infrastructure and services to promote women's participation and empowerment. Special attention should be given to community-driven information and communication initiatives, using both ICTs and the long established media, including its ownership;

14. Encourage the widespread use of open-access software. Moreover, content created or funded by government, government contractors conducting essential public functions, or intergovernmental organisations should become part of the public domain. This is of particular importance with respect to technical and scientific information.

15. Recognize the special role of libraries as centres for community access to knowledge. Libraries and archives should be considered in the development of national ICT policies and supported by public (government and donor) funds.

15. Support women's ministries and agencies, gender focal points, and gender advocates to participate effectively in regulatory policy-making and in all national and international ICT policy processes in a coordinated way;

16. Train relevant government officers in gender analysis of the ICT policies and support women's ministries and agencies, gender focal points, and gender advocates in the work they are doing.

25 June 2005