STATEMENT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE UNITED NATIONS DECADE FOR WOMEN**

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The United Nations Conference on Human Settlements
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1. Thirty-nine non-governmental organizations, members of the Committee on the UN Decade for Women of the Conference of Non-governmental Organizations in Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council have followed the discussions of the Preparatory Committee for the Conference on Human Settlements and are familiar with the documentation on Habitat. The Committee, composed of representatives of about 50 international organizations, has repeatedly discussed the relationship of human settlements to the advancement of women.

2. We support wholeheartedly the priority of providing in every human settlement the essentials for a healthy and well-regulated society, such as adequate housing, school facilities, sanitation, medical and social services, safe drinking water and opportunities for recreation so that the entire population of men, women and children can live and work in dignity.

3. We have noticed, however, that Document A/Conf. 70/PC/17 dealing with Human Settlements issues to be considered by the Conference, omits reference to the full participation of women in the design and organization of communities, so that these settlements will be able to meet the special needs of women in their homes in urban or rural areas.

4. We would, therefore, urge that during the consideration of various agenda items, the delegates to Habitat take into account the relevant recommendations made in the World Plan of Action adopted by the World Conference for International Women’s Year in Mexico City, and approved later by the 30th General Assembly. These guidelines could help the World Conference on Human Settlements draw up a realistic and just set of recommendations on a wide range of policy measures, from which a comprehensive national settlement policy may be drafted.
5. We would hope that the following recommendations found in the IYW World
Plan of Action could be included in the final drafts of the Declaration of
Principles, the Recommendations for National Action, and the Plan for International
Cooperation approved by the Conference on Human Settlements:

A. Para. 46 (g) Greater participation of women in policy making positions
   at the local national and international levels.

B. Para. 46 (f) Legislation and other measures should be taken to guarantee
   that the views and needs of women are taken into account in the planning and
design of urban and housing development as well as human settlements.

C. Para. 46 (h) Increased provision should be made for comprehensive
   measures for health education and services, sanitation, nutrition, family
   education, family planning and other welfare services.

D. Para. 155 In the development of social services as a useful tool in
   mobilizing human and technical resources -- the contribution of non-governmental
   organizations should be kept in mind.

E. Para. 46 (j) Recognition should be given to the work in the home, in
domestic food production and marketing, and voluntary activities not traditionally
remunerated.

F. Para. 150 The design of the house should take into account the needs of
the entire family, especially the women and children. Use of the following should
be encouraged (a) building materials that require minimal or no maintenance; (b)
labor saving interior finishes and surfaces conducive to comfort and hygiene; (d)
furniture that is moveable, storable and easily replaceable and (e) where feasible
and appropriate an area for women to undertake activities such as reading, sewing
and weaving.

G. Para. 151 In this projection of the house into a neighborhood designs
should provide for services and utilities and neighborhood facilities that respond,
interalia, to the expressed needs of women and reduce labor as well as travel for the vital needs such as water, food, fuel and other necessities.

H. Para. 152 In the design of the network of neighborhoods consideration should be given to accessibility of neighborhood centers for women and children.

6. In addition, the wealth of expertise found in non-governmental organizations concerned with the advancement of women could, we feel, contribute most constructively in implementing recommendations of the Conference on Human Settlements on the country and local level.

To assist in this process, the Committee on the UN Decade For Women will undertake to make widely known the decisions of the Conference on Habitat bearing on the participation of women in the building of human settlements and the improvement of conditions affecting them, so that each organization may take effective action to improve the quality of life for all peoples in cities and villages around the world.