

**Civil Society Event on 21 April 2010 as part of the Global Preparatory Meeting for the 2010 High Level Segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**

**Theme:** Financing for climate change: Gender Equality  
**Time:** 10:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.  
**Location:** Conference Room 4

*Opening: Cate Owren, Program Director, Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)*

Your Excellency Mr. Hamidon Ali, President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, Ms. Sha Zukang, Under-Secretary-General of DESA, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

A very warm welcome to all of you for this half-day session, **Financing for Climate Change: Gender Equality**. I am delighted and truly honored to be in your company, and on behalf of the organizers, the DESA Office for ECOSOC Support and Cooperation and the NGO CSW Committee, I thank you for being here. My name is Cate Owren, and I am Program Director at WEDO, the Women's Environment and Development Organization.

Today, this session is a part of the **Global Preparatory Meeting for the 2010 High-level Segment of ECOSOC - the UN Economic and Social Council**, which will take place June 28<sup>th</sup> through July 2<sup>nd</sup>. The high-level segment will address the issues of gender equality, empowerment of women and development cooperation.

Tomorrow, the Global Preparatory Meeting will focus on rural women as agents of change and champions of global food security, followed by a session on development cooperation, examining international aid in effectively implementing, for example, the Millennium Development Goals and national development plans. And for those of us who have been deeply involved in the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations, Copenhagen is still fresh in our minds as we race toward Mexico.

In this context, there is perhaps no topic more relevant – nor more timely – than looking at the intersection of gender equality and women's participation and leadership, with the potentially billions of dollars that will be (that must be) generated to deal with the urgent issue on our global agenda: climate change.

Climate change is a development issue. It is a human rights and social justice issue, and it is a women's issue. The impacts of a changing climate are being felt the world over; agencies such as UNDP have noted that the impacts threaten to set back development strategies, plans and funds by decades.

At the same time, the UN system has championed women's involvement and prioritized women's access to resources. "Investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect," Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon has said, "on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth."

And yet, climate change finance – or the funds generated and managed for adaptation, mitigation, technology development and deployment, capacity building and so on – has yet to make use of this good advice. Gender equality is smart economics. So today, we aim to move this discussion forward and hopefully come up with some steps for action.

It is my great pleasure to now **give the floor to the President of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, His Excellency Ambassador Hamidon Ali**. Sir, I give you the floor.