

**Ministerial Roundtable A2 & A4**  
**Tuesday, 19 March 2002, 10:00am-1:00pm & 3:00-6:00 pm.**  
**Partnerships in Financing Development**

**WOMEN'S CAUCUS – STATEMENT on**  
**PARTNERSHIPS FOR FINANCING GENDER-SENSITIVE,**  
**PEOPLE-CENTERED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

The Women's Caucus values the initiation of the long-needed Financing for Development process. We view it as an important step towards implementing governmental commitments made at the Millennium Summit and past UN conferences on environment, human rights, population, social development and labor, women, racism, and housing. We appreciate this opportunity to present and discuss our views on partnerships with other stakeholders in this process.

Some positive elements have come out of the process. The agreement to encourage stakeholders to "mainstream the gender perspective into development policies at all levels and in all sectors" in order to "strengthen the effectiveness of the global economic system's support for development" was quickly adopted at the plenary of the January 2002 Fourth PrepCom without discussion, although the agreed version does not include gender mainstreaming in macro-economic policies as well as development.

However, we are greatly concerned with the Monterrey Consensus document's reaffirmation of the existing power relations in global economic governance and the current predominant development model which focuses on gender-blind trade liberalization and foreign direct investment as the primary dynamics of economic growth and development. We had hoped that governments and the other major stakeholders would use FfD as a forum to take on the challenge of changing the current macro-economic framework that perpetuates global imbalances, inequality and suffering.

We also sharply disagree with the lack of balance between the six FfD issue areas in which the major priority is the mobilization of domestic resources, thereby placing the main responsibility for sustainable development on domestic resource mobilization.

Principles for Equitable and Just Partnerships

For the FfD process after Monterrey to be just and transparent, a genuine partnership must be established based on a clear definition of partnership. To promote principles of genuine partnership and a level playing field, we therefore propose the following:

- Partnerships must be based on and respect the human rights framework. Human rights are at the core of sustainable development, offering important guiding principles for development and international cooperation. They are also powerful tools for people, particularly women, to escape from poverty and marginalization.

- There must be gender balance in decision-making on all levels and in all areas of economic, finance, and development policies.
- Genuine consultation and dialogue must be established with civil society from the inception of processes that do not co-opt or manipulate the weaker partner(s).
- Genuine consideration of the views and advice offered.
- Transparency in the dialogue and consultation process.
- Assurance that partnerships do not negatively affect a society's basic needs.
- Flexibility in partnerships according to needs.
- Provision of the necessary financial and other resources and capacity building to enable true participation and equal partnerships.

These principles should involve concrete mechanisms. We propose:

- Institutionalization of gender-balanced civil society access and democratic participation. This must include women's groups and networks in all partnership stages. The UN approach to civil society access to the UN is a starting point for establishing models of participation and democracy.
- A gender audit of the partnership process, including monitoring and assessment of the input and results in relation to national economies and international institutions.
- Corporate social responsibilities to include standards of behavior in regard to labor standards and the environment.
- Environmental responsibility of all stakeholders, including respect for natural resources.
- There must be consultation among all stakeholders in matters of national and foreign inputs to the production process prior to foreign direct investment ventures in host countries.

### FfD-related Partnerships

Based on these principles, we call for the establishment of international standards of partnership. These principles and standards should be considered when addressing the imbalance of power in all bilateral and multilateral relationships between:

- Developed countries, developing countries, and countries in transition
- Developing countries, countries in transition, and international financial institutions
- NGOs and other FfD stakeholders
- Civil Society/NGOs and governments
- Governments and business at the national level
- UN and International Financial Institutions

In this FfD process women are witnessing the establishment of new partnerships between the UN, IMF, World Bank, and WTO. We view these new partnerships with great concern because they presently support an unsustainable, gender-blind, corporate-focused development model. In this context we demand that these partners seek to actively develop an alternative gender-sensitive, people-oriented sustainable development paradigm and international financial architecture.

We insist that the Bretton Woods Institutions and the WTO commit to the Monterrey challenge to change the structures that perpetuate imbalances and gender, racial, ethnic and cultural inequality in the international financial architecture.

We are sure that partnerships based on these principles can enable us all to take up this challenge and achieve substantial results after Monterrey and as we prepare for the WSSD in Johannesburg.