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Statement submitted by Concile mondial de congrès diplomatiques des aumoniers pour la paix universelle des droits humains et juridiques, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Integrating Women into the Global Economy

Women are service providers, farmers, manufacturers and artisans; they trade at national and international levels. Businesses owned by women are increasing, creating jobs and consumer goods and services. Women entrepreneurs tend to reinvest in their community, proving that they are good development partners.

Among the companies owned by women, few are exporters.

At seminars to enhance skills and networks, women are a minority.

Relatively few women hold top positions in business development.

Many women work in the informal sector or hold economically precarious positions.

Some things to see from the perspective of business women:

- Different business goals, based on distinct values and life experiences.
- Barriers related to financing, land ownership and integration in business networks.
- Cultural issues related to the role of women within the family, business and society.

The International Monetary Fund published a paper of thirty pages on the status of women in the global economy. If women's work was encouraged in developed and emerging countries, it would be a wonderful springboard for growth, the International Monetary Fund experts write.

The CEO of the International Monetary Fund, is Mrs. Christine Lagarde, she published a thirty page paper on the place of women in the global economy. "Women, work and the economy; macroeconomic gains (to wait) a gender equality": if the title is ordinary, the guideline is more original: almost all of the current socio-economic challenges could be solved through better integration of women in the official economy. The whole world would be a different place if the challenges of pension funding and the stability of financial markets would be addressed differently.

The facts established by a group of eight economists, of both sexes, is not really original: "Women make up just over half of the world population, but their contribution to the figures of activity, growth and well-being of our economy is well below their potential," we will be reminded. This is practically the terms of Mao Zedong: "Women can support up half the sky", said the founder of Communist China in the 1950s.

Women currently account for only 40 per cent of the work force of the global economy, at least in its formal structures, for their participation in the "informal sector" is much higher. In "unpaid labour", ie household care, women are still considered to do twice if not more as much as men. These figures come from the International Labour Organization.

While the disparities vary widely from region to region. In East Asia, in particular, female participation in the labour market is characterized by a rate of 63

per cent against 21 per cent in the Middle East and North Africa. Among the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development countries, the differences are also important. The International Monetary Fund believes that Japan could earn 0.25 per cent more potential economic growth per year if the integration of its female population was similar to that of other G7 countries. This would create an increase to a large extent with the Japanese pensions. In the United States considering that women work as much as men (on the official market) it contributes to the GDP increasing by 5 per cent, with the gain up to 12 per cent in the United Arab Emirates.

The International Monetary Fund reviewed almost all of the following inequalities: salaries, participation in senior positions in companies such as in the United States, only 4 per cent of Chief Executive Officer's of 500 companies in the Standard and Poor's are represented by women.

Men and women have lived quite differently the great recession of 2007-2009: the United States has been much less affected by unemployment in that 80 per cent work in service industries, which themselves have been less affected than other industries. In emerging countries, particularly in Latin America, it is exactly the opposite: in Mexico 70 per cent of the unemployed are women.

Experts in Washington have a very wide sample of remedies: education is still inadequate in developing countries, the deterrent taxation in rich countries because the progressivity of the income tax can be an incentive to stay at home. But is this the solution?

Feminists will not learn much in this executive summary, which is the result of a hundred economists studies, some of which demonstrate the beneficial effect to wait for greater participation of women in financial markets that would reduce a degree of excessive volatility. It must nevertheless be acknowledged the International Monetary Fund's commitment to the cause of women: Madame Christine Lagarde, acceded to the general management of the Fund in the summer of 2011.

SUPPORT WOMEN IN BUSINESS

Greater participation of women in international trade through trade development programs or strengthening existing ones.

STARTING POINTS

FUNDING

Evolve beyond microcredit. Investigate how to prepare women in financing, and how financial institutions can understand and capitalize on this growing market. Exploit the potential of risk capital.

TRAINING

The business management training, skills for service providers and consulting programs are most often recommended by women active in international trade. Training on standards, export development, marketing and networking is also very popular. Promote the participation of women in business to export dedicated training seminars.

INFORMATION

Provide access to business information and trade support services. Conduct needs assessment of exporting firms owned by women.

NETWORKS

Develop links with support agencies to trade in the public and private sectors at all levels. Include women in trade missions. Encourage women to integrate with major associations such as chambers of commerce. Promote adherence to professional associations. Create links with associations in other countries, which can help businesswomen build referral networks. Use of the Internet to create virtual networks that address best practices for women entrepreneurs. Organize events for women's businesses in embassies, international organizations and multinational companies, their meetings with local buyers. Develop own databases to women entrepreneurs.

VISIBILITY

Identify successes and publish them. Invite women who are successful in exporting to share their experiences on television programs, radio or in newspapers devoted to trade. Encourage professionals to visit schools and to regularly attend conferences or trade shows. Develop credible awards programs.

TECHNOLOGY

Use of technology to expand international trade and to reach rural areas. Pool resources to share access.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

Assess the specific support needs of women, particularly with medical centres, maternity leave and the care of children.

AREAS WHERE WE MUST FOCUS

• SERVICES

- o on creating businesses primarily in the service sector.

• THE INFORMAL SECTOR

- o Women form the majority of the informal sector. We need to create targeted programs to help women move from the informal economy to the formal economy.

• TEXTILES AND CLOTHING, FOOD PROCESSING, HANDICRAFTS

- o A high percentage of women work in these sectors.