



ORAL STATEMENT TO BE DELIVERED TO THE GENERAL DISCUSSION
THE 55TH SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

24 February 2011

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, NGO Representatives, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for this opportunity to participate in the General discussion and address the 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

I speak on behalf of the 800 people who attended the NGO Committee on the Status of Women, NY Consultation Day on 21 February 2011, a day when NGOs from over 110 countries represented women and girls worldwide.

Our participants reaffirmed the many good elements that were already in the Draft Agreed Conclusions and worked to map our recommendations to this document.

Our recommendations focused on five areas: education and training, employment and decent work, gender responsive products, discrimination and violence against the girl child, and UN Women.

- 1) NGOs strongest recommendation is an emphasis on early learning and the role of parents. As children's first teachers, the community must support parents. The economic dimension of schooling must be considered, early education must be free and families should be subsidized for sending their daughters to school. Textbooks and curricula must use positive images of girls and women involved in science and technology. Teachers should be trained to recognize stereotypes in teaching science and math for girls.
- 2) NGOs urge the review of products to ensure that they are appropriate for girls and women. This includes a wide range of industries from automobile seat belts designed for men, to pharmaceutical research performed exclusively on male animals. To bring women into business, new forms of training must be created. Examination of the 'leaky pipeline' and the 'glass ceiling' will lead to innovative methods of retaining women in decent work and in leadership roles.
- 3) NGOs expressed concern about ensuring access to technology for women and girls in rural areas, who may be poor and marginalized.
- 4) NGOs urge the use of technology to heighten communication, engagement and awareness to end discrimination and violence against women and girls. This includes social media, video games and pornography.
- 5) NGOs are dedicated to liaise with UN Women. Our participants encourage a clear commitment to sustainable contributions by Member States to UN Women to double its current funding.

Respectfully submitted,

Vivian B. Pender

Chair

NGO Committee on the Status of Women, NY