



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the United Nations
New York



Germany 2011|2012

Candidate for the United Nations Security Council

Statement

by Ambassador Dr. Peter Wittig
Permanent Representative of Germany
to the United Nations

ECOSOC Substantive Session of 2010
High-level Segment
General Debate

Economic and Social Council
General Debate on

“Implementing the internationally agreed goals and
commitments in regard to gender equality and the
empowerment of women”

New York

1 July 2010

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Mr. President,

Germany aligns herself with the Statement of the European Union. Let me just briefly highlight a few important aspects:

First of all: Without women's participation progress, development and stability cannot be achieved. There is an inextricable link between reaching the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and mobilizing women's potential.

Second: The important anniversaries in 2010 – Beijing +15, 30 years of CEDAW, 10 years since the adoption of Security Council Resolution 1325 - help to keep all of us focused on implementing our commitments in regard to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Thirdly: Women's rights are human rights! A society where women's rights are not respected is a society prone to instability and insecurity!

Mr. President,

Gender equality and the empowerment of women are the cornerstones of all policies pursued by the German government. The Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (**CEDAW**) as well as the outcome of **Beijing and the Beijing Platform of Action**

provide the framework for our efforts to strengthen the legal, political and economic empowerment of women worldwide. Germany is taking up this challenge:

- The German Government has provided 3.17 million Dollar for the World Bank Gender Action Plan 2007-2010.
- In 2009, the German government adopted its first **Development Policy Action Plan on Gender** which focuses on four issues to be tackled in the next few years:
 - Women in armed conflicts and their role in conflict management;
 - Economic empowerment;
 - Gender-specific challenges and responses to climate change;
 - Sexual and reproductive health and rights as well as family planning.

Let me share with you a few examples how we want to tackle these issues:

We recognize that women are agents of change. Women need to participate in formal employment as well as in political decision-making processes. Violence against women must be fought at all levels.

In our view, civil society organisations, especially women's organisations, play a vital role in enhancing women's rights, in empowering women and in achieving gender equality.

In partner countries Germany supports a wide range of projects:

In **Nigeria**, the German government has supported the National Council of Women's Societies. Women's access to justice has been improved, the political and economic empowerment of women has been enhanced.

In the **Democratic Republic of Congo**, combating violence against women is a part of the multisectoral Health HIV/AIDS project that builds the capacity of health services in South Kivu. Cooperation with the NGO Heal Africa which supports medical treatment for female victims of HIV/AIDS also forms an important part of German development cooperation.

In **Latin America** the regional project "Combating violence against women in Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia and Paraguay" started this year.

Mr. President,

Last but not least, Germany places high hopes in the creation of the new Gender Entity. We welcome the agreement reached. By integrating all relevant units and agencies into one comprehensive entity under the strong leadership of an Undersecretary-General, the new Entity will definitely

strengthen gender policies within the UN system and it will give a stronger voice to women's issues worldwide. It will make policies on equality and empowerment more targeted and effective. Strong leadership from the very start will be essential for the success of the new entity.

Mr. President,

Let us use the momentum created in the last few months. Let us work together to make women's participation a reality. If we manage to do this, the achievement of the MDGs is within our reach.