

Presentation on behalf of civil society organizations¹

United Nations General Assembly High Level Dialogue on Financing for Development 24th October 2007 New York

Esteemed President of the General Assembly, Delegates and my civil society colleagues:

It is an honour to be able to share some thoughts and proposals with you on behalf of the civil society organizations present here today. I would like to highlight four points:

1) Regarding the preparation process for the International Conference on Financing for Development to review the implementation of the Monterrey Consensus to be made in Doha in the end of the year 2008, we would like to place on record that:

- we are concerned that the present financial and international trade structure maintains inequalities and restricts the policy space of developing countries;
- the civil society organizations present here are involved in the process and in the Monterrey Consensus from a critical perspective, as we have stated in the past;
- we urge the governments to ensure that the Doha conference is of the highest level and brings together Heads of the State and the Government;
- we understand that the implementation deficit of the pledges made at the Monterrey Consensus, which we view as a minimum requirement, as well as the change in context and the configuration of actors in the sphere of development, call for a new Summit, resulting in a new document that would be negotiated at the highest level;
- we demand that the participation of civil society in the preparation process for the Doha Conference be taken seriously. That is to say through a sustained, inclusive, transparent, formal process establishing preparatory committees, which are regulatory in nature.

From the perspective of civil society, audiences with government representatives have proven insufficient as they do not offer the best guarantee for dialogue between the governments and civil society and do not echo the cumulative experience of past decades.

We deplore the fact that even today civil society organizations are not given a voice, in some round tables.

Esteemed President, the United Nations must play a leadership role in terms of the participation of civil society.

2) With reference to new development issues and in particular innovative financing mechanisms for development, we would like to highlight that:

- 5 years after Monterrey, there are new ideas on the table and some have already been put into practice.
- We are happy to see the rise in initiatives from groups of countries, but we believe that the United Nations as a whole should assume leadership in proposing new instruments.
- Air travel tax shows that when there is political will, new global taxes can be implemented.
- In the context of an urgent need for more and new resources, we urge serious consideration of the proposal on global taxes such as the CTT (currency transaction tax or tax on foreign exchange operations), which according to recent studies can generate 33 billion USD per year if a 0,005% tax is applied on the exchange of stronger currencies.

¹ Presented by Cecilia Alemany (Association for Women's Rights in Development - AWID) on behalf of the International Facilitation Group on FfD (IFG on FfD), New Rules for International Finance and the Committee of NGOs on FfD.

3) Yesterday several presentations highlighted the need for governments to fulfil their pledge to assign 0.7% of their GNP to official development aid.

We firmly support this demand and deplore that fact that, in real terms, aid has actually decreased in 2006. This shows a lack of political will for development aid to be more effective.

More and better aid is urgently required.

According to the OECD, half of the aid today is in the form of technical assistance; we urge that this should be *demand driven* and not *donor driven*.

Today developed countries are focusing on new modalities of aid, based on the pledges made by them in the framework of the OECD in the Paris Declaration.

We see serious problems in the implementation of these principles, defined by developed countries and also in the way they are evaluated on the basis of data from the World Bank.

The objectives of the Paris Declaration are not very ambitious. Among other things gender equity analysis and women's rights and objectives to eliminate the conditionalities imposed upon developing countries, should be more effectively integrated.

On the other hand, we are of the opinion that for the voices of the Southern countries and civil society to be included in the definition of the future of aid, the universal political space that guarantees that these voices are heard, should be the United Nations, including ECOSOC and we hope that the Doha Conference is an opportunity to take new pledges on financing for development.

4) Yesterday the representative of PNUD highlighted, among other points, that one of the objectives that has still not made any progress is to do with women's empowerment and gender equality.

In this regard, we would like to highlight the importance of women's organizations as agents of development and the need to promote new mechanisms for financing for women in developing countries and relatively less developed countries.

We believe that governments should give greater support to gender architecture in the United Nations so that the system as a whole can make progress in terms of its commitment to gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights, including the economic, social, cultural and environmental rights of all persons.

Finally, Esteemed President, I would like to reiterate the firm commitment of the civil society organizations present here to actively and formally participate in the preparations for the Doha Conference so that financing for development, does not remain a technical issue concerning only a few, but a reality that improves the situation of the most unfortunate, which in a majority are women.