

**SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY**

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**3<sup>RD</sup> PACIFIC MINISTERS MEETING ON WOMEN**  
(Nouméa, New Caledonia, 1 June 2007)

**FINAL DECISIONS OF THE**  
**10<sup>TH</sup> TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE OF PACIFIC WOMEN,**  
(Nouméa, New Caledonia, 27–31 May 2007)

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**PREAMBLE**

1. The 10<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, hosted by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), was held from 27 to 31 May 2007 at the Jacques Iékawé Conference Centre, SPC Headquarters, Nouméa, New Caledonia.

2. The conference was attended by Ministers, officials from Pacific island countries and territories (PICTs) holding responsibilities for women's ministries and departments, and development partners including representatives of regional organisations, research institutions and civil society. It was chaired by the Head of Delegation, Government of Samoa, Ms Luagalau Foisagaasina Eteuati-Shon.

3. **The conference:**

- i) recognised the renewed momentum provided by the Revised Pacific Platform for Action 2005–2015, backed up by political leaders' acknowledgement in the Pacific Plan of the need for gender equality, and the requirement for urgent action to ensure more rapid progress;
- ii) acknowledged the real progress made by PICTs in establishing the foundation for gender equality and the empowerment of women through the adoption of national women's machineries and implementation of gender-sensitive policy frameworks for women, and noted the need for more rigorous monitoring and evaluation;
- iii) acknowledged the contributions of development partners to these efforts;
- iv) noted the current process of United Nations reform, and called on UN agencies, in particular UNIFEM, to strengthen their presence and programming in the region;
- v) affirmed and highlighted the contributions of the women's movement and traditional and civil society;
- vi) recognised the need to better engage with men and boys as advocates for gender equality;
- vii) affirmed the critical importance of engaging more strategically with the UN, including the Commission on the Status of Women, for the promotion of gender equality and empowerment of women in the Pacific;
- viii) agreed that it is now time to step up the pace with renewed vigour and commitment to the advancement of women in the Pacific;
- ix) agreed that the meeting must produce practical recommendations for action that delegations can take back to their countries.

4. Participants at the 10<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of Pacific Women held at SPC headquarters,

Noumea, New Caledonia, 27–31 May 2007, noted:

- i) the merger of SPC's bureaus for women, youth and culture and the Community Education Training Centre (CETC) within the new Human Development Programme (HDP), and the strategic direction of the programme;
- ii) SPC's corporate plan for 2007–2012, which emphasises the critical role of gender equity and gender equality in development;
- iii) the intimate connection between achieving gender equity and gender equality and eradicating poverty.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 1: PACIFIC WOMEN'S BUREAU/ HUMAN DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME REPORT CARD**

5. The meeting:

- i) encouraged governments to support the further development of the new HDP by providing comments to SPC and to meetings of SPC's Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) on how the HDP can best respond to the various needs identified by members for advancing gender equity and gender equality and their objectives in culture, youth and community education;
- ii) requested that a review of the performance of the HDP be conducted after one year to ensure that the programme's focus on gender is not diluted;
- iii) acknowledged the consistent, appropriate and relevant contributions provided by CETC to Pacific women, and encouraged governments to support graduates on their return to their home countries.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 2: MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO NATIONAL POLICY DEVELOPMENT, IMPLEMENTATION AND REPORTING**

6. The meeting:

- i) urged governments to provide adequate human and financial resources for national women's machineries so they can develop specific gender-mainstreaming initiatives and build capacity in gender analysis and the development of national women's action plans in line with national strategic development plans, the Revised Pacific Platform for Action (2005–2015) and the Pacific Plan.
- ii) urged the need for strengthening partnerships between government and stakeholders in gender mainstreaming and the importance of promoting the concept – including through training – at cabinet/ministerial level.
- iii) noted the importance of including local communities in gender-mainstreaming initiatives;
- iii) urged donors and development partners to:
  - increase collaboration and harmonisation on gender equality including establishing more efficient partnerships with regional organisations;
  - continue to provide technical and financial support for capacity building in PICTs to enhance progress in gender mainstreaming, taking country contexts into account.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 3: GENDER STATISTICS AND INDICATORS**

### **FOR MEASURING PROGRESS**

7. The meeting:
- i) urged governments, SPC and other organisations to support ongoing work to strengthen the capacity of national statistics offices to establish, update and use – in close consultation with women’s machineries and stakeholders – gender statistics and indicators disaggregated by ethnicity, age, disability, employment status and other relevant factors;
  - ii) recognised the difficulty of costing the contribution of women to the economy through unpaid labour, but urged governments to include this unpaid work as part of the national accounts;
  - iii) urged governments to consider utilising a standard source of gender-based statistical information and indicators for reporting requirements, noting that there is a place for *ad hoc* research activities to meet specific information needs within PICTs;
  - iv) encouraged development partners to support the joint SPC/Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) gender statistics initiative and other research or information initiatives, including the collection of qualitative data, to enable harmonised monitoring of gender equality throughout the Pacific region.

### **AGENDA ITEM 4: ADVANCING THE PROCESS OF ‘GENDER BUDGETING’ IN THE PACIFIC**

8. The meeting:
- i) urged governments through their national women’s machineries, Departments of Finance and other relevant ministries to progress the development and implementation of gender-mainstreaming tools, including the establishment of gender-responsive budgeting to assist in implementing budget reforms.
  - ii) called on academic institutions and regional organisations to include gender budgeting in their training and technical assistance programmes.

### **AGENDA ITEM 5: CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)**

9. The meeting acknowledged the importance of CEDAW in advancing gender equity and equality in the region, and:
- i) encouraged the governments of Tonga, Nauru, Palau and the USA to ratify CEDAW;
  - ii) urged countries that have ratified CEDAW to provide timely reports to the UN CEDAW Committee, whether Initial Reports, Periodic Reports or subsequent reports;
  - iii) encouraged NGOs within countries that have ratified CEDAW to provide alternative/shadow reports to the UN CEDAW Committee;
  - iv) encouraged development partners to support:
    - Tonga, Nauru and Palau in ratifying CEDAW;
    - full implementation of CEDAW in PICTs, including legislative compliance and capacity-building initiatives, through providing financial resources and technical expertise to national women’s machineries and other relevant ministries;
    - convening subregional processes to advance CEDAW implementation, including holding UN CEDAW Committee reporting sessions in the Pacific region;
    - the development and presentation of government reports and alternative/shadow reports.

**AGENDA ITEM 5.1: GETTING A PACIFIC EXPERT ON THE UNITED NATIONS  
CEDAW COMMITTEE**

10. The meeting recognised the sovereign right of countries to nominate a candidate for the UN CEDAW, and:
- i) endorsed the proposal to support the candidacy of a Pacific expert for the UN CEDAW Committee, provided the candidate meets the selection criteria presented, especially the requirement for experience and recognition at the international level;
  - ii) noted the need for further consultation on the issue of candidate selection with national governments;
  - iii) noted the desirability and strong advantage for the region of having the full support of PICTs for the nominated candidate;
  - iv) requested that SPC facilitate circulation of the profiles of potential candidates in communication with national governments and national women's machineries;
  - v) agreed that should a suitably qualified candidate be put forward by the end of September 2007, the Conference would support her standing for election to the CEDAW Committee in 2008;
  - vi) encouraged countries to enlist support for this candidacy, as appropriate, from their permanent missions to the UN in New York.

**AGENDA ITEM 6: RESEARCH FOR ADVOCACY**

11. The meeting acknowledged the importance of evidence-based decision making, and:
- i) encouraged donors to support governments, local, national and regional organisations, institutions and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), and civil society to produce, publish and disseminate research and results, including research on gender roles, to influence policy and promote advocacy on women's human rights and empowerment;
  - ii) supported the research activities of local and international NGOs and civil society, which can provide new insights to inform the development of policies and programmes aimed at achieving gender equality and the elimination of poverty in the Pacific.

**AGENDA ITEM 7: BUILDING A WOMEN'S MOVEMENT**

12. The meeting recognised the importance of engagement with NGOs and civil society groups working in the area of women's rights, and the value in utilising their specialist expertise to advance gender equality in partnership with government, and in this context encouraged governments and development partners to:

- i) support existing and new women's national and regional movement building efforts;
- ii) support strong participation by women's groups, including indigenous and women's rights groups at relevant forums, for example, by providing for their structured involvement in the Triennial Conference of Pacific Women;
- iii) support the participation and inclusion of marginalised groups, such as young women and women living with disabilities, in movement-building activities.

**AGENDA ITEM 8: INFLUENCING REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

## **FRAMEWORKS**

13. The meeting noted that PICTs needed to engage more strategically on gender equity and gender equality issues at both regional and international levels, and:

- i) urged regional meetings, such as CRGA and the Conference of the Pacific Community, the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting and the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, to include gender and development as a standard item on their agendas;
  - ii) urged the strengthening of regional frameworks, such as the Pacific Plan, to influence key government agencies to engage more closely with national women's machineries to progress human security for Pacific women in accordance with the Pacific Platform for Action.
  - iii) urged SPC to make more concerted efforts to increase its funding for the implementation of the Pacific Platform for Action.
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## WORKSHOP RECOMMENDATIONS

### Women, peace and security: Advancing the UN Security Council Resolution 1325

- Advance the implementation in PICTs by all stakeholders of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 to ensure women's equal participation in decision-making for conflict prevention, management, peace building and peace support operations;
- Endorse the need for research, analysis, and dissemination of information on women's role in peace and security in PICTs, as outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

### Building a Women's Movement

- Recognise the importance of engagement with women's rights' NGOs and civil society organisations (CSOs), and the value in utilising their specialist expertise to advance gender equality in partnership with government;
- Encourage donors to financially support women's movement building efforts;
- Support strong participation by indigenous women's groups and women's rights NGOs/CSOs at relevant forums, for example, by providing for their structured involvement in the Triennial,
- Encourage the inclusion of marginalised groups, such as young women and women living with disabilities, in movement-building activities.

### Young Women Leaders

- Recognise the particular cultural, social political and economic challenges faced by all young women, including those in Pacific Island societies, and the double discrimination they face;
- Acknowledge the contribution and rights of women with disabilities to be included in government and NGO programmes;
- Support innovative leadership programmes for young women so that they are able to effectively participate in decision-making processes in their homes, communities, and countries;
- Utilise the energy and creativity of young women in the ongoing development of the Pacific women's movement;
- Ensure that young women's opinions and experiences are taken into account in making policies that will affect their lives;
- Advocate for a distinct space for young women at national and regional events, and their inclusion in all official delegations.

### **Reporting/Optional Protocol/ Legislative Indicators**

- Urge governments to commit to law reform in the area of women's rights based on national priorities, using the framework of the CEDAW legislative compliance indicators that have been developed;
- Encourage development partners to provide technical assistance on both a national and regional level to facilitate the implementation of CEDAW;
- Request that SPC continues to facilitate the involvement of the French territories in France's report to the CEDAW Committee, and encourages NGOs to participate in the reporting process both on their own and in collaboration with their governments.

### **Mainstreaming Gender in Forestry, Agriculture and Fisheries**

- Urge regional and national institutions to take a two-pronged approach to women's empowerment through:
  - targeted women's programmes,
  - cross-sectoral and integrated approaches in agriculture, fisheries, maritime and forestry;
- Ensure that women's contribution to sustainable development is mainstreamed in the productive sectors through national planning and budgetary processes, parliamentary processes and legislation;
- Improve access to information and training on gender development in the agriculture, fisheries, forestry, and maritime sectors, including access to the internet and cellular networks.

### **Advancing Women in Decision-Making**

- Support new and ongoing coordinated and prioritised research, policy and programming measures to promote the advancement of women in political representation, leadership and decision-making.

### **Women, Media and ICTs – Revisiting Section J of the Beijing Platform for Action**

- Continue to uphold the universal principles of human rights, including freedom of expression, information, media and communication to ensure a diversity of viewpoints;
- Formally recognize women's media initiatives as per the Beijing Platform for Action as providing a critical bridge between women at all levels, particularly between marginalised communities and policy makers;
- Support Pacific media in their efforts to adopt the strategies outlined in the Pacific Women in Media Action Plan;
- Request increased budget allocations for national women's machineries to enable advocacy for national women's plans of action;
- Ensure harmonisation of the Digital Strategy of the Pacific Plan with the commitment of the media and ICTs to the Revised Pacific Platform for Action to promote access to appropriate



information and communication technology that will empower all women, especially those in rural and remote areas.

### **Women and Disability**

- Ensure that the rights and issues of women with disabilities are effectively mainstreamed in all national laws, policies and programmes, and that specific anti-discrimination laws, policies and programmes that include references to disability are enacted in PICTs;
- Ensure that governments undertake data collection on women with disabilities, and that governments and SPC promote the effective participation of women with disabilities in all future Triennial meetings.

### **Violence against Women and Crimes against Women**

- Promote efforts to eliminate violence against women through policy, legislation and programmes;
- Formulate policies and supportive legislation to criminalise any form of violence;
- Call upon leaders of religious, traditional and social organisations to take positive steps to challenge established assumptions that may contribute to the problem of violence against women;
- Request that governments acknowledge the seriousness of violence against women and the need for policies and programmes to collect and publicise data on this violence, including data to quantify its economic costs;
- Adopt a multi-sectoral approach that recognises the role of men, women, boys and girls in addressing the problem of violence against women;
- Call for the abolition of traditional and cultural practices that adversely affect women.

### **Overcoming Cultural Barriers to Equitable Participation by Women**

- Acknowledge the positive impacts and take steps to overcome the negative impacts that culture poses to women's advancement in PICTs;
- Support ongoing research on the role that culture plays in the advancement of women;
- Provide education and training on gender through both the formal and informal sectors.

### **Gender and Land Research**

- Recognise the importance of land to women through ensuring the inclusion of women in land management institutions at local, provincial and national levels;
- Ensure regional and national land initiatives, including legislation and policy reform, are informed by gender analysis;

- Ensure that women receive leadership training and knowledge relating to land ownership rights, land management and access to land and housing;
- Ensure the recognition of women's customary rights to land.

### **Tools for Conducting Research Advocacy**

- Encourage government and development partners to support local, national and regional NGOs and policy makers to produce research for advocacy on women's human rights and empowerment;
- Create national web sites containing existing policy-relevant research on women, with space for policy makers, academics, and activists to identify potential areas for research on gender inequality;
- Urge regional agencies such as SPC, USP and PIFS to undertake regional mapping of all research concerning women's inequality in the Pacific in order to identify and prioritise research themes for advocacy purposes.

### **Gender Budgeting**

- Include gender perspectives in budget decision-making and resource allocation to support commitments to gender equality;
  - Strengthen partnerships between government ministries (e.g. finance, planning, women, statistics,) and between government and civil society using a gender-responsive budget model or strategy applicable to PICTs;
  - Endorse a collaborative approach to strengthen the capacity of Pacific governments to mainstream gender in all budgets and policies.
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