

# WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION WILL BE IMPORTANT FOR INFLUENCING CLIMATE CHANGE

The International Colloquium on Women's Leadership was convened in Monrovia, Liberia, 7-8 March 2009 by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia and President Tarja Halonen of Finland. The high-level meeting attracted more than a thousand participants, including several heads of states and governments, ministers, leaders of intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations, leaders in the fields of business, science and the media, and other stakeholders.

The purpose of the Colloquium was to strengthen women's leadership by networking and sharing information and experience about the most challenging issues facing women globally and in Africa in particular.

One of the main themes of the Colloquium concerned the relationship between climate change and gender. More than a hundred participants discussed what women can do in order to influence climate change.

The Colloquium adopted a Call for Action on Climate Change and Gender. It calls on governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations and other stakeholders:

- to cooperate and do their utmost to achieve the new agreement on climate change, and in this process encourage women to participate in the negotiations and urge parties to incorporate gender considerations into the new agreement in order to lay a foundation for gender-sensitive efforts to implement the new agreement in the most cost-effective way;
- to create an enabling environment for the participation of women at local, national, regional and international levels in decision-making on climate change and in activities to implement these decisions;
- to support the implementation of present and future climate commitments by planning for information sharing, training, and other forms of capacity building to encourage women's participation in mitigation and adaptation, including risk management, as well as by making the necessary resources and technology available.



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**A report, including recommendations for further work as well as the main presentations, can be found on the website of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland: [www.formin.finland.fi](http://www.formin.finland.fi) < International cooperation < Cooperation on Climate Change < Climate Change and Gender.**

**Further information:**

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Finland to the UN Security Council in 2013-2014

## CALL FOR ACTION ON GENDER AND CLIMATE CHANGE BY INTERNATIONAL COLLOQUIUM ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT, LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT, INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY MONROVIA, LIBERIA 7- 8 March, 2009

We participants in the Gender and Climate Change sessions representing women leaders of governments, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations, academia, media and other stakeholders thank Their Excellencies, President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of the Republic of Liberia and President Tarja Halonen of the Republic of Finland for convening the International Colloquium on Women's Empowerment, Leadership Development, International Peace and Security 7-8 March in Monrovia, Liberia. The colloquium provided a forum to reflect on the impact of climate change in developing countries on the daily lives of women, in particular, and also women's possibilities to participate in mitigation and adaptation to climate change. In the light of our deliberations we:

**Recognise** that climate change will undermine most seriously efforts to poverty eradication and achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, so that it raises serious questions of climate justice and equity. Recognise that a gender sensitive strategy is a precondition to the rising challenges of sustainable development.

**Note** with concern the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change presented in its 4<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report, that climate change may affect most strongly the poorest regions and people, especially women, young people and children through impacts on agriculture, food security and availability of water, which are traditionally women's tasks in many developing countries.

**Recognise** that women and young people have the skills and capacities to adapt to climate change, and they can also be powerful actors e.g. by planting trees, maintaining

forests and developing ecological food production and sustainable household energy which are also creating new sustainable jobs. Likewise they can play central role in changing the consumption and production patterns to sustainable ones. Thus awareness raising, information and using traditional knowledge as well strengthening women's networks is important.

**Acknowledge** the historic momentum of the ongoing negotiations on a new global and comprehensive climate agreement and the commitment of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to agree on the new commitments and action in Copenhagen in December 2009.

**Call upon** all Parties and relevant intergovernmental and nongovernmental organisations and other stakeholders to co-operate and to do their utmost to achieve the new agreement on climate change, and in this process pay particular attention to encouraging women to participate in the negotiations and urge parties to incorporate gender considerations into the new agreement in order to lay foundation for gender-sensitive efforts to implement the agreement in the most cost effective way.

**Further call upon** governments and other stakeholders to create an enabling environment for participation of women at the local, national, regional and international level in decision making on climate change and in activities to implement these decisions.

**Request** governments, the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the UN system in the context of delivering as one, other relevant international organisations and financing institutions in the context of current and coming programmes and priorities to support the implementation of the climate commitments and actions by planning for information sharing, training and other forms of capacity building to encourage women's participation in the mitigation and adaptation activities including risk prevention and management as well as making the necessary resources and technology available both for men and women. Special consideration need to be given to developing gender sensitive financing. ■