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**STATEMENT BY THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF BUSINESS AND
PROFESSIONAL WOMEN ****

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INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

Submission to

HABITAT Conference and Forum

1. The International Federation of Business and Professional Women is an organization with affiliates in some 60 countries with a membership of about 300,000. It is unique in that it is the only international organization which has the improvement of the status of business and professional women as its chief aim and is now the most influential organization of business and professional women in the world. Its members are found on all continents, of all races and holding beliefs in the world's major religions.
2. The Aims of the Organization are, in summary, to encourage women and girls: to work for equality with men in education, training, remuneration, opportunities for employment and advancement, and for high standards of service in business and the professions; to promote friendship, co-operation and understanding among the world's women; and to participate equally with men in the economic, civil and political life of their countries.
3. The Constitution states clearly that this Organization shall be non-political; that it shall promote its objectives without distinction as to race, language or religion. Since its founding in Geneva in 1930 it has lived up to these precepts.
4. The International Federation of Business and Professional Women is the recognized voice of business and professional women at the United Nations, of which it has been a supporter since the inception of that body. As an UGO, it has Consultative Status Category II at the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). It is registered on the Special List of NGOs having consultative status with the International Labour Office (ILO) and has submitted facts and figures related to the problems of the woman worker. It also has consultative status with UNICEF and keeps in close touch with WHO, FAO and UNEP. Member Federations and Associate Clubs have worked to influence the attitudes of their governments towards ratification of United Nations conventions for improving the status of women.
5. This Organization has a very special and specialized interest in Human Settlements and, because the majority of its members live in urban areas, wishes to present some ideas on urban human settlements. So far as this Organization is concerned, "Human Settlements" includes housing, working conditions, transportation, distribution (of food, clothing, etc.), day care centres for children of working parents, availability of shopping areas and educational and training institutions to work and home, housing for the elderly, the activities of youth with a view to preventing delinquency. Nevertheless, Human Settlements are not limited to the urban areas because the members have a very real interest in women and girls in the rural areas.
6. The International Federation finds itself in general agreement with the principles set out in paragraphs 135 to 140 inclusive of Section H, Chapter II, of UN Document E/Conf./66/5 for the World Conference on International Women's Year. It would like to see many more women architects, town planners and in civic governments participating in human settlements arrangements. This would prevent, it is hoped, future bad planning of work areas in homes and apartments - so that lights are not placed where a worker's shadow is cast on her work and where work areas and tables would be of a convenient height and size.
7. This Organization has arranged seminars in connection with human settlements. In Munich, Germany, in June 1973, a seminar entitled "The Crisis in Human Environment - Human Settlements" and sub-titled "The Role of Business and Professional Women in Improving the Quality of Life" was held. In July of the same year, at Port of Spain, Trinidad, a week-long seminar, "Living in Town" was co-sponsored with the Commonwealth Foundation. From this seminar came resolutions urging the

United Nations, Specialized Agencies, National Governments and IFBPW affiliates to try to bring to women in both rural and urban areas adequate housing, accessible water supply, improved sanitation, and training in more productive methods in, and more modern implements for, the production of food. These resolutions were adopted subsequently by the members, meeting in Congress held in Buenos Aires, Argentina, in August, 1974.

8. Many affiliates have undertaken projects which aim to improve conditions in human settlements. In so doing they have initiated unusual and useful techniques which benefit the people for whom they are planned, especially the elderly and disadvantaged. Among the members are architects, town planners, counsellors, workers with juvenile delinquents, recreation directors, child care specialists and many others whose work is helping to improve conditions in their communities.

9. Several affiliates are doing outstanding work in the field of housing for the elderly. Their criteria include adequacy, safety and modest cost. Others have set up projects where women and girls, streaming into the cities from rural areas, have been housed, their education and training for careers and instruction in homemaking are overseen. Others, again, have undertaken the establishment of day care projects.

10. In the field of education, training and career counselling, many affiliates have projects in hand that range all the way from helping to reduce illiteracy in their countries to encourage higher education and to teach crafts; many give bursaries, fellowships and scholarships to assist financially where this is needed.

11. Because affiliates are deeply concerned with the environment and quality of life in their communities, many have co-operated with local governments in projects to improve urban and rural areas, to clean up water supplies and to clean up the air.

12. The International Federation of Business and Professional Women requested from its affiliates information of what are the needs of human settlements and suggestions on how to supply these needs. The replies can be summed up as follows: In no country is there sufficient day care for the children of working parents; in densely populated areas there is great need for recreational facilities for poorer people - and these need not be expensive or complicated - and for the elderly, for parents, for young people and for small children; attention was drawn to the fact that buildings seem to be created only for the young, no children, active people with little thought for the elderly, handicapped or the very young; shopping areas were often far from housing thus making the purchase of groceries, etc., a real burden on people who must shop after work and for housewives with no private transportation; that shopping centres seemed to be laid out and sited with the idea that everyone drives a car; that public transportation, with high steps and awkward ways of boarding, took no thought for the handicapped, the elderly or people carrying small children or heavy parcels; that quiet places out-of-doors were lacking in many urban areas for people to be able to sit and relax away from noise and crowds yet close enough to housing for parents with small children, the handicapped and the elderly to enjoy them; and that land use zoning could be done more with people in mind in urban areas particularly so that availability of places of employment would be nearer to workers. One respondent said that there were not enough places for tired, handicapped and families with children to sit down and rest when walking or shopping.

13. There is need in some countries for housing for single people; many now occupy premises needed by larger family units. Flats for single people should be in different areas of cities and of various rental structures.

14. As much as possible, homes should be equipped with labour-saving devices. Ideal dwelling should be spacious enough for comfortable living for each member

of the family; but it is realized that this is not always possible yet careful planning could make the best possible use of available space. Even in under-developed areas, care should be taken to dispose of body wastes so they do not contaminate food; pure drinking water should be available or steps taken to purify it; facilities for body hygiene should be provided; and facilities for safe storage and preparation of healthful and nutritious food should be provided.

15. In urban areas where high-rise apartments are the norm, future planners for residential areas should keep in mind the needs mentioned above and should take into consideration the special services needed for children with working parents, the handicapped and the elderly - and the accessibility of such services.

16. Food - and clothing - must be shopped for on a regular basis. Public transportation is necessary for most people to get to shopping areas. Shopping can be a physical burden and strain and public transportation that is accessible without walking long distances with heavy parcels (and with small children) is a necessity. Shopping hours are important to working parents who must shop on the way home from work or on their days off. Places where mothers may sit to feed and change their babies should be provided in shopping areas. It has been noted that some transportation companies are beginning to consider the elderly and handicapped when building their equipment so that ingress and egress are easier for those people and for parents with prams and small children. This Organization looks with favour on these developments.

17. Working conditions are so many and varied that it is difficult to deal with them adequately in this short paper. Briefly it could be said that space should be adequate for the kind of work being done, equipment should be of a height and type that encourages efficiency and does not tire the worker unduly, air should be free from pollutants, and there should be good ventilation, light and heat. It has been found in surveys that better work is done more efficiently when conditions are good.

18. Centres for recreation and sports activities are one way in which some urban communities deal with problem of providing opportunities for their citizens to participate. Play spaces for children near their homes are almost a necessity. Many local governments assist in organizing such activities by funding areas and equipment, providing leaders, etc. Voluntary organizations are often active in this kind of thing. Recreation means different things to different people and while each should be able to do what is best for her/him, it is a good idea to have some constructive interest to avoid boredom.

19. It is the policy of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women that there should be equal opportunity for education and training for women and men, and its affiliates have been encouraged to work to that end. This is meant to apply equally to urban and rural women and girls. For the rural women and girls emphasis is placed on opportunities for them to learn the use of machines that would increase the production and distribution of food, the use of fertilizers, and other matters important to raising the standard of living in the developing countries especially. The World Food Conference in Rome in November 1974 accepted that principle and in the Plan of Action and Resolutions of the UN Conference for International Women's Year, many suggestions were made that women should have these opportunities and this action is endorsed enthusiastically.

20. Schools for younger children should be located near or within residential areas in urban centres. This would be impossible in rural areas, but in many of these buses transport the children to and from school.

21. Some communities use their school facilities much more efficiently than others. For example, in some communities the library at the school serves both the children and the public; children with learning disabilities receive special help there rather than in segregated buildings; parents and grandparents are used in recrea-

tional and teaching roles as helpers; group activities take place in school areas not in use by students or at times when they are not at school; night school classes for adults are held; and other activities of many kinds can keep the school building busy and partly compensate for the expense of the school and its equipment.

22. Distance and communications between the dwelling, place of work, location of services and recreation area and the standard and capacity of means of collective transport determine to a large degree how much time people have available for their personal/family relationships.

23. The urbanization of society proceeds apace with the migration of people from rural to urban areas. This movement has broken down old ties of family relationships and friendships. Lack of contact in new housing areas has also been noted as a social problem. Experience shows that women at home are more adversely affected by these movements than men as they haven't the same opportunities to form new relationships. The sex difference in this area is especially marked in the case of women immigrants from abroad who have the learning of a new language and new customs to cope with as well.

24. Anonymity in living in new communities (migrants from abroad or from rural to urban areas) makes access to municipal authorities and services much more difficult; it adds, too, to the difficulty of achieving group solidarity, the basis for common activities.

25. These social relationships can be hindered - or, at least, neglected - if economic pressures result from the migrations. Women suffer most because they are less able to cope socially, especially if they carry out the dual role of housewife and full- or part-time worker.

26. It is important that all groups of interested people should play a part in the organization of the environment, with special emphasis on human settlements. It is the fervent hope of the International Federation of Business and Professional Women that the developing countries will try to avoid the mistakes made in more developed areas so that planning for urban and rural settlements may keep people in mind and not just buildings, roads and streets, etc.

27. In this planning process there is need for town planners, sociologists, geographers, architects, landscapers, environmentalists, medical teams and many other specialists, hopefully with minds open for ideas and the imagination to carry them out....for people. Architects can provide in their designs all the requirements of an area and have much to contribute to a better and happier life. It is important that many disciplines play a full part in any plan dealing with the environment in any form. Women must have a full and equal role in this work.

28. People must work within a plan that would enable them to realize themselves fully. Therefore, if the plan does not provide for the realization of both parts of human person - spiritual and corporeal - then it cannot be justified as a whole plan intended for the betterment of people during their life span. It is important, therefore, that Human Settlement planning take into account, first of all, WHAT IS HUMAN; and taking this as the point of departure, proceed to plan the settlement for human beings.

Respectfully submitted,

THE INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN

per:



Nazla L. Dane, Immediate Past President and
Chairman, UN Standing Committee.

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