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Première session

Point 4 de l'ordre du jour

**MISE EN APPLICATION DE LA RÉOLUTION 60/251 DE L'ASSEMBLÉE
GÉNÉRALE DU 15 MARS 2006 INTITULÉE «CONSEIL
DES DROITS DE L'HOMME»**

**Lettre datée du 21 juin 2006, adressée au Président du Conseil des droits
de l'homme par Madame la Ministre des affaires étrangères
de la Croatie**

J'ai l'honneur de vous informer que se sont réunies à Genève, le 19 juin 2006, en marge de la première session du Conseil des droits de l'homme, Mesdames les Ministres des affaires étrangères de la Barbade, M^{me} Billie Miller, de la Croatie, M^{me} Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, du Liechtenstein, M^{me} Rita Kieber Beck, et de la Suisse, M^{me} Micheline Calmy-Rey, ainsi que des fonctionnaires et dignitaires de haut rang, M^{me} Akiko Yamanaka, Vice-Ministre des affaires étrangères du Japon, M^{me} Esperança Machavela, Ministre de la justice du Mozambique, M^{me} Edda Mukabagwiza, Ministre de la justice du Rwanda, M^{me} Belela Herrera, Vice-Ministre des affaires étrangères de l'Uruguay, M^{me} Louise Arbour, Haut-Commissaire aux droits de l'homme, M^{me} Mehr Khan Williams, Haut-Commissaire adjoint aux droits de l'homme, et M^{me} Wangari Mathai, lauréate du prix Nobel de la paix. Elles se sont réunies pour échanger leurs données d'expérience et leurs vues sur les droits des femmes, sur la réforme de l'Organisation des Nations Unies ainsi que sur la participation des femmes à la vie politique et publique.

Les participantes ont adopté à l'unanimité une déclaration, intitulée «Statement on the Participation of Women in Political Life», proposée par la Croatie, dont vous trouverez ci-joint copie¹.

La déclaration a également reçu le soutien de M^{me} María Teresa Fernández de la Vega, Vice-Premier Ministre de l'Espagne, M^{me} Benita Ferrero Waldner, Commissaire européenne chargée des relations extérieures et de la politique européenne de voisinage, et de huit autres Ministres des affaires étrangères, M^{mes} Ursula Plassnik, Dora Bakoyannis, Kinga Göncz, Tzipi Livni, Ilinka Mitreva, Anna Fotyga et Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma.

Je vous serais très reconnaissante de bien vouloir faire publier cette déclaration sous forme de document officiel de la première session du Conseil des droits de l'homme.

(Signé) Kolinda **Grabar-Kitarović**
La Ministre des affaires étrangères de la Croatie

¹ Déclaration jointe en annexe telle qu'elle a été communiquée, uniquement dans la langue d'origine.

Annex

STATEMENT

by the Women Ministers of Foreign Affairs and High Officials on the Participation of Women in political life on the margins of the 1st session of the Human Rights Council

We, women ministers, participating at the 1st session of the Human Rights Council, have to raise our voice against all existing forms of discrimination against women including cultural stereotypes and prejudices, and point out the need for ensuring full and targeted attention to end discrimination of women in political and public life.

Creation of the Human Rights Council is providing us with the unique opportunity to locate women's human rights at the heart of its work and to integrate these rights fully in all agenda items.

Realization of the principle of equality of women and men is a precondition for the functioning of any democratic society. This principle has been embodied in the constitutions and laws of many countries and in all key international instruments but its practical realization in political and public life is still far away.

Examining the present political landscape, it is evident that women are very much under-represented in the political institutions and in public life in general. Even though some progress has been achieved since the introduction of policies and programs resulting in an increase in women's participation in decision-making processes at the local, national and international levels, there are still economic, social and cultural barriers that limit their active participation.

Women's active participation at all levels of decision-making processes is essential for achieving the goals of gender equality, development and peace and for strengthening of democracy, as well as for the advancement of the society as a whole. We are also strongly convinced that the empowerment of women and their effective participation in all spheres of life are essential tools in the prevention and elimination of gender-based discrimination and all forms of violence against women.

Recalling the framework of international standards of equality and of participation of women and men in public life, including those enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women, we underline that women have, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, the right to vote in all elections and to be eligible for election, to hold public office and exercise all public functions established by national law.

We take this opportunity to declare our support to the outcome of the 2005 World Summit which reaffirmed that the full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the Beijing

Declaration and the Platform for Action is an essential contribution for the achievement of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

In light of the persistent gap between women's *de iure* and *de facto* equality, we urge governments to implement effective temporary special measures to accelerate the achievement of women's *de facto* equality.

The review and amendment of existing electoral laws is a precondition to enhance women's equal participation and we therefore call upon governments to adopt temporary special measures, such as provided for by the General Recommendation No. 25 of the CEDAW Committee, including, setting benchmarks, for achieving equitable representation of women in elected positions and assisting women candidates to develop their skills, capacities and expertise. We are deeply convinced that, in the long run, it will result in the development of policies and programs building a critical mass of women in strategic economic, social and political positions, and thus having a genuine impact on political life of any country.

In this regard, we fully subscribe to strategies aimed at involving men in the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women as well as fostering an enabling environment in decision-making processes at all levels, including measures for reconciliation of family and employment responsibilities.

We express our full commitment to undertake measures to eliminate occupational segregation and gender wage gaps in the labor market, and to develop strategies to eliminate gender stereotypes, including in the education system. We strongly recommend to all governments to set up a statistical system for successful monitoring the progress of equality in all public sectors.

We, women ministers, will endure in our request for the removal of all barriers in order to achieve practical realization of gender equality in political and public life.

Geneva, 19 June 2006
