



UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/10045
7 February 1975

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirtieth session

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR, INCLUDING THE PROPOSALS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
OF THE CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S YEAR

Letter dated 6 February 1975 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of the German Democratic Republic to the United
Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you, annexed to this letter, excerpts from a statement made by Mr. Alfred Neumann, Chairman of the German Democratic Republic National Committee for the International Women's Year and First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the German Democratic Republic, at an international press conference on the International Women's Year held at Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, on 22 January 1975.

May I ask you to circulate these excerpts as an official document of the General Assembly under the item entitled "International Women's Year, including the proposals and recommendations of the Conference of the International Women's Year" of the provisional agenda of the thirtieth session and to bring this document to the attention of the forthcoming session of the Consultative Committee for the Conference of the International Women's Year.

(Signed) Bernhard NEUGEBAUER
Envoy Extraordinary and
Minister Plenipotentiary
Chargé d'Affaires

ANNEX

Excerpts from a statement made by the Chairman of the German Democratic Republic National Committee for the International Women's Year, Mr. Alfred Neumann, member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and First Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the German Democratic Republic, at a press conference on the International Women's Year, held at Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, on 22 January 1975

Mr. Alfred Neumann made the following statement:

"At its twenty-seventh session, the General Assembly of the United Nations, in resolution 3010 (XXVII), proclaimed 1975 International Women's Year. The guiding ideas of the Year are to be 'equality, development and peace' - which are demands affecting vital questions of women's life all over the world. The United Nations resolution also proclaimed important objectives. Equal rights with men are to be promoted, women are to be included to a greater extent in the economic, social and cultural processes at the national, regional and international levels. What matters now is to recognize the growing contribution made by women to the development of friendly relations and co-operation between States as well as to the strengthening of international peace.

"Ever since its foundation, the German Democratic Republic has regarded the promotion of women and their full legal and political equality with men as part and parcel of its planned and continuous policy. From our point of view, the development and promotion of women cannot be limited to the period of one year only.

"In the German Democratic Republic, the 'classical' problems of women, dating back to the capitalist past, were resolved a long time ago. The fact that the Government of the German Democratic Republic and the non-governmental organizations of our country are fully supporting the objectives and programmes for the International Women's Year also manifests our internationalist attitude.

"All United Nations decisions and conventions on the position and the rights of women have been implemented in our country. All the same, there are still a number of specific problems connected with the higher level of our social development. What has been the prevailing practice and dominant moral principle for centuries cannot be overcome, either materially or ideologically, within only one generation. For instance, it is not always easy for women with children to meet all the demands of work and family life. That requires more than just the wish to combine everything in a harmonious way.

"From the first day of its existence, our socialist State has undertaken great efforts in this direction. Its objective is, in accordance with the possibilities of our national economy, to make life for working women and mothers easier and, also, to make it possible for them to make full use of their equal rights. All the resolutions of the Eighth Party Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany and, in particular, the socio-political programme adopted there, which is being implemented successfully, serve this purpose. Also in 1975, the last year of our present Five-Year Plan, these programmes are being realized consistently.

"At present, 84.5 per cent of all women of working age are in a job or undergoing vocational training or further qualification; 49.1 per cent of all workers in the German Democratic Republic are women. The scope of activities for women is no longer limited to the so-called traditional women's professions. Women are working successfully now as skilled workers in production, brigadiers, forewomen, directors, presidents of agricultural co-operatives, engineers, technicians, scientists, artists, judges, public prosecutors and mayors.

"In only one generation we have succeeded in reducing decisively the education gap between men and women, inherited from capitalism. By the end of 1973, 52.5 per cent of all female employees were skilled workers; among those under 35, 66.3 per cent were skilled workers and among those under 25, even 69 per cent; 54.1 per cent of all students enrolled at our universities and colleges for full-time studies were young women and girls."

Mr. Alfred Neumann then explained the programme for events in the German Democratic Republic connected with the International Women's Year, prepared by the National Committee and adopted by the Council of Ministers of the German Democratic Republic:

"Highlights will be:

"(a) The Tenth National Congress of the Women's Organization of the German Democratic Republic, International Women's Day on 8 March 1975, and the thirtieth anniversary of liberation from Hitler fascism;

"(b) The World Congress of the International Women's Year, to take place in Berlin, capital of the German Democratic Republic, from 20 to 24 October 1975;

"(c) All government authorities and social organizations will pay special attention to those tasks which serve to implement the resolutions of the Eighth Party Congress of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany regarding the promotion of women and mothers, their training and further qualification in their professions, the improvement of their working and living conditions, and their health;

"(d) In industry and agriculture, in social and government institutions, and in residential areas, the cause of the International Women's Year will be promoted by special events;

/...

"(e) A large number of events will focus special attention on the fact that the Soviet Union was the first country in the world to implement the fundamental rights of women;

"(f) Works created by artists on the struggle of women for equal rights and human dignity against capitalist exploitation, fascism, racism and colonial oppression will be an expression of international anti-imperialist solidarity;

"(g) In the field of sports and physical culture, the activities of women and girls will be further promoted;

"(h) Universities, colleges, and technical schools will organize scientific events.

"The International Women's Year will give the women and all citizens of our country the opportunity to participate even more actively in the construction of the developed socialist society, to increase their contribution towards international solidarity and their participation in the struggle for maintaining and safeguarding peace."

During the press conference, representatives of the Government of the German Democratic Republic and of social organizations presented detailed facts on the social development of women in the German Democratic Republic.

Professor Dr. Anneliese Toedtman, Deputy Minister of Health, emphasized that care in the national health system began with expectant mothers; in 1974, over 99 per cent of them were attended in maternity care centres.

Mrs. Inge Lange, candidate member of the Politburo and secretary of the Central Committee of the Socialist Unity Party of Germany, emphasized especially the support granted to families having more than three children and to working women.

Professor Dr. Johanna Toepfer, Deputy Chairman and member of the Secretariat of the National Executive of the Association of Free German Trade Unions, underlined that 31.8 per cent of all deputies of the People's Chamber (parliament) of the German Democratic Republic are women, and that women constitute 40 per cent of the membership in regional and local parliaments.
