



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 December 2008
English
Original: Arabic

Commission on the Status of Women

Fifty-third session

2-13 March 2009

Item 3 (a) (i) of the provisional agenda*

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS

Statement submitted by Association nationale Al Hidn, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* E/CN.6/2009/1.



Statement*

The Association Nationale Al Hidn is honoured to take part in the fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which has the priority theme of the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS. The family, while undergoing rapid transformation, remains central to the balanced rearing of human beings. However, its existence, which is so crucial for both the individual and society, is being threatened by unpredictable notions that lack a secure basis in principles. We therefore believe that efforts should be redoubled to protect the family and ground it on the bases that we agreed at the Doha International Conference for the Family, where the consensus was that a family consists of a female spouse, a male spouse and children living under one roof. That concept of family must be constitutionally protected by national laws and incorporated into international agreements, with emphasis on the obligations of the State, as an institution that provides care for and serves its citizens, towards the institution of the family and its various legal, logistical and educational needs.

We believe that the following are essential:

1. Awareness of the concept of marriage should guide Government policies, programmes and budgets.
2. The values and culture of marriage should be expressly incorporated into educational curriculums and national media policy, with a view to increasing the prestige of the family. The roles of family members should be honoured and medals and awards provided for performance of those roles.
3. Consideration should also be given to family role as a basic criterion in the selection of officials and politicians and as an indicator for evaluating the electoral programmes of political parties.

That should be achieved by the following:

- Disseminating a culture of partnership between men and women with respect to family responsibilities;
- Increasing the prestige of motherhood and taking it into consideration in social and professional advancement;
- Providing for alternating paternity and maternity leave in order to ensure care for infants;
- Ensuring women's access to health care, and adopting values-based approaches to the prevention of HIV/AIDS that are compatible with local cultural specificities.

* Issued without formal editing.