

Declaration of the 2nd Northeast Asian Women's Environmental Conference (NEAWEN): Kitakyushu & Tokyo

We, the participants from China, Korea, Mongolia and Japan, who gathered for the 2nd Northeast Asian Women's Environmental Conference held in Kitakyushu and Tokyo, Japan, on October 12 and 14, 2002, declare our resolution to build up a gender-equal and sustainable society based on our discussions concerning global environmental issues, including water, air, energy and waste.

Recalling the Johannesburg Declaration and the Plan of Implementation adopted by delegates of 191 countries at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held from August 26 to September 4, 2002, we advocate gender equality as a key issue for sustainable development. We also emphasize that the mainstreaming of women's concerns should be pursued in sustainable development.

We recognize that Agenda 21 at the 1992 UNCED in Rio de Janeiro and the Plan of Implementation at the 2002 WSSD in Johannesburg are insufficient to satisfy our demand for gender justice. Considering that globalization accelerates impoverishment of certain groups of people, especially women, and adversely affects the environment, we propose to take an alternative approach, which promotes regeneration rather than mere protection of the environment.

1. We are concerned about the scarcity and unequal distribution of fresh water, which is vital to the life and health of human beings. Water problems, which include water contamination by toxic chemicals and domestic waste and the poor management of water resources, have a tremendous impact on women's household work as well as on their reproductive health. Therefore, we propose an eco-system approach, which covers a wide range of problems from the forest to the sea, and ask for women's equal participation in decision-making regarding water issues from the household level to the global level. We also urge the mainstreaming of gender perspectives in all decision-making processes and documents at the Third World Water Forum to be held in Japan in March 2003.
2. We are alert to the danger of global warming and other environmental disasters, including sandstorms, *zud*, floods, etc. and their trans-boundary impacts. To overcome these ecological crises, we propose establishing time bounded targets in promoting renewable energy, such as wind, solar, and biomass energy. Although women are key actors in tackling global warming and other environmental disasters, the representation of women in decision-making bodies which design environmental policies, especially energy policies, has been extremely limited, and energy policies are based on an unjust gender division of labor. We call urgently for women's equal participation in decision-making based on gender sensitivity.

3. We recognize that the current lifestyle of mass production, consumption and disposal should be changed and that institutional mechanisms should be introduced to bring about the change. In view of the important roles that women play in society as well as the family, we urge women's initiatives be reflected in environmental education. We strongly recommend an active role for women in decision-making processes aimed at promoting sustainable consumption and production.

We here affirm that our grassroots activities are critical for implementing sustainable development. We call for governments, NGOs and other major groups in Northeast Asia to support our initiatives. By abandoning excessive materialism and advocating reasonable consumption, we appeal for a new culture and ethics that value harmony among people, including different sexes and generations, and between human beings and nature. Therefore, we advocate the necessity of environmental education.

In order to strengthen the Northeast Asian Women's Environmental Network for future effectiveness, we propose several concrete plans of action, including the following:

- 1) To strengthen cooperation within the Northeast Asian Women's Environmental Network in order to learn from one another;
- 2) To collect clear and appropriate examples of integrating gender perspectives in projects and programs related to sustainable development in the Northeast Asian region and utilize them in each country;
- 3) To mainstream gender perspectives in developing educational programs for a sustainable lifestyle;
- 4) To conduct research on environmental policies from gender perspectives in the Northeast Asian region and lobby various levels of governments for gender justice.

We, the participants of the 2nd Northeast Asian Women's Environmental Conference, commit ourselves to exploring action plans for fruitful networking in the region.

12 October 2002 (Kitakyushu City)

14 October 2002 (Tokyo)

Drafting Committee:

PARK, Eun-kyung (Korea)

LEE, Mi-young (Korea)

SU, Wenping (China)

ZHOU, Ling (China)

SHAGDARIIN, Battsetseg (Mongolia)

EJIRI, Mihoko (Japan)

Secretariat:

Kitakyushu Forum on Asian Women

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