

**FOURTH UNECE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

GENEVA, 1-2 December 2009

Agenda item 10. Cross-cutting issues, interlinkages and implementation of CSD-17 decisions

Intervention by the International Federation of Business and Professional Women¹

We appreciate the efforts of the UNECE secretariat to present the different themes of this CSD cycle from different “angles”. In two cases however, we feel that the result could have been more balanced: it would have been interesting to have the view of NGO’s/other major groups as well during the panel/ keynote speeches / presentations on mining and chemicals.

We offer our mediation and contacts list of experts for the next occasion.

When it comes to cross cutting issues like “gender”, we would like to point out the following:

- Gender mainstreaming (policies) and women’s participation is NOT the same; looking at recommendations that talk about the pivotal role of women and women as agents of change, and the importance of them being part of decision-making processes, we have to say we still not see enough evidence of implementation of those recommendations and policies
What is rather interesting, is the gender balance that seems to exist in this room; it would be interesting to see a breakdown of actual functions though...
- There seems to be a standard phrase, used by a lot of well meaning governments which is a bit strange when looked at it more closely: “...involve women and OTHER vulnerable groups”. You may see the funny contradiction: women as agents of change, being a vulnerable group as a whole? The women major groups shows great diversity in who they are and the levels of expertise.
- People cannot be developed, people develop themselves” said HRH Prince Claus. Some of us would appreciate a little help from a friend to be taken seriously so we can do our jobs; others need serious assistance financially and otherwise to be able to play their roles and get out of the poverty trap. Of course we ask attention for the effects of chemicals, climate change etc. on women because of their biological make-up.
- In all cases: CSD 17 for the first time phrased it correctly and referred to women as “actors” not just as a target group – we urge member states and others to be demand driven and precise in their wording. It will make your support even more noteworthy and appreciated.

Lesha Witmer

Chair

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¹ The text is presented as received from the author.