

The Federal Republic of Germany

Positions for the Commission on the Status of Women

I. Promoting Equal Participation of Women in Government

The Federal Republic of Germany is strongly connected with organizations such as the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and the World Bank's Gender Action Plan, in an effort to promote the equality of women nationally and internationally. Germany is very active through European organizations by donating over 20 million Euros annually to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), International Planned Parenthood Federal (IPPF), an NGO umbrella organization, and UNIFEM. In an effort to declare Germany's commitment to the issue of women quality, the nation has ratified the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, and the Millennium Declaration of the United Nations. The main action Germany has taken is on a regional level through cooperation with the European Union. In 2002, Germany joined the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA). Based out of Stockholm, IDEA focuses specifically on promoting the advancement of women through a political system. On a national level, while Germany continues to advocate for further equal government participation, the percentage of women has risen only slightly. This minute increase still leaves the social and economic views of women largely underrepresented.

The nation of Germany is focusing efforts with promoting the participation of women in government through programs of quotas and federal policy. The implementation of quotas as to percentiles or specific seats reserved for women in parliament has proven to increase proper representation of a population in government. The quotas should be based strictly upon population representation, therefore allotting a percentile of seats for women based upon the percentile of women within the populace. Through international pressure and cooperation, federal policies should be amended to properly address issues of discrimination and equality of women. These two policies along with education and proper encouragement will specifically allow women access to parliament.

II. Women's Role in the Global Economy

With the election of the first female Chancellor, Angela Merkel in 2000, Germany is proud of the progress made with regards to women's rights, but is still working towards equality. Germany, together with its European partners, supports UN measures such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the 2005 World Summit Outcome, and the internationally agreed development goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals. The Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 seek to grant women equality with men. The Federal Republic of Germany was one of the first countries to sign this Optional Protocol on 10 December 1999. Germany has strongly stood behind measures calling for the equality of women in all aspects, including economically. Naturally, all of the rights in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948, as well as the rights contained in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (both from 1966) apply to both men and women. One of the focuses, both within national and international bounds, is the implementation of gender budgeting. This specifically calls for the allocation of funds within a state's budget in an equal manner regarding gender. For example, the German cooperation with Morocco, this works to bring awareness of the large population of lower economic women to the budgeting committees.

The CEDAW Convention is primarily an anti-discrimination convention that was originally established in 1981. Germany stands behind the CEDAW Convention, but believes more specific language could be used to define the types of discrimination included in the convention. One of the paramount recognitions was that violence against women was considered a form of discrimination by the committee. Due to this, countries have begun to write laws protecting women against violence in several countries. Under the CEDAW Convention, a new development in international law was created to provide women with a place to voice the abuses they have witnessed in a safe environment. Gender budgeting should be

implemented, especially in developing nations, as this will adequately address issues of unequal access to resources. The gender budgeting systems, such as those within Morocco, will take into consideration the variation of usage of resources between sexes and account for these differences.

III. Combating Sexual Exploitation of and Violence Against Women

The violence and sexual exploitation of women inhibits the further development of a nation to a democratic and westernized state. Germany affirms the need for more specific, strong definitions of exploitation within the UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The declaration does define the three types of violence against women, which include violence in the family, violence in the community, and violence perpetrated or condoned by the State. The nation is in full support of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. This resolution “calls for full and equal participation by women in peace processes and for the mainstreaming of gender issues in security work.” According to the World Health Organization, “the prevention of violence against women [should] be considered a high priority for national health, social and legal agendas of both industrialized and developing countries.” The most effective forms of prevention are through awareness raising campaigns, such as Amnesty International’s Stop Violence Against Women Campaign, which has focused on domestic violence and discrimination. The Council of Europe (CoE) adopted the Stop Domestic Violence Against Women Campaign through the implementation of task force in 2005. The CoE recommends “the development of a legally binding instrument on the elimination of all forms of violence against women in Europe; the establishment of a mechanism to monitor implementation of such a convention; the development of a comprehensive system of legal protection; the development of comprehensive services for all survivors of violence; and the commitment of adequate resources and funding to support NGOs to provide services.”

In collaboration with the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), the Federal Republic of Germany believes that to amend this issue, the process must be divided into the following steps: prevention, protection and assistance, and prosecution. In matters of prevention, the Commission on the Status of Women should work with organizations such as the OSCE in implementing programs of public awareness, cooperative policy development, education for both men and women, a focus on the youth, and community involvement. These systems should be put in place on a global level. In an effort to provide protection and assistance to victims, the Commission on the Status of Women should work to develop programs such as victim identification, comprehensive care for short and long-term cases, safety and reintegration, legal protection, treatment of perpetrators, and crisis centers. For example, the Rural Women of Kyrgyzstan Against Violence program, which focuses on the accessibility of aid and protection as well as increasing awareness of Kyrgyz Law on Domestic Violence. The final step in combating the sexual exploitation of and violence against women is prosecution. The implementation of laws and policies, as well as internal policies and codes of conduct, dealing with gender equality, socially, economically, and politically, would encourage multinational cooperation and pressure in this effort. Action plans should be implemented which will directly address the proper functioning of other organizations, companies, and social groups. Another important issue is the proper training and protocol enforcement of peacekeeping forces. This should be carefully implemented through the cooperation with other multinational organizations such as the United Nations, UNIFEM, and Non-Governmental Organizations.