



# Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development

NGO in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations

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Dear All,

Women's rights groups, activists and political leaders across Asia-Pacific have been campaigning for quota legislation in the Papua New Guinea (PNG) Parliament, under CEDAW and Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA). The Campaign started in 2009 and received heavy opposition. But tireless efforts by women's rights groups, activists and political leaders resulted in the PNG government tabling the Bill this year in May. This time, there were more people who showed support to the Bill. The Bill will be put to vote in July 2010.

APWLD recently organised a Gender and Politics workshop for women political leaders and activists, in Malaysia. As an outcome of that workshop, the participants prepared a 'Call for Action' urging the PNG Parliament to seriously adopt and implement articles under CEDAW and BPFA to promote and institutionalise women's participation and leadership in political processes.

**APWLD would like to circulate this 'Call for Action' amongst other political leaders and activists to endorse it. Please endorse this statement by visiting our website and clicking on a quick endorsement icon.**

The 'Call for Action' will be sent to concerned groups in Papua New Guinea.

Looking forward to your support and solidarity.

APWLD

## **Papua New Guinea - Call for Action Women in Decision-Making: A Key to Sustainable Development**

Women continue to be dramatically underrepresented in decision-making positions in Papua New Guinea (PNG). It is necessary to ensure full and equal representation and participation of women in the decision-making processes to address social and economic issues in an integrated way. It is also imperative to have a State consistent program with a budgetary allocation for effective implementation and monitoring mechanisms on women's political empowerment.

**Women's participation in political processes is crucial for reaching Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);** States and donors must remember their commitments to gender equality. They must also remember the findings of the *Global Monitoring Report of the World Bank* and the *Gender Gap Report of the World Economic Forum*, which demonstrates that countries score high on competitiveness, also enjoy high levels of gender equality.

The PNG government committed itself in Beijing Platform of Action (BPFA), under Article 190 *"To establishing the goal of gender balance in governmental bodies and committees, as well as in public administrative entities, and in the judiciary, including, inter alia, setting specific targets and implementing measures to substantially increase the number of women with a view to achieving equal representation of women and men, if necessary through positive action, in all governmental and public administration positions"*.

In May 2010, as a result of the tireless efforts of PNG women, the PNG government tabled the Bill as a Notice, once again proposing 22 seats reserved for women in the Parliament. This Bill will be put up for debate and voting in July 2010. The constitutional amendment will ensure close to 20% seats reserved for women.

***Recognising positive steps of the PNG state towards the implementation of MDGs, BPPA and Convention on the Elimination of all kinds of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW); We the women from Asia Pacific region call upon the PNG State to implement international and national commitments made for women's political empowerment through the following:***

1. Implement special measures to increase the level of women's representation to at least 33% in parliaments, national and local governments, parliamentary standing committees and political parties.
2. Implement gender budgeting initiatives and allocate adequate State finances for gender equality.