

Opening statement Women Major Group (Monday 3 May 2010)

Thank you, chair.

The Women's Major Group wants to remind you all that at the 17th session of this Commission, women were mentioned rightly so, but strangely enough for the first time, as **actors**. All issues of the present cycle of the Commission on Sustainable Development have an impact on women and their lives, and women are key to solving the related problems. **Women are important agents and driving forces of change.**

Gender equality is a manifestation of social justice and a prerequisite for sustainable development; therefore, gender equality and women's empowerment **are** central elements of all debates and issues of the Commission on Sustainable Development.

Equal participation of women and men is essential in the debate relating to sustainable development. Women are still significantly underrepresented in such debates, and their specific needs are insufficiently recognized. Every day, however, they have to deal with the consequences of decisions made mainly by men.

Women in Europe for a Common Future, founded after UNCED, has contributed significantly to engendering the EU regulation on the protection of human health and the environment from the use of chemicals.

We want to see you, governments, really committing yourselves to implement those international agreements you say you support. Women all over the world would be better off if you member states, implemented the Beijing declaration, CEDAW, WSSD, CSW and CSD recommendations.