

Statement on the Report of the IGWG on Transnational Corporations and Other Business Enterprises with Respect to Human Rights

WILPF

I speak on behalf of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF), the Centro Regional de Derechos Humanos y Justicia de Género (Corporación Humanas Chile) and the Geneva Infant Feeding Association. Friends of the Earth Europe also supports this statement. We welcome the report on the second session of the open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights (A/HRC/34/47). We are encouraged by the steady progress towards a binding treaty.

In this statement we highlight the calls, reflected in the report, for a gender perspective to be mainstreamed in the treaty. The adverse human rights impacts of corporate activities are not gender neutral. Corporate activities in a community may cause or even exacerbate gender discrimination because of pre-existing gender roles and structures within that community.

Applying a gender perspective means to seek to prevent and address negative gendered impacts. This means, for example, analysing the differential way in which corporate activities may affect women and men, and identifying appropriate responses that also take into account the intersection of other discriminations that can have additional and negative impact. The treaty must require human rights and gender impact assessments of planned projects and activities.

The treaty must also remove obstacles to women's access to justice and effective remedies, including by clearly defining the extraterritorial dimension of states' obligations to ensure remedy for abuses and violations that occur outside their territories.

We strongly encourage the working group's Chair in the preparation of the draft text for negotiation to:

- draw on gender expertise in relation to business and human rights; and
- find ways to ensure that the experiences of affected women be reflected fully in the treaty drafting process, keeping in mind that women are not a homogenous group.

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We urge all States to engage constructively in the process, including in the third session of the working group, and to make and support proposals that can lead to a treaty that is fully useful and useable for women.