

Statement by the Women and Gender NGOs Constituency in the High Level Segment

Cancun, December 10, 2010

Thank you Chair.

Excellencies, distinguished delegates, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

My name is Ana Agostino from ICAE and I am representing the women and gender constituency here.

Women's rights are human rights. No agreement, decision or mechanism on climate change will be effective or successful without the full respect of women's rights and the recognition of our valuable knowledge. Women are crucial in sustaining daily life and livelihoods. We must recognize the differentiated impacts of climatic changes on women and men as a result of structural inequalities: inequalities that are exacerbated by climate change.

By not agreeing on a fair, ambitious and binding agreement you withhold women and men, boys and girls a safe and healthy climate and you jeopardize our daily lives. Colleagues: this process is more than acronyms; it is about 7 billion men's and women's faces for whom you bear great responsibility. There will be more disaster- and with each one there can be up to an 80% spike in violence against women. This is a long way from sustainable development and human rights.

We need structures that enable women to participate fully in all decision-making spheres for financing, mitigation, adaptation, technology and capacity- building and education. Women and girls should benefit fully from all the measures you are undertaking. Particularly the future financing structures and mechanisms should respond to the differentiated needs and interests of women and men, in their diverse contexts.

Climate change poses a challenge so complex that the answers need transformation of our current development paradigms that are driven by markets and profits. Carbon markets are not the solution for this much needed change. We now have the opportunity to transform current paradigms, [and prevent further damage] by reducing inequalities, enhancing human rights and agreeing collectively on a comprehensive approach to combat climate change and save ecosystem integrity and humanity's future.