

## **54 UN COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

### **PANEL OF WOMEN FROM DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIQUE OF CONGO**

**New York, 10 March 2010**

**The Political implication of Congolese Women, for Change  
and in the promotion of good governance in the DRC.**

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## 1. Introduction

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the 3rd largest country in Africa with an area of 2345,000 Km<sup>2</sup> and a population estimated at 80 millions of inhabitants of which 52% are women. Since June 30th 1960, on the country's accession to political independence, the governance of the country is unilaterally organized by males at all levels.

The "gender" dimension was not integrated equitably in the management of the country, several needs and specific priorities of the female majority population are not understood by the leading class. Hence, the obligation to correct policies and program formulated by the DRC Government for sustainable development.

## 2. Definition and understading of the « good governance » concept

Governance is the noun form of the verb "to govern," which means: to drive with authority, to exercise political strength or to manage. Governance itself means: conducted management with rigor.

When the concept "good governance" is integrated in the management of public affairs, this implies transparency in the management of the country's resources and distributive justice. **This simply implies that it is necessary to banish things like corruption, misappropriation of public funds, financial waste/chaos, and clientelism etc.**

## 3. Le role and capacity of women to manage public affairs with good governance

Democracy has also as definition: the expression of the majority while protecting the minority. This can be expressed in several ways. It is notably by representation through elections, by popular consultation and designation or nomination of delegates and governors.

To govern a country such as the DRC that has self-identified as "democratic", this approach implies the power of the people, for the people, and by the people. **The people of the DRC are constituted by a demographic majority of women.**

Logically, 50 years today since the transfer of the management of the DRC to the Congolese at the time of its accession to international sovereignty, the political leaders of the DRC since 1960 would be the emanation of the will of the majority of the population, therefore the will of women! This is far from there. From regime to system, as we evoked it in our introduction, the country unilaterally managed by men. The leading class does not therefore reflect the population in terms of real representation of the population by category of "gender".

This unilateral management not only violates holy principles of democracy, it especially does not answer to expectations or the real and fundamental need of populations because leaders have never mastered global parameters of these needs. These take into account gender and environmental specificities in which evolves living beings who have to be at the center of priorities for governance. However, the result of management qualified of mono vision is poverty, corruption, clientelism, frustrations, conflicts, violence and under – development.

This is the reason why, instead of remaining in the compartment of the "lamentations", women must become aware of a part of power that is conferred to them by democratic principle of "the majority law" and on the other hand the capacities that they have in taking into account general interest of which they have always demonstrated when they take care of their family in all circumstances. All the reports on the DRC mention how much Congolese women, even though in an informal way, were responsible for the survival of their families during the whole period of instability of the country and in all sectors.

**It is imperative for women to get involved massively also in the management of the public affairs in order to generate "the qualitative change" expected that we call: "good governance".** The preoccupation of the wellbeing of their family constitutes the "micro management" of the country. It suffices to bring back this management at the level of

State institutions at the local and national level, the DRC will enter into the development circuit.

This Power conferred upon women is confirmed in article 14 of the DRC Constitution promulgated on 18<sup>th</sup> December 2006, that consecrates the principles of gender-based non-discrimination and parity between men and women in the participation of the management of the country at all levels. Matters relating to human rights notably civil and political rights integrated in the DRC Constitution, take foundation from regional and international legal framework uniformly ratified by the Congolese Government.

Either way, Women do not participate in any management at several levels. So why is change not yet tangible? To this question, we must indicate that positive impact of the participation of women in the management of the country will only be visible if women participate equitably in the instances of designing and making of decisions. For *"a woman in politic, then politics changes her, but several women in politics, then they change policies for the general interest"*.

To bring change to the governance of the country, women must develop skills for "effective political and participative leadership". They must support those who are already committed in this way and give rise to more ambitions for those who have latent talents. The Congolese State must adopt and apply gender integration development policies and programs of the Nation. Women constitute a human resource of great value that has its place in the country's reconstruction.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women must propose the vote of resolutions with coercive measures constraining the UN Security Council to sanction Members States and Governments that do not implement engagements taken for the promotion of women's rights.

#### **4. Conclusion**

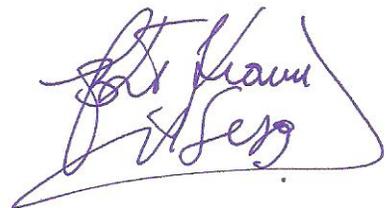
The responsibility of women is located to orient their countries towards the development ways. While being victims, the women must make use of the power of demographic majority and their inner capacities to ensure family survival to positively change the governance of national public affairs.

It is evident that to be true agents of change and properly play this role, women need to reinforce their capacities proportionally to the responsibility ranging at all the levels. They also have to increase their participation in national decision-making at all political levels.

The integration of a gender approach is not only about increasing the participation of the women at all decision-making levels, but it is also about taking into account the specific needs of men and women in this management.

New York, 10 March 2010

**Honorable Bazaiba Masudi Eve  
Sénatrice**

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'Bazaiba Masudi Eve', written in a cursive style.

