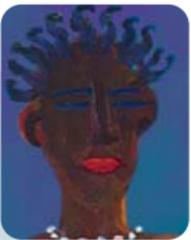




Women's National Commission



Having it all?

Women in the UK talk about the Beijing Platform for Action, ten years on

February 2005



What is the Platform for Action?



In 1995, the United Nations held a World Conference on Women in Beijing, where women came to help write a series of promises about what governments would do to achieve equality for women, known as the Platform for Action (PFA). All the member states of the UN (including the UK) signed up to the promises in the PFA.



Ten years on, the UN Commission on the Status of Women is looking at what progress has been made.



This leaflet tells you what women want the UK Government to do now.



This call for action is for all women, in all our diversity, inclusively – for women of colour; all ages; differing abilities, ethnicity, sexuality, and gender identity; for widows, single women; those of us without children; for mothers and carers; women of all faiths and no faith.



Poverty

- Change the Social Security system to let us earn a **decent pension**, maternity pay, and other National Insurance benefits, even if our pay is very low or if we take time out as carers



Education and training

- We want compulsory **gender awareness education** on the National Curriculum to tackle gender stereotyping and gender inequality
- Stop making girls take **early decisions about exam subjects** – it forces us into traditional and low paid careers
- We want **training and mentoring programmes** which will empower us to reach our potential in our chosen education and career paths



Health

- We must all have **control and choice over our sexual and reproductive health**
- More funding is needed for **education and treatment** for sexually transmitted infections and harmful cultural practices
- **Appropriate health services** must be available for women of different faiths, cultures, and transgender women; we must eradicate institutional racism and prejudice



Violence

- The Government must sign up to a **comprehensive, integrated national strategy**, as in other countries, to stop all forms of violence against women



Armed conflict

- We need training and funding and **political will** to help us play a full part in peace building in Northern Ireland, in Iraq, the Middle East and Africa



The economy

- Our **unpaid work** creates essential social capital and must be included in Government's economic indicators
- **Government statistics** need to be broken down by gender, and gender impact assessments, particularly of the UK budget, must be done
- Actions must be taken to **get rid of the gender pay gap**; we still earn 18% less than men
- The UK must champion **core labour standards** at home and in global supply chains



Power and decision-making

- The European Commission's target of at least 40 per cent of each gender in decision-making positions must be adopted as a binding Directive



Equality (institutional mechanisms)

- We want a Single Equality Act that **gives women equal rights** and protection alongside other groups



Human rights

- The UK must champion enforceable **gender guidelines** for women refugees into the EU
- Women and girls who are trafficked into the UK are often treated as criminals by public services; they must be given the **support and advice** they need including appropriate housing and counselling



The media

- The spread and accessibility of **internet porn** must be stopped as it harms women – it promotes sexual violence
- The press must **stop publishing degrading images** of women that objectify us



The environment

- Women must be **involved in planning** for public services, as we are most reliant on them
- We must be **consulted on sustainable development policies**, as those that do not include the views of women won't work in the long run



Girls

- We must **educate girls and boys** on sexual and reproductive health – we still have one of the highest rates of teenage pregnancy in Western Europe
- We need more **advice and support services** specifically designed for young women on sexual and reproductive health

Further information on Beijing +10, as the anniversary is known, as well as more details on specific lobbying points and WNC partner organisations, can be found on the WNC website.

www.thewnc.org.uk



Women's National Commission

The Women's National Commission is the official independent advisory body giving the views of women in the UK to the Government.

Established in 1969, the WNC represents over 350 women's organisations throughout England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.



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