

EWLA

General Assembly Resolution

on

the European Commission Plan for a  
European Network Promoting Women in  
Decision-Making Positions

May 12, 2007

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**The General Assembly of the European Women Lawyers Association (EWLA), held on May 12, 2007 unanimously adopted the following**

**RESOLUTION ON A EUROPEAN NETWORK PROMOTING WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING POSITIONS**

The European Women Lawyers Association, representing women lawyers organisations from all Member States of the European Union as well as from EFTA countries and women lawyers active in these states on all levels of decision-making in the public and private sectors

recalls that

- the principle of substantive equality between men and women is one of the constitutional principles upon which the European Union is built and a positive obligation of its institutions and Member States, as proclaimed by Articles 2 and 3(2) EC;<sup>1</sup>
- the principle of substantive equality between men and women is reaffirmed by Article 23 of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- the principle of substantive equality between men and women is also enshrined in Articles 3 and 4 of the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), which binds all EU Member States and is a source of fundamental rights to be respected by the EU as well; and that, moreover, Articles 7 and 8 CEDAW expressly obliges them to ensure women's equal participation in the political and public life, and in the representation of their governments at the international level;
- in addition to being a common constitutional principle of the EU Member States and hence a fundamental value of the EU, substantive gender equality also contributes to a more just, more inclusive, and more diverse society;
- the principle of substantive equality between men and women imposes on the EU and its Member States an obligation to adopt a pro-active approach and to take measures to actively promote gender equality;
- by its Recommendation 96/694/EC<sup>2</sup>, the Council called on both Member States and EC institutions to achieve a balanced participation of women and men in the decision-making process in all fields and at all levels;

reaffirms its Statement on Women in Decision-Making Positions of 5 March 2007<sup>3</sup> and its recommendations contained in it;

welcomes the initiative taken by the European Commission of establishing a network promoting women in decision-making positions;

calls upon the European Commission

1. to create a Network promoting women in decision-making positions. This Network should include NGOs active in promoting women in decision-making positions;
2. to entrust the Network with identifying best practices, developing practical measures, and recommending their application in the Member States in cooperation with network members.

These best practices and measures should effectively promote a balanced participation of women and men in decision-making bodies both within the public and the private sector, e.g. by

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<sup>1</sup> See also the preamble to Directive 2002/73/EC, 4<sup>th</sup> recital, [2002] O.J. L 269/15.

<sup>2</sup> Of 2 December 1996, [1996] O.J. L 319/11.

<sup>3</sup> As published on [www.ewla.org](http://www.ewla.org).

- a) establishing national action programmes, such as leadership training programmes for women, promotion of women directors' networking, transparent recruitment policies, flexible working conditions, compatibility of working and school hours, statistics disaggregated by sex, research on the glass-ceiling phenomenon, and follow-up procedures;
  - b) a duty for companies to publish information on gender distribution in management in the annual accounts of companies with more than 50 employees. This information should include board members, managing directors and other members of a company's management;
3. to publish and promote, in the Member States, the best practices and measures recommended by the Network;
  4. to require Member States to report annually on actions taken pursuant to the Network's recommendations and on the results achieved;
  5. to consider, if need be, taking further actions to apply the Network's recommendations within the EU.

Moreover, EWLA calls upon the European Commission

6. to ensure that every EC/EU instrument relating to an EC/EU body (agency, committee etc) should contain a reference to gender equality as a horizontal objective pursuant to Article 3(2) EC as well as the requirement of balanced participation of men and women;
7. to launch an annual prize for innovative action in promoting women's advancement.