

**ASIA-PACIFIC REGIONAL COMMISSION**

**United Nations Conference Centre, Bangkok, Thailand.**

**Statement by NOELENE NABULIVOU**

**Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN), FIJI**

**and Women's Major Group**

**(Will shorten on delivery)**

**Committee of the Whole 1**

**Agenda item 3: Review of issues pertinent to the subsidiary structure of the Commission,  
including the work of the regional institutions**

**(a) Macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development**

**25 April 2013**

**Distinguished Chair, government representatives, civil society colleagues and friends**

As discussed by many in the Regional Implementation Meeting just this week on Rio+20 Outcomes, and during this time of critical deliberations on Sustainable Development and the Post 2015 Development Agenda, DAWN wishes to recognise this Regional Commission for its important focus on macroeconomic policy, poverty reduction and inclusive development. We have just a few short and we hope, useful inputs to contribute, as follows:

Regional Commissions provide valuable fora to ensure strongest input of national and regional realities and priorities into regional and global development plans, and negotiations on SDGs and P2015 Development agenda negotiations. Therefore we thank you and UNESCAP for the opportunity for civil society including women's groups to contribute, and trust this will only increase in coming years.

This regional focus is absolutely critical in a historical moment where the just-released 2013 Asia Pacific Economic and Social report shows that despite some gains in poverty reduction, there are still over 800 million poor in the region struggling for survival on an income of less than \$1.25-a-

day, constituting nearly two-thirds of the world's poor. We reiterate on precarity of much work in Asia-Pacific, with **over 1 billion workers in the region currently in vulnerable employment**. All this, in the midst of food and water crises across the world including in the Asia Pacific, with **an estimated 563 million people in our region undernourished**.

Therefore, on behalf of over 400 women's groups as part of the Women's Major Group network, including in the Asia Pacific region, we raise the following as essential elements of all effective and inclusive development agendas in order to eradicate poverty including immediate strongest attention to ending extreme poverty; addressing persistent and deep social and economic inequalities; and also with strongest attention to environmental degradation and climate change.

**Specifically, we call for the following:**

- Recognition that there are ecological limits to the 'growth' paradigm and that sustainable and equitable economic and social development never be primarily or only profit-driven;
- This requires building on the overarching principle of equitable sharing of atmospheric space, between and also within States, and taking into account intergenerational and social justice, including gender and environmental justice;
- Further it implies respect for the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities, which considers historic economic, ecological and social debt responsibility. Also compliance with Agenda 21 and Rio+20 commitments on technology transfer, monitoring and assessment, skills development and research as explicit in all investment and trade regimes, and in line with the precautionary principle and principle of free, prior informed consent as critical social and ecosystem protection;
- Women from Asia Pacific call for urgent reform of monetary, financial and trade rules globally in line with human rights obligations, and with adequate policy space for all states, including LDC, LLDC and SIDS states, so as to effectively implement effective macroeconomic policies, trade and investment agreements to achieve gender, economic and ecological justice for all;
- This includes global and national binding rules and safeguards for all peoples of Asia Pacific States, including through application of the Maastricht Principles on Extraterritorial Obligations of States in the area of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This is central to the protection of bio-cultural users of land and natural resources from negative impacts of

extractive industries, and large-scale monocultures;

- It also implies affirmation of global moratorium on geo-engineering in order to prevent the unsustainable technological and market based fixes that attempt the large-scale manipulation of the earth's climate such as managing solar radiation, extracting carbon from the atmosphere, and modifying the weather; This can never be the underpinning of macroeconomic policies, as they merely delay and often in fact worsen, the longterm environmental situation while adding to profits who now appear as climate change and development specialists, when they have been the ones who in pervious incarnations have been those selling the very technologies and development plans that have brought us to this unfortunate juncture;
- Relatedly, we call for the phase-out, elimination of financial support, and immediate moratoria on harmful economic activities which affect the health of people and the environment, particularly in the areas of mining, nuclear energy, and chemicals. We cannot speak of education for poorest communities to phase out uses of such harmful chemicals for example, when chemical companies continue to have access to domestic markets to sell such goods;
- Rather, we must promote truly safe and sustainable energy solutions that prevent negative impacts on the health of people and of the planet and that do not further deplete existing community resources;
- This also requires re-orientation of national agricultural plans from extractive industries and export- oriented agribusiness toward local women-led and small-holder agro-ecology practices; including strong protection of local free an non-marketised seed supplies and distribution systems in order to reverse the environmental and social impacts caused by food insecurity, soil degradation and land grabbing, on all affected communities including migrants, fisher, forest and indigenous peoples, pastoralists, and many other marginalized communities.
- To close, we call most of all for guarantees of Asian and Pacific women's equitable access to and control over resources that promote fair asset redistribution among different social groups regarding the use of land, ocean, credits, technology, intellectual and cultural property;
- Member States, we sincerely remind that there can be no real development by, with and for women and girls in the Asia and Pacific if we do not guarantee the human rights of diverse women, girls and people. This also requires guarantee of full sexual and reproductive rights.

- It also requires far clearer political and technical recognition that care and social reproduction are intrinsically linked with the productive economy and therefore must be fully reflected in all microeconomic and macroeconomic policy-making.
- This is a bottom-line for all poverty eradication and gender equality policy in the Asia-Pacific region and globally, and must be explicitly reflected in regional and national development plans as an immediate and core priority;

**Thank you Distinguished Chair, Member states and colleagues.**