

**COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF A TWO-DAY NATIONAL GENDER  
FORUM ORGANISED BY GRAP ON THE THEME:  
“CIVIC ENGAGEMENT FOR GENDER EQUALITY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN  
GHANA: SHARING EXPERIENCES, CONTESTING SPACES, RENEWING  
COMMITMENTS”**

**Date: MARCH 15-17, 2010**

**Venue: AIRPORT WEST HOTEL, ACCRA.**

**Preamble**

We, participants of the 2010 National Gender Forum organised from March 15-17, 2010 having met to present and discuss papers on a range of relevant themes such as climate change, political participation, media, trade unions, as a reflection of our contributions to date on the issue of promoting women’s rights and gender equality in Ghana;

**Recognising** that gender equality, women’s rights, and social justice can only be achieved with real commitment on the part of policy makers and with the active participation of women at all levels of decision making;

**Acknowledging** the commitment to promoting 40 per cent women representation in political processes and ensuring that 27 per cent appointments in the district assemblies have been women which is close to the minimum 30 per cent proposed by the UN;

**BUT**

**Concerned** about the lack of a clear agenda to ensure that all national governance issues address the specific concerns of women;

**Disappointed** that despite the high level of advocacy work undertaken by committed women and men on the need for a clear national agenda for the promotion of gender equality, women continue to face different forms of discriminatory practices, and excluded from critical decisions,

**Shocked** by the decrease in the number of women in Parliament and other decision-making structures in spite of the promise of the government for a 40 per cent representation in politics and decision-making;

**Aggrieved** by the continued experience of poverty, insecurity, poor health status, lack of employment and access to basic services such as water, health, education and electricity;

**Appalled** by the extent of political polarization currently being experienced within the public space with the active collaboration of sections of the media with dire consequences for the promotion of women's rights and democratic governance,

**Encouraged** by the determination of gender sensitive women and men to remain committed to the promotion of women's rights and gender equality in Ghana's democratisation process;

**And**

**Committed** to working with relevant agencies, institutions and organizations with the mandate to promote women's rights and gender equality;

**Hereby demand as follows:**

1. That the Government puts in place guarantees in the Constitution for women's rights and gender equality promotion especially through the Constitutional Review Process;
2. That the Government undertakes an analysis of systemic obstacles for achieving the 40 per cent affirmative action target and release a new White Paper with realistic target for increasing the number of women in politics and decision-making;
3. That the Government retains the 50 percent target for women

- appointed into the district assemblies;
4. That the Government and donors include civil society organizations and women's rights organizations in all sector dialogue policy processes;
  5. That the Government ensures that all policy discussions on climate change are informed by a gender analysis and the promotion of women's rights and effective participation of women;
  6. That the Government strengthens health systems to ensure that every pregnant woman has free access to skilled attendance at birth and emergency obstetric care at the point of delivery to reduce the unacceptably high levels of maternal mortality;
  7. That the Government fulfills its promise of implementing the demands contained in the Women's Manifesto for Ghana;
  8. That the government holds itself accountable to the promotion of child rights and the rights of other vulnerable groups including the disabled from a gender responsive perspective.
  9. That media houses take responsibility for improving the quality of reporting on gender equality issues by deepening their relationships with women's rights organisations;
  10. That the Government increases its accountability to women's rights promotion through publishing sex-disaggregated data with a focus on results of public spending on women and men; and
  11. That the Government makes funding support for women in local governance a percentage of the national budget instead of the ministries' (Ministry of Women and Children's Affairs and Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development) budgets.