

The YLDA Declaration on Women's Rights to Political Participation.

The declaration was endorsed and signed at the YLDA's first women's workshop held in Hong Kong from 7-11 August 2009 with the aim of empowering young women in politics.

Whereas, the Women of the Young Liberals and Democrats of Asia (YLDA), reaffirmed our faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women;

Whereas, we have committed ourselves to promote the inherent and indisputable right of women to participation in political and public life as guaranteed by United Nation's (UN) instruments;

Whereas, we are steadfast in democratizing political processes and promoting democratic development by engaging every citizen, especially the women sector;

Whereas, we believe that advancing women's participation in politics and acknowledging women's leadership roles is vital to institute political, social and economic development;

Whereas, we are determined to achieve these goals, we have pledged to ourselves the attainment of a global culture of support for the promotion of universal respect for women's full political participation in democratic development;

Now, therefore the women of YLDA, taking a common stand for the development of women's rights to political participation, declare:

A. That appropriate measures must be taken to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and socio-economic life of our countries, we state our commitment to consolidate and strengthen the Asian women's network in co-operation with the liberal youth network, allied political parties, civic partners and the civil society;

B. That in recognition that women are agents of social change and development, we advocate that gender mainstreaming becomes a priority in policy-making of political parties and of the government, in accordance with the United Nation's Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Beijing Platform for Action and UN Security Council Resolution 1325;

C. That in response to the global call for the acknowledgement of the role of women in political development, we are adopting the "Win with Women" Global Action plan and this plan's four point agenda:

1. Removing restrictions on women's political participation, including restrictions on women's suffrage and candidacy;
2. Increasing the number of women elected officials at the national, provincial and local level;
3. Ensuring that political parties include women in meaningful leadership positions and in meaningful numbers;
4. Encouraging greater participation of women in government decision-making and advocating for legislation that enshrines full equality of men and women;

D. That it is our conviction that access to positions of political, social, economic responsibility and decision-making is an essential women's right, we strongly support the

women's right to participate and be represented in public policy formulation in all sectors and at all levels through:

1. Support for the appointment of women to decision-making roles and to consult and incorporate the advice of groups which are broadly representative of women's views and interests.

2. Ensure that political parties will guarantee that women are nominated for election in areas where they have a likelihood of electoral success. Political parties should also endeavor to ensure that women are given equal opportunity with men to appointed government advisory bodies and that these bodies take into account, as appropriate, the views of representative of the women's groups.

E. That it is our belief that women's participation in politics can be fully achieved by promoting women's economic, social and cultural rights as well, thus, we support the international advocacy to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women as promoted by CEDAW.

Finally, the women of YLDA commit to promote the advocacy of gender equality in democratic processes and political development and we support the UN instruments that set an international standard for defining equality between men and women and advocating equal treatment in political and socio-economic life.

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Signatories:

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