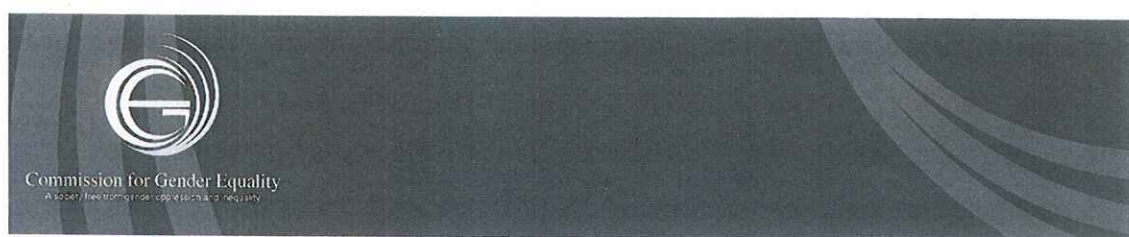


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Commission for Gender Equality
A society free from gender oppression and inequality



NATIONAL GENDER SUMMIT

Date: 9-11 April 2014

Reflecting on 20 years of democracy in South Africa:
Celebrating gains and strategising on challenges to
attaining gender equality

In Association with



SUMMIT DECLARATION



Commission for Gender Equality
A society free from gender oppression and inequality

National Gender Summit

Held at the Lakes Hotel (Gauteng, South Africa), from 9-11 April 2014

SUMMIT DECLARATION

We, delegates to the National Gender Summit convened by the Commission for Gender Equality, assembled at the Lake Hotel (Benoni, Ekurhuleni), for three days of debate on the eve of National General Elections, 20 years into our democracy, came together to evaluate the progress made towards the realisation of Substantive Gender Equality and Gender Transformation in our Country.

The Summit celebrated the many achievements we have made since 1994. This includes our constitutional, legislative and policy frameworks which entrench gender equality and women's rights. We celebrate those South African women who have broken the glass ceiling by taking up leadership positions in the country, regional and international fora. We applaud the role of civil society in driving active citizenship. We note the strides achieved so far including the creation of the National Gender Machinery.¹

Several challenges remain including: the embedded impact of patriarchy on institutions, relations and behaviours, deepening inequality, poverty, lack of access to and ownership of land, unemployment and precarious employment. The persistence of Gender Based Violence, including on the basis of sexual orientation, HIV/Aids, denial of reproductive and sexual health rights, and increasing cultural and religious fundamentalism are serious concerns. Due to the inadequate transformation of the political sphere, the effective decision-

¹ The National Gender Machinery includes the Commission for Gender Equality, the Department of Women, Children and People with Disabilities, the Parliamentary Portfolio Committee for Women, Children and People with Disabilities, Office on the Status of Women in Provinces, and Civil Society and Women's Movements.

making and substantive participation of women remains a deficit that needs attention.

As we rise from this Summit we are committed to ensuring that these concerns are addressed in the upcoming elections by all political parties. We wish to confirm, that the Commission for Gender Equality will continue to act in a manner that earns the respect and trust of our people. All stakeholders that have participated in the Summit will provide feedback to and mobilise their organisations and those they represented to ensure the necessary political will and identify critical roles and action to implement Summit resolutions and Programme for Action. Furthermore, it is important to ensure that there is a special focus on the implementation as well as monitoring and evaluation of all structures that are necessary to promote gender equality and restore dignity for all.

We affirm that the emancipation of women remains central to achieving gender equality. Women's participation, contributions and accessibility to decision-making institutions at all spheres of leadership is essential. Partnerships with civil society and constitutional bodies supporting democracy are critical to transformation. We call upon all participants and stakeholders to engage men and boys to eradicate inequalities and GBV.

We call upon the South African Government to commit itself to ratifying and implementing all the relevant global declarations and protocols including the UN international Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. We call upon the Private Sector to implement relevant gender transformative laws and policies.

We remain committed to solidarity and co-operation with similar agencies in the Region and globally to ensure the advancement of substantive gender transformation around the Post 2015 Agenda, calling for the stand-alone goal on Gender Equality and the mainstreaming of gender into all other pillars of the MDGs.

The Summit commits itself to ensuring that the rights of women with disabilities, Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals, Transgendered and Intersex persons, youth as well as younger women are recognised and respected, and their human rights enforced and promoted.

As participants to the Summit, we commit ourselves to working together with the Commission for Gender Equality in the implementation of the Action Plan adopted during Summit deliberations and ensuring that, in case of non-compliance, corrective measures are taken to promote effective implementation of the constitution and relevant policies.

Delegates express their gratitude to the Commission for Gender Equality and partners for creating an atmosphere in which the Summit deliberations and participation could be carried out.