

CEDAW Resolution for District 11

**Sponsored by Jean Bryant, District 11 Legislative Awareness and Advocacy Chairman, 2006
Adopted at District Conference, September 29, 2006, Hilton Head Island, SC**

Whereas; Zonta International has supported the UN since 1946 and, as a non-governmental organization (NGO), has brought women's concerns to the UN, and worked for decades with other women's organizations to get the UN to adopt a comprehensive Convention (Treaty) to eliminate discrimination against women that would codify rights delineated in a series of individual treaties or subsumed in generic human rights documents; and

Whereas; the Convention to Eliminate All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) was adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1979 by votes of 130 to none with 10 abstentions, to guarantee women's rights that were not previously subject to international standards, including rights in the political, social, economic, cultural and family life; and

Whereas; on 17 July 1980 at the Copenhagen World Conference on the United Nations Decade for Women, "Equality, Development and Peace", 64 States signed the Convention, and on 3 September 1981, 30 days after the twentieth member State had ratified it, the Convention went into effect; and

Whereas; the United States was active in drafting the Treaty for the Rights of Women and President Carter was among the leaders who signed the Convention on 17 July 1980; and

Whereas; in September 1994, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee voted 13 to 5 with one abstention for ratification of the Treaty, and again on 30 July 2002, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee supported ratification by a bipartisan vote of 12 to 7, but each time opponents blocked action by the full Senate; and

Whereas; the 55th International Convention of Zonta International in 2002 passed a resolution promoting CEDAW and the Optional Protocol adopted in October 1999 by the UN General Assembly, and urged clubs to take action in support of the treaty; and

Whereas; as of June 23, 2006, a total of 183 States have signed and ratified the Convention, but the United States still has not ratified the Treaty; and

Whereas; the Zonta International United Nations Committee has made active support and implementation of the terms of CEDAW by Zonta Clubs one of its three priorities this biennium (2006-2008), and has urged Zonta clubs in the United States, the only Zonta country that has NOT ratified CEDAW, to work for the adoption of this convention;

BE IT RESOLVED, therefore, that:

1. District 11 urges members to educate themselves about the importance of ratification of CEDAW by the United States.
2. District 11 urges Zonta clubs to make ratification of CEDAW by the United States one of its main legislative advocacy projects this biennium.
3. District 11 encourages members to draw upon their diverse expertise and resources to develop strategies and seek partners to educate the public about the need for the United States to become a party to CEDAW.
4. District 11 encourages members to work with others in their respective states to encourage their United States Senators, the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, the U.S. Secretary of State, and the President of the United States to ratify CEDAW, thereby strengthening America's position among other nations as an advocate for women's equality.
5. The District 11 Board encourages local clubs and areas to combine their efforts and encourage communication and cooperation among the clubs to make their individual efforts more effective.