

**CEDAW Resolution for District 11**  
**Sponsored by Jean Bryant, District 11 Legislative Advocacy Chair, 2009**

Whereas; Zonta International has supported the UN since 1946 and, as an international non-governmental organization (NGO), has brought women's concerns to the UN; and

Whereas; Zonta and other women's organizations worked for decades 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 and cultural realms 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 55<sup>th</sup> 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 July 2009, a total of 186 countries (over 90% of the members of the UN) have ratified the Convention, but the United States is the only industrialized nation that has not ratified the Treaty; and

Whereas; the Zonta International United Nations and Legislative Awareness and Advocacy Committees have made active support and implementation of the terms of CEDAW by Zonta Clubs one of its priorities this biennium (2008-2010), and have urged Zonta clubs in the United States, the only Zonta country that has NOT ratified CEDAW, to work for the ratification of this convention by December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2009, the 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of CEDAW;

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 their main legislative advocacy projects this biennium, in particular between September and December, 2009.
3. District 11 encourages members to draw upon their diverse expertise and resources 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 other community organizations in their respective states to urge 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 nations as an advocate for women's equality and human rights.

Adopted in Conference Sept. 25, 2009