



## **INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF WOMEN LAWYERS**

**FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES FEMMES JURISTES**

**FEDERACIÓN INTERNACIONAL DE ABOGADAS (FIDA)**

[www.fidafederation.org](http://www.fidafederation.org)

### **RESOLUTIONS OF THE 38TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION**

The 38th International Convention of the International Federation of Women Lawyers (FIDA), under the theme “**Empowering Women, Building Sustainable Futures**”, held from Monday, 4 November to Friday, 8 November 2024, in Cali, Colombia.

The Convention featured delegates from across the globe and was marked by rich discussions, insightful panel sessions, and transformative ideas addressing critical issues on human rights, gender equality, and social justice. Participants were present in person from the following countries – Bahamas, Ghana, South Africa, United States, India, Peru, Tanzania, Nigeria, UK, Cameroon and Colombia. There also virtual participants from India, Taiwan, Nigeria, Colombia and South Africa.

The Convention began with a colourful opening ceremony, and in the ensuing days, distinguished speakers and panelists from various jurisdictions in five continents of the world, participated in 12 highly informative sessions. FIDA Members also visited the Nashira eco-village in southern Colombia.

In recognition of their contributions to advancing women's rights, some women lawyers were acknowledged for their outstanding services. These were: Quota Law Award in Colombia – Myriam Mendez Montalvo, Maria Teresa Garces Lloreda, Viviane Morales Hoyos, Angela Cuevas De Dolmetsch and Yolima Espinosa Vera. The Life Member Award was given to Jethlyn Burrows (Bahamas).

During the Convention, FIDA was honored to have the participation of some female mayors, representing the vital role of women in politics, including: Ligia Del Carmen Cordoba (Alcaldesa De Buenaventura), Viviana Patricia Mena Zapata (Alcaldesa De Riogrio), Maria Del Pilar Garcia Arizabaleta (Presidentia Sociedad Vallecaucana De Mejoras Publicas), and Leonor Abadia Benitez (Alcaldesa De Guacari).

**Following deliberations in plenary and breakout sessions covering a wide array of themes, delegates resolved as follows:**

## **1. Rape Within Marriage**

- i. Acknowledged that marital rape remains an underreported and insufficiently legislated issue globally, with several countries failing to recognize it as a crime.
- ii. Recognized the devastating psychological, social, and physical consequences suffered by victims, including trauma and isolation.
- iii. Noted barriers to reporting such crimes due to stigma, fear of retaliation, and societal normalization of abuse within marriage.

Resolved to:

- a. Advocate for the criminalization of marital rape in all jurisdictions and expand the interpretations of the law to accommodate marital rape
- b. Urge governments to provide protection mechanisms for victims and support access to justice.
- c. Promote public education campaigns to challenge cultural norms that excuse marital rape.

## **2. Neurological Orphaned Illnesses**

- i. Noted that rare neurological diseases are often overlooked in healthcare systems, resulting in delayed diagnosis and limited treatment options.
- ii. Recognized the need for governments to incentivize research and provide equitable healthcare access.

Resolved to:

- a. Encourage global collaboration to address treatment gaps for orphan diseases.
- b. Advocate for the creation of legal frameworks supporting research and healthcare accessibility for rare diseases.

## **3. The Gift Economy and Ecocide**

- i. Recognized the exploitative nature of profit-driven economies and their impact on human rights, environmental degradation and human existence.
- ii. Emphasized the need to criminalize ecocide as a means of protecting vulnerable populations and ecosystems.

Resolved to:

- a. Promote policies that value care, mutuality, and sustainability over profit.
- b. Urge governments to recognize and criminalize ecocide.

## **4. Artificial Intelligence (AI) and the Role of Women**

- i. Observed the dual potential of AI as a driver of innovation and a source of ethical and employment challenges.

ii. Noted the underrepresentation of women in STEM fields and the gendered impact of technological advancement.

Resolved to:

- a. Advocate for inclusive AI development and the integration of women in STEM fields.
- b. Urge governments to develop legal frameworks protecting jobs, privacy, and ethical standards in the age of AI.

## **5. Pension Reform and Gender Equity**

i. Noted that women face systemic disadvantages in pension systems due to caregiving responsibilities, gender pay gaps, and longer life expectancies.

Resolved to:

- a. Advocate for pension reforms that recognize unpaid care work and ensure equitable benefits for women.
- b. Promote financial literacy and economic empowerment programs targeted at women.

## **6. New Masculinities**

i. Acknowledged the need to dismantle toxic masculinity and redefine male roles towards equity and collaboration.

Resolved to:

- a. Promote education and cultural shifts to encourage emotional intelligence and equity in men.
- b. Engage men as allies in gender equality advocacy.

## **7. Sustainable Development and Gender Justice**

i. Recognized the vital role of women in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

ii. Noted various ongoing discriminatory practices that are in conflict with the SDGs and serve to hinder women's participation in governance and development and impact gender justice

Resolved to:

- a. Advocate for increased representation of women in political and decision-making roles.
- b. Call for the removal of discriminatory laws and practices to ensure gender justice.

## **8. Empowering Women Through Environmental Stewardship**

i. Noted the link between women's empowerment and environmental sustainability.

Resolved to:

- a. Support programs fostering women's environmental leadership.
- b. Advocate for inclusive environmental policies that empower youth, communities, and women living with disabilities

## **9. Violence Against Women in Conflict Zones**

i. Acknowledged the pervasive violence against women in armed conflict, including sexual slavery and forced sterilization.

Resolved to:

- a. Strengthen legislation to address sexual violence in conflict.
- b. Support survivors with access to justice, healthcare, and psychosocial services.
- c. Promote accountability mechanisms to end impunity.

## **10. Femicide**

i. Recognized femicide as a critical human rights violation resulting from systemic gender-based violence.

Resolved to:

- a. Empower women through education and economic opportunities.
- b. Provide psychological support services, shelters for survivors of femicide and legal representation for victims' families.
- c. Conduct training for lawyers on addressing gender-based violence to ensure better protection of women

## **11. Legal Protection for Webcam Models**

i. Recognized the need to protect the rights of women working in the webcam modeling industry and other online or virtual services

Resolved to:

- a. Advocate for legal frameworks recognizing webcam modeling as legitimate work.
- b. Ensure minimum labour standards and protections against exploitation.

## **12. Quota Laws and Women's Participation in Governance**

i. Noted the global underrepresentation of women in political spaces.

Resolved to:

- a. Urge governments to adopt and enforce quota laws ensuring equal representation of women in governance.
- b. Support leadership development programs for women to enhance political participation.

Dated this 8th day of November 2024.

### **Rapporteurs**

Evelyn Membere-Asimiea – Lead  
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Sotonye Kelechi-Nwuzi  
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