

SUMMARY

AFFIRMATIVE ACTIONS, A STRATEGY OF RESISTANCE OF THE POPULATION IN VULNERABLE SITUATION IN COLOMBIA

I want to thank for this wonderful opportunity to share in a scenario of analysis and reflection on today's world issues that are of deep concern to all humanity, as is the condition of vulnerability of women and minority groups. I come from the other side of the world, from a dreamy city and with contrasting landscapes, where the magic of the natural landscape, monuments and history conspire to the unquestionable dressing of the kindness and warmth of our people the visitors receive the smiling embrace that has always characterized us.

Cartagena de Indias, located in the Colombian Caribbean, is a city of mostly black population that still shows alarming rates of inequality, social exclusion, racial and extreme poverty. That picture becomes embarrassing mirror of a reality that demands the state and society to compliance of the challenges that could reduce the gap of marginalization of vulnerable groups as a vital sign of contribution to the building of a socially harmonious world and in peace.

My brief intervention on affirmative action in my country, Colombia; which are deeply linked to the sacred right to equality and non-discrimination for racial, gender and other.

Before I recall what was stated in the Durban World Conference against racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, where explicit recognition of the urgency to address and take action on the part of States and Nations to make it possible to put an end to the plague of inequality and discrimination, through actions that will revindicate thousands and thousands of women and men placed on the platform of despair and denial of opportunity.

In Colombia, prevails a block of constitutionality that collects and endorses the supranational norms that with criteria guarantees and makes all the legal and political landscape of international law of human rights reality. That is the source that supports Article 13 of the Political Constitution of Colombia that enables the enforcement of rights to equality and nondiscrimination.

This article says "All people are born free and equal before the law and entitled to equal protection and treatment by the authorities and enjoy the same rights, freedoms and opportunities without any discrimination on grounds of sex, race, national origin or family , language, religion, political or philosophical opinion.

The State shall promote conditions to make equality real and effective and shall adopt measures in favor of discriminated or marginalized groups. The State shall especially protect those who for their economic, physical or mental condition, are in obviously vulnerable circumstances and shall punish any abuses perpetrated against them. "

Understanding the concept of Affirmative Action or positive actions, such as measures designed to promote and position specific people or groups, either to eliminate or reduce

gender inequalities, socio-cultural or economic that affect them, but also assimilated to all temporary legislative and administrative actions, consistent with the purpose of remedying situations of disadvantage or exclusion and discrimination of a group, in some aspect of their life.(Greenwalt, 1983). 1 (pastor murillo, las medidas de acción afirmativa o medidas especiales: para reparar las injusticias históricas y la discriminación) – Alfonso Ruiz, Miguel (1994 77-83 discriminación inversa o igualdad.

To point out some significant experiences of positive or affirmative action in my country:

- Women's Empowerment through strengthening of organizational expressions and networks at local, regional and national levels (even in the midst of discrimination and threats), from there, day to day advances in the application of positive / affirmative actions to force local and national governments to address the women, as example the opening of Secretaries for women's Affairs in local government institutions.
- The Law on Quotas to guarantee the participation of women, at least 30%, in scenarios of politics and bodies to life. This action seeks to recognize amend the imbalance experienced and still experience women compared to men in terms of opportunity for leadership and political will; and it makes the judgment enforceable by C371, with which the gate opens to recognition women as subjects of law, with full powers to access areas of political and social power.
- Differentiated policies for access to placements quotas in colleges and universities, through quotas that are approved and promoted by the training centers; and scholarships and loans for undergraduate and specialization that promote the state entities through special funds granted by the ICETEX (Colombian Institute of Technical Studies Abroad). However, the results today indicate that such policies are not being applied and there is no follow-up in schools and especially in private universities; and with respect to ICETEX credits, generally they lack sufficient funds to meet demand, as well as the high level of the requirements end up limiting access of young people and Afros and Indigenous to the credit.

In this context, and from other side, the social movement of Afro-Colombians, and especially the African women, more specifically located in the Caribbean region, have agreed today that a priority is the defense to stay in the ancestral territory which claims respect for rights such as, Prior Consultation; participation in the modification of Land Management Plans; Titration of the Collective Territories, and the strengthening of the Community Councils as their own and autonomous bodies of the ethnic people of African descent as the recognition given by Law 70 of 1993.

It is inconceivable that while in scenarios like these, we are reflecting on the principle of equality and non-discrimination in cities like Cartagena, the Afro communities and within women especially. They (women) are fighting under unequal conditions of participation and decision of policies that affect them negatively to the point of placing them on the edge of

extinction; against the misconceived development that only safeguards the interests of national and international investors.

We could say that in Colombia affirmative action have also become a mechanism of **resistance** of Women against the scourges of discrimination, indifference, violence and exclusion that still face vulnerable groups because of their ethnic, social status and poverty.

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In that order and in particular I suggest to the United Nations, seen by many countries as a as a voice that comes in assistance in the solitude of discrimination, as a table that saves in the ocean of inequality, and as a ray of sun that gives heat in the imminent cold of indifference; consider within your recommendations these actions:

1. Increase efforts to ensure the full enjoyment of the rights of the Indigenous/Afro and Rural Women
2. Monitor and review the access to education, especially to higher education for Afro women, indigenous, who are displaced in rural areas.
3. Be aware of the allocation of resources for programs and projects by the national government and local governments, aimed at women,
4. Accompany and draw attention to the situation of collective and individual threat of women who claim compliance and respect of the rights, and safety of their bodies and their lives.

Thank you.

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