



14/12/2007 10:27

Kirsti Kolthoff, EWL President
Intervention during closing event of the Year of Equal
Opportunities for All, Lisbon 20.11.2007

Dear ministers, members of the European Parliament, colleagues and friends,

I'm very happy to present here the wishes of the 4000 member organisations of the European Women's Lobby throughout Europe in relation to the follow up of the European Year on Equal Opportunities.

First, we would like to recall that access to power and resources is still unequally distributed between women and men in all areas of life, with some groups of women facing even greater discrimination than others. The European Women's Lobby itself **therefore commits to work to ensure that equality between women and men becomes an everyday reality and this must mirror the diversity of women.**

In relation to future action on the part of the European Union, as strongly emphasised by EWL member organisations at our last General Assembly in October 2007, EWL wishes for the adoption of **specific new Directive implementing the Principle of Equality between Women and Men outside Employment covering all areas of social life, with an aim to improve and complement the existing legal framework.**

Finally concerning the national level, which is the main constituency of our member organisations, we would like to stress that real progress towards realising gender equality in practice necessitates specific human and financial resources. **EWL calls on the Member States to fully integrate in their budgetary policies the commitments made towards equality between women and men and towards investment in care and social protection systems.** This should include support to civil society organisations, who often help victims of violence and help those women who are most marginalised and have the least access to rights and resources.