

# Parties call for Gender Equality and Human Rights in Geneva Climate Talks

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**GENEVA, SWITZERLAND (February 8, 2015)** *Original Post at [www.wedo.org](http://www.wedo.org)*— The first meeting of the 2015 climate talks kicked off today in Geneva, Switzerland. At this meeting, Parties will agree the draft text which will become the foundation for negotiations from now until Paris, COP21, in December— with an eye towards a new global climate agreement.

The tone of the first day seemed to show that Parties are ready to get straight to work, with countries in the G77&China showing a particular display of strength and unity during the Opening Plenary, foregoing lengthy group statements by making online submissions and aligning under common messaging.

From there, the session moved quickly into the first agenda item, reviewing section C of the elements text, a proposed ‘General/Objectives’ section of the agreement. The co-Chairs process for the sessions was to take any new/additional comments or language, and then move on to overall comments.

The first Party to take the floor, the Government of Mexico called for *“Parties to respect human rights and gender equality in implementation of all climate policies and actions.”*

This was supported by Uganda and Chile. The EU then put forward an additional strong proposal stating: *“All Parties and stakeholders shall, in all climate change related actions, respect, protect, promote, and fulfill human rights for all. All Parties shall be guided by gender equality and ensure the full and equal participation of women in all climate actions and decision making processes. All Parties should consider in their climate policies and actions a just transition of the workforce that creates decent work and quality jobs.”*

Adding to this strength of proposals, the Least Developed Countries and African Group said they would also proposing language on gender equality.

These proposals have been integrated into a new para, 12bis, into an updated draft text of the General section C. [http://unfccc.int/files/bodies/awg/application/pdf/section\\_c\\_general\\_objective\\_-\\_08022015@2100.pdf](http://unfccc.int/files/bodies/awg/application/pdf/section_c_general_objective_-_08022015@2100.pdf)

Sitting in Geneva, the home of a vast global human rights community, it was striking to witness a strong breadth of Parties putting language forward on gender equality and human rights. It is a strong precedent and one which will hopefully lead to a more just and rights-based outcome for

all.

Of course however, much more work needs to be done on this and for ambition in the overall agreement.

For this text/section, an issue lies in what this section will look like with some Parties feeling/ suggesting that it should be short and just a reiteration of the objective of the Convention.

Overall, there remain large substantive political challenges in terms of ambitious commitments, equity, common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities (CBDR-RC) and adequate financing.

This however, is a moment to recognize how far the climate negotiations have moved to recognizing the human face of climate impacts.