

## HEINRICH BÖLL FOUNDATION

Barbara Unmüßig, President

### **“Gender politics make a difference” On the future of feminist and gender democratic politics in the Heinrich Böll Foundation**

#### **Introduction**

At the Heinrich Böll Foundation gender politics and feminist analyses and strategies are a permanent fixture and a core value in its national and international work; its scholarship programme and overall organisational development.

Gender politics is one of the Foundation’s most important political characteristics. In organisational and development the Foundation has become a pioneer and role model for many other organisations.

*“...we are proud of [the shared task of gender democracy in the Heinrich Böll Foundation] because the likelihood of these structures existing in any other mixed organisation is slim. But for us, there is no reason to allow the further process of the Foundation’s development to be left to its own devices.”*

This quotation by Gunda Werner – an innovator for the model of gender democracy in the Heinrich Böll Foundation – dating from 1999 is the motto for a thorough examination of our strategies and political focuses of gender politics as well as their institutional anchoring in the Heinrich Böll Foundation.

It is a fixed element of our political culture to examine whether, in the light of new social and economic challenges, our gender political orientation is on the right path. Do we influence gender political discourse? Are we, as a political foundation, in a position to provide gender political impulses for more gender equity – world-wide? And, finally: How do we realise our model of gender democracy in our own organisation, in its corporate culture?

To answer these questions we have embarked on a journey, in the last year in particular; have had many discussions and made some important changes. The two units “*Joint Taskforce for Gender Democracy*” and the “*Feminist Institute*”, which have previously worked separately from each other, will be amalgamated into a joint organisational and working unit. This should enable us to be politically even more influential. Together we wish to take the field of conflict between feminism and gender democracy and use it to produce positive results. Using a number of selected focal topics the newly founded “*Gunda Werner Institute for feminism and gender democracy*” (GWI) wishes to demonstrate in the field of political educational work in Germany that viewing political topics from a gender political perspective and providing impulses for political action makes a significant difference.

Parallel to this, the Heinrich Böll Foundation has subjected its equal opportunities, equality and women’s advancement policies in its international work to a comprehensive inventory carried out in several phases and, at a strategy workshop run by the foreign department, has charted a new thematic course for the future.

The objective of this position paper is, **firstly**, to discuss the gender political challenges of the future for our national and international work and to renew our self-conception and/or model of gender democracy.

**Secondly**, we wish to express our programmatic focus more clearly; to define objectives and tasks and to agree the definitions and instruments of gender democratic politics.

The Executive Board has adopted “Programmatic Guidelines” and defined gender politics as both a shared task as well as also an independent theme. This should be supported in our

national and international work; in the scholarship programme and in organisational development with concrete objectives and corresponding financial and personnel resources.

Unlike any other Heinrich Böll Foundation strategic paper, this position paper has been intensively discussed at all stages of its drafting with staff in almost all the Foundation's departments as well as with the Foundation's unsalaried bodies (Supervisory Board, Women's Council, Members' Assembly, Expert Advisory Board North South and the Scholarship Programme department as well as the Men's Forum). Most, if not all, of the many proposals and additions were included in this final version of the position paper on the future of feminist and gender democratic politics in the Heinrich Böll Foundation. Many, many thanks to all those involved!

## **A. The gender political challenges**

### **II. Women's policy successes and ...**

Political processes and economic upheavals have brought movement into the relationship between the sexes. In the Federal Republic of Germany, in Europe and world-wide the influence of the women's movement and feminist theory and practice have promoted socio-political relationships and the legislative equality of women.

The "nationalisation" of women's politics since the 1980's has prompted a wealth of laws, directives, UN resolutions, supranational (EU) and national policies in the majority of the world's nations; all of which are aimed at achieving the equality of the sexes.

These political and social upheavals and the economic and cultural turmoil caused by globalisation processes have resulted in an abundance of forms of living and working.

Women world-wide have thus conquered both business and politically territory. They have achieved a giant step forward in labour markets: today, 40 % of all people in employment world-wide are female – 30 years ago it was only half as many. Significant progress towards equality has also been recorded in the field of education. Thanks to initiatives in civil society and by the state for greater equality of women the legal situation has also improved.

An international gender political milestone was, undoubtedly, the 1995 World Conference on Women's Beijing Platform for Action. The Platform introduced gender as a category to international politics for the first time. This represented recognition of the fact that gender roles and relationships are embedded in social, political, economic and cultural contexts and can thus also be changed.

The *Gender Mainstreaming* instrument – anchored in the Beijing Platform for Action as a strategic approach – is intended for use by state institutions; international organisations and companies to question stereotypical gender roles in both the private and the public arenas and to alter them in the emancipatory sense. What was new is that gender mainstreaming explicitly wishes to consider the dynamics between the sexes. The elimination of inequality and undemocratic relationships between the sexes should thus not be solely a matter for women but also for men and a task for all of society. Men are thus for the first time addressed as participants in gender politics. This should be viewed as an innovation if not yet as a breakthrough. The implementation of gender mainstreaming as an instrument with this originally radical intention is often politically and financially obstructed; not taken seriously or practiced in a technocratically abridged manner. It has, at all events, not yet been possible to realise its full potential in any society.

### **3. Women's and gender political challenges**

Compared with the situation of women as late as the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century an almost revolutionary transformation has taken place. Undeniable progress is juxtaposed by the fact that – in both national and global terms – the hierarchies, power differentiations and dominance relationships between the sexes have by far not been eliminated.

Discrimination, disadvantaging and violence continue to be influential factors in the living conditions of millions of women across the globe. There is hardly a single international document, an international (women's) conference which does not confirm that the structural inequality between the sexes in many societies has, if anything, become stronger. In political terms women are still excluded from decision-making processes. Their legal situation is precarious. Despite the increase in the numbers of working women the economic differences at the expense of women have hardly decreased at all, partially because a far higher percentage of them

work in precarious and part-time circumstances and/or in underpaid industries than men. Men are, however, also increasingly being affected by unemployment and marginalisation.

Characteristics of this situation are, for example

- the gender-differentiated and hierarchical division of labour which still exists in many areas of business life; politics; the sciences; government and private life;
- women's unequal access to resources (e.g. education, communications, healthcare, disparate distribution of public finances; land and also "natural" resources);
- differences in income between the sexes, particularly disparate payment for equivalent or, in some cases, the same work. In Europe women's income is, on average, 15 % lower than men's; world-wide this figure is up to 30 %;
- Women spend (world-wide) twice as much time as men in unpaid care and reproductive work in households and communities. The dominant male role model is that men are excluded from care and nurturing and instead are primarily responsible for salaried employment. This gender specific division of labour has changed very little;
- unequal participation in democratic decision-making processes and in the holding of political office in parties and governments.
- Violence against women. In 95 % of all cases of domestic violence world-wide women are the victims. In Germany and Europe female migrants are particularly affected by this.
- The stipulation of sexual behaviour and identities (e.g. via heterosexual family concepts) and the discrimination of sexual orientation deviating from the heterosexual norm.

Gender politics is as relevant and necessary as they ever were, even if, however, the social and socio-cultural contexts have shifted. Gender relationships and hierarchies are closely interconnected with political, social and, above all, economic transformations. Even if power and interest constellations are continuously changing, it is precisely the gender arrangements which remain deeply rooted in social institutions and organisations.

Parallel to this the consistency of power asymmetries between the sexes has become brittle. They differentiate between the sexes and within the relevant gender groups. The simple dichotomy between powerful men and powerless women has long since reached its limits.

Strategic and political approaches for the objectives of gender democracy and gender equity must continuously re-establish the connection between the complicated interrelationships of the state, business and society with gender relationships and analyse the diverse and, in some cases, contradictory constellations. Parallel to this – this is objective of the Heinrich Böll Foundation - political strategies must also take up clear positions against unambiguous power and exploitive structures and take political initiatives in favour of a gender group (this means, for example, promoting the rights of homosexuals or exclusively encouraging women to organise themselves).

Despite similar structural characteristics, specific focuses and strategies must be identified for each society with its corresponding cultural, socio-economic and political context.

This calls for in-depth analyses of the specific gender political situation and requires the Foundation to promote the corresponding analysis methods.

#### **IV. On the relevance of gender politics in Germany: between "backlash" and new feminism**

In Germany the topics of feminism and gender democracy were long considered to be old-fashioned and superfluous. Subjective perception – young women in particular have grown up without any noteworthy experience of discrimination – characterises this assessment.

Equal opportunity or even feminist approaches were long considered to be obsolete and embarrassing. It is undisputed that for girls and young women self-determined life plans combining, for example, career and family and/or private life have become more of a matter of course. Boys and men are also increasingly orienting themselves to roles other than the traditional role models and social roles assigned to them. And the emancipation of traditional roles has also become a key element in the individualisation of our society and the differentiation of life styles. All of this is reflected in the attitudes of (young) men and women – above all in western societies and the global middle class.

Gender researchers<sup>1</sup> also argue in a similar direction: In contemporary society the specific hierarchically organised gender relationship is increasingly dissolving from within since it is losing its normative basis – the gender specific division of labour. Feminism has thus fulfilled its historic task; has achieved its goal and is no longer needed.

For some time now feminism and gender equity have, however, returned as topics in the political and discursive arena. Public arguments are again taking place concerning what gender equity could mean. It was suddenly there, the speculation regarding why we Germans fare so badly in comparison to the rest of Europe with regard to the salaried employment of women; their lack of representation at board level and in the top positions at universities. These problems, recognised as modernisation deficits, are now meeting with a response in contemporary politics and the media.

Gender political aspects are now receiving more consideration in the debate regarding new policies for the family. The compatibility of family and career should focus on both sexes. It is to the credit of Minister for Family Affairs von der Leyen that she is also attempting to make the role of men into a subject of public debate to an extent rarely seen previously. Parental benefits, crèche places, all-day schools – all of this sparks (and spark) a fierce debate on the subject of gender roles, not only in conservative and religious camps or within the Christian Democratic parties.

The controversy can be felt across the whole of society. Its spectrum now reaches from the call for a “new feminism” (DIE ZEIT newspaper) or for a “conservative feminism” (Ursula von der Leyen) through to “back to the hearth”. The discussion has long since also been filled with anti-feminist rhetoric and polemics. The FAZ newspaper and the Spiegel magazine have thus attempted to disavow the emancipatory progress of recent years and to force it into a long since obsolete pro-women and thus simultaneously anti-male corner using malice, allegations and ideological statements from yesteryear. To this end, diffuse fears have been mobilised and aggression has been fanned. The aim is obviously to assert antiquated ideas of masculinity. Some of the polemics even go so far as to assert that the new feminism and also the Federal Government’s new family policies make it impossible for men to be real men and women to be real women. Such articles unfortunately defy any kind of differentiated discussion on the future fields of activity of gender politics.

Independent of the public discussion we must address the question of what, in pragmatic political terms, is being done in Germany to achieve greater gender equity. What political initiatives has the Federal Government introduced to eliminate discrimination, inequality and stereotypical gender constructions? What are the characteristics of conservatively influenced “new feminism”?

- Equal opportunity policy approaches are, as a matter of course, being focused on the compatibility of family and career and thus subordinated to family policy or completely substituted by it. Parental benefits are exemplary in this context. Admittedly, they may – at least – also include men/fathers as a target group, however their aim, on the one

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<sup>1</sup> See Sabine Hark: “Dissidente Partizipation - Eine Diskursgeschichte des Feminismus”, Frankfurt 2006.

hand, is achieve optimum use of the qualified male and female labour force whilst, on the other, increasing the birth rate among the educated German middle classes.

- Policies for women's advancement now have virtually no public profile or largely concentrate on advancing women's careers. Funding for women's advancement is being reduced or cut altogether at both the national and EU level.
- Legislative initiatives against discrimination in women's salaries; an equal opportunities act for business or to give female immigrants residence permit status independent of their marital status are not in sight.
- Groundbreaking instruments such as *Gender Mainstreaming*, which have the potential to focus political initiatives and measures in all institutions and organisations on the goal of gender justice and which are anchored in the EU's Amsterdam Treaty are now again being reduced by the Federal Government to "equality policies focusing on preventive procedures".
- Concepts or political campaigns which could fundamentally alter the hierarchical order of the sexes; the social attribution of "masculine" and "feminine" and the consequent social scale of values and hierarchy fall by the wayside and/or were never taken into consideration in governmental actions.
- Binding political guidelines such as quotas, not to mention structural policy measures aimed at breaking up relationships of economic and emotional dependency in partnerships and thus facilitating individuals' independent securing of their existences, have virtually no chance. On the contrary, social and tax policy imperatives continue to preserve the traditional matrimonial and familial model, such as, for example, the new statutory duty of spouses to support a spouse receiving social benefits and standard marital income splitting, which in the sense of the family ideology currently being propagated is, in the best case, to become family income splitting.
- Gender politics encompass an active debate on the gender role of boys and men. It has long since become clear that boys and men are also negatively affected by gender blind education, health or labour policies. Statistics show that violence (perpetrator and victim), vandalism, addiction and criminality are male-dominated fields. An active debate on the "crisis of masculinity" necessitates a fundamental gender sensitive, political change of perspective and, above all, also male role models who take up the topic in the political and public arena
- Gender politics include family concepts guaranteeing social and legal recognition and equality to homosexual family constellations.

The challenges and fields of action described above for future-oriented gender politics are, to a large extent, being ignored by the Federal Government. The intermeshing of family policy oriented instruments with equal opportunity policy objectives will assist with improving the modernisation deficits for our economy (more salaried employment for women) and the demographic problems of the future. These "efficiency objectives" will also certainly be of benefit to individual men and women.

It is, however, also clear that the current politics of the Federal Government do not provide a recipe for more equality for that section of the population which is marginalised and excluded and continues to be subjected to legal and tariff political discrimination. And this still, in the main, affects women, even in our society. Empowerment approaches for "weak" women, girls, men and boys; specific assistance for women, girls and boys are continuously being rolled back in favour of **politics for the few** who are of use for our global economic competitiveness and can be more easily integrated into our society. "New feminism" or "conservative feminism" is thus criticised as also being "middle class clientele feminism", no longer taking into consideration any of the other problems such as the gender discriminatory division of labour, violence, sexism and racism or legal and political exclusion.

The gender politics of the Heinrich Böll Foundation with their model of gender democracy (see below) focus on the a concept which aims to do justice to the various realities of life for women and men; to eliminate power and dominance relationships between the sexes and to assist in making human rights a reality for both sexes.

## V. On the relevance of gender politics world-wide

In 2002 when presenting the “UN Report on Women, Peace and Security” Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated: “Women do not enjoy equal status with men in any society”. But: not even the UNO is able to counteract this situation in any meaningful way, neither within its organisation nor politically. A clear illustration of this, specifically with regard to women’s politics, is the inadequate Millennium Development Goals (MDG). They fall far short of the political demands of the Beijing Platform for Action. The proposals for reform of the UN also include very few programmatic approaches concerning ways in which gender politics could be provided with new impulses at international level.

There is currently no initiative or even one single future-oriented reference project on the part of the UN which international women’s organisations or gender politically active networks could refer to, or have referred to, as was, for e.g., the case with the UN women’s conferences from the 1970’s to Beijing in 1995. The objective at UN level is, rathermore, to defend the status quo against attacks by the political neo-conservative camp and by fundamental-religious networks and organisations.

At international level, no major gender political impulses in the direction of equality are to be expected in the foreseeable future. The documents signed by the world’s governments, such as the Beijing Platform for Action; the CEDAW anti-discrimination convention or the UN Security Council Resolution 1325, are, and remain, key points of reference for the institutionalisation of women’s (rights) policies and for greater political and economic participation. The Heinrich Böll Foundation will, also in future, refer to these documents in its work with regional and trans-regional partners and networks.

### 1. Democracy and gender politics

The equality of the sexes by means of corresponding legislative framework conditions and continued promotion of the institutionalisation of gender politics remain the central sphere of activity of the international work of the Heinrich Böll Foundation. They are an **integral component of our democracy work**.

- **The institutionalisation of women’s and gender politics:** The passing of national laws and the ratification of conventions have improved the preconditions for the legislative equality of women and the implementation of human rights. The principle of gender mainstreaming has been introduced in many countries. As a result the women’s equality world-wide has, de jure, unarguably increased; the process is, however, still nowhere near completed. In addition to this the huge divide between legislative framework provisions and their implementation world-wide is cause for complaint.

Political and administrative implementation capacities in parliaments and at all levels of government must thus be strengthened. Improvement of the political, economic and social participation of women has been successfully achieved in many countries through the assistance of positive discrimination measures (quotas for political parties, parliaments, business, and universities). The goal of the Beijing Platform to place a critical mass of at least 30 percent women in political decision-making structures has, however, still nowhere near been achieved and remains a task. Open and latent resistance to women’s rights, deeply entrenched in many societies, necessitate public and political campaigns.

- Lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transsexuals (LGBT) are subject to particular discrimination: Homosexuality is a criminal offence in some 85 states; in 9 states it is even a capital crime. Transsexuals world-wide are submitted to violence and arbitrary incarceration and subject to attempts to force them into sexual gender formats. The refusal to honour basic rights and institutionalised discrimination are the order of the day, even in European states. Campaigns and initiatives against the persecution and systematic discrimination of lesbians, gays and transsexuals are required, working in cooperation with the LGBT projects which exist in many locations both nationally and

internationally. In many countries the Heinrich Böll Foundation is often the only foreign organisation supporting such campaigns and networks.

- **Religion, equality and politics:** A particular challenge for the implementation of equality and human rights is the re-emergence of religious movements and politics. The parallelism of diverse legal systems – modern law, religious law and traditional law – have a negative effect in particular on the legal position of women, since, for e.g., in many countries marital and family law is practised according to religious law. The common denominator among such religiously influenced legal systems is the rigid assignment of gender roles and gender identities to which both sexes are “subjected”.

Action by the state should give precedence to secular marital and family law which is based on equality of the sexes. In the religio-legal context there are, however, also numerous Muslim, Christian or Jewish moderate clerics, above all, however women’s rights activists, who advocate an emancipatory, feminist interpretation of religious law in order to be able to, from their point of view, conciliate religion, equality and feminism. Locally and regionally anchored approaches for reform and/or modification of traditional and/or religious law can also provide a point of contact for political intervention in favour of increased women’s rights. The challenge in this regard will, among others, be the identification of the boundaries of religio-cultural freedom and placing them in a relationship to the personal rights of the individual. Bans on contraception; enforced veiling; male defence of family honour; enforced marriages; genital mutilation and circumcision represent unambiguous religious and cultural boundaries which infringe upon the personal rights of women and men.

The Heinrich Böll Foundation will study the interaction of religion, politics and gender relationships more intensively than in the past and promote corresponding trans-regional and trans-religion analyses.

## **2. Gender politics and economy**

Economic globalisation processes, with their inequalities and upheavals have very different and often contradictory effects on women and men. They change social systems, cultures and economies in different ways. Women, on the one hand, have far greater access to jobs than ever before. This results in new freedoms and increased self-determination. At the same time, at 60 percent, women make up the majority of the world’s working poor. On the other hand, the increasingly precarious status of salaried employment means that men see themselves shaken to the core of their self-conception.

**Migration is becoming feminine:** More than ever before, women are seeking new ways to earn their livelihood in global markets. Migration – previously more a male domain – has long since become feminine. Today, women make up half of the world’s 180 million migrants. And they are not only seeking employment in the care sector but also in salaried employment. In this context transnational companies and their suppliers in particular offer employment for minimal wages and often under degrading working and living conditions.

**Re-distribution of care work:** Gender inequality continues to be a fact not only in salaried employment but also in care work. It is primarily performed by unpaid women, among other reasons because it does not seem possible to align it with the dominating male role model. Women and men solve the problem of compatibility by employing low-paid cleaners, nursemaids and carers for the elderly – often female migrants. The re-distribution of care work is currently taking place all over the world, but not between men and women but rather, thanks to the global supply chain, between widely disparate women for different countries, social classes and cultures.

**Strengthening economic competence:** Understanding the ambivalence of economic globalisation processes to gender relationships and integrating them into political and economic decision-making processes is an important field for international gender politics. Analyses on this subject are still rare. Expanding knowledge on the gender political effects of



global economic processes and political decisions – be it in the fields of trade, labour, financial or investment policies – is an important sphere of activity in the international work of the Heinrich Böll Foundation. We would like to strengthen the capacities of women in particular to gain more influence on national and international decision-making processes. To this end capacities and networks able to analyse the politics of the World Bank or the World Trade Organisation (WTO) with regard to their effect on the sexes and gender politics are required. A key project is the organisation of regular international summer schools on the central topic of “Engendering Macroeconomics”.

### **3. Women in peace politics and conflict management**

Foreign and security policy continue to be male-dominated domains. Even the concepts of conflict prevention and conflict management have difficulties with the consistent integration of the gender dimension into theories on the origin of conflicts and their management. The concern of the Heinrich Böll Foundation with regard to this thematic focus is to systematically integrate the gender perspective into all issues relating to “war and peace”. An ambitious and extremely difficult undertaking. Our many years of work are, however, beginning to show the first signs of success.

- **UN Resolution 1325:** Women are players in the resistance to war and armed conflict; in conflict management and prevention, even if we do not wish to represent women as the more peace-loving of the sexes. In recent years there has been a resurgence in the interest of women’s politics and feminist networks world-wide in foreign and security policy topics and concepts. They are again declaring their claims to representation in political decision-making processes on war and peace more loudly and noticeably. In crisis and conflict regions women are raising their voices and demanding their rights to political participation in conflict prevention; in measures to maintain peace and in post-conflict management.

In this context they also refer to UN Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000. This resolution is a key milestone on the path to more gender sensitive peace and security policies. For the first time in the history of the United Nations the UN Security Council has issued a directive on the participation of women in decisions on war and peace as well as regarding gender sensitive security policies which is binding under international law. Feminist networks are emphatically demanding that governments implement Resolution 1325 and develop concrete action plans to achieve real integration of the Resolution’s directives into conflict management concepts. The Heinrich Böll Foundation is a pioneer and key player in national and EU networks and will attempt to expand this role at global level, for example via corresponding case studies for the implementation of Resolution 1325.

For the Foundation gender politics are, in all regions, a central **democracy and justice topic**. In addition to climate and energy politics gender politics is a definitive focus of our regional work. In contrast to other political foundations the international work of the Heinrich Böll Foundation has an unambiguously gender political profile, which we wish to strengthen on an ongoing basis.

## **B. The gender politics of the Heinrich Böll Foundation**

### **I. The model of gender democracy**

Against the background of the above mentioned political, economic and cultural gender political challenges the Heinrich Böll Foundation's model of gender democracy– adopted upon the re-founding of the Heinrich Böll Foundation – is as current as it ever was. It has lost none of its social explosivity. Because our model of gender democracy questions existing legislative, economic and social discrimination, inequality and hierarchical relationships. Our concern in this regard is not to level out gender differences but rather to achieve equal rights and opportunities for diversity.

The questioning of stereotypical gender roles in the political and private arenas and changing them in an emancipatory sense is a central task in the implementation of our mission statement. Analysis of gender relationships and gender influences on political and entrepreneurial decisions is a decisive instrument on the path to emancipatory equal opportunities policies.

Gender democracy as a visionary objective means that

- a wide range of role models and life plans are recognised and viewed as being of the same value;
- the allocation of social positions, employment, income and power is not based on gender;
- patriarchal structures and power relationships in the private and public arenas are overcome;
- the diversity of gender identities, gender-related forms of expression and sexual orientation are recognised both legally and socially.

This mission statement should be understood as both a socio-political vision and as an organisation principle. Gender democracy is a normative term postulating equal rights, equal opportunities, equal access for men and women to economic resources and political power. Participation is the prerequisite for the change and transformation of (gender) unequal relationships. The Heinrich Böll Foundation has thus created theoretically good preconditions for the spelling out in gender policy terms of our own political focuses and spheres of activity in our national and international work; for the scholarship programme and in human resources and fiscal policies.

Gender democratic and feminist politics wish to question and work on their self-conception according to all fields of politics and their influence on the relationship between the sexes. As a consequence gender democracy demands nothing less than the transformation of all those social structures which reproduce inequality and stereotypical role models between the sexes. In the Heinrich Böll Foundation the implementation of gender democracy and breathing life into it is thus

**a shared task!**

### **II. Tasks and strategies for gender democracy**

The outlining of the political, economic and cultural challenges and upheaval with which the political education work of the Heinrich Böll Foundation in its entirety is confronted makes it clear that gender issues and gender equality policies can no longer be developed from the "relevance perspective" and from universal interests, as was the case during the heyday of the women's movement. We must thus turn our attention to the preconditions for gender political action and interference to a greater extent than previously.

This also entails **defining the target conflicts** resulting from our integration into social, economic and technological development more aggressively than previously. It is no longer feasible to encompass the female population solely by means of the term "women", just as little as the male one can be defined using the term "men". What connects the single head

mistress in Munich with the Filipino home help who looks after the former's home in order to finance her children's education back home in the Philippines? What connects the landless Brazilian woman with the female police officer in Rio? What does the hedge fund manager in London have in common with an unemployed man in Berlin or an African refugee in Morocco?

These examples cite (new) divisions of labour and social divisions and refer to the fact that social allocations of "male" and "female" can no longer be ascribed to the corresponding gender as a matter of course.

In common with all emancipatory gender politics feminism means transcending gender duality and gender typical allocations. This also encompasses intermeshing the analysis category "gender" with other differentiation characteristics such as class affiliation; ethnic origin; sexual orientation and religious affiliation/orientation. This gives rise to the issue of understanding equal opportunities differently and/or continuously reinterpreting them. They could provide points of reference for alternative models which must be (further) developed. Productive discussion regarding the relationship between **gender** and **diversity** and their reciprocal interweaving must thus be continued.

**Gender political interference:** In order to achieve social acceptance gender politics all over the world must take up concrete, socio-politically relevant topics and questions concerning the future, e.g. in health policy; with regard to demographic change; with regard to social security systems; in legislative policy; in eco and scientific policy; in security and peace policies; in labour market and global economic and financial policy as well as in education policy. These politically contested fields require gender political and feminist interference. In this context, women and men must voice their gender political claim to co-determination of themes and illustrate alternatives.

An objective of the work of the Heinrich Böll Foundation is, in correspondence with our mission statement, to anchor a socio-politically wide-ranging understanding of gender politics and to organise gender political interference.

This requires **gender competence** and **new gender knowledge** in order to encompass gender aspects in topics relevant for the future. Anyone wishing to challenge and influence the political mainstream requires, on the one hand, gender sensitive analyses. On the other, they require social alliance partners and networks. Gender politics with the objective of gender democracy is a social negotiation process for power and resources. This assumes strong networks capable of intervention and alliances for mobilisation.

**Empowerment and gender mainstreaming:** The fundamental gender political understanding of the Heinrich Böll Foundation in our national and international work encompasses the fact that this work pursues multiple, parallel strategic approaches. We assist and strengthen – depending on the political analysis and gender political setting of priorities – political issues and networks specific to women (and men), in other words classical **empowerment strategies** as well as gender democratic and cross-divisional approaches. **Gender mainstreaming** is, in this regard, one of several strategies which we have, for a considerable time, been successfully implementing in our national and international work. Our independent gender democratic approach aims explicitly to place both sexes in the focus of the political development of gender relationships in various spheres. In this regard the Foundation will, in future, continue to enter onto new terrain and set special, distinctive examples. With the "Ladies' Lunch" and the "Men's Forum" the foundation has established two formats offering the gender specific exchange of ideas and networking.

**Forming alliances:** Our diverse strategies include the formation of classical women's politics and new alliances and, in this context, the inclusion in particular of new players. Well-educated women who are asserting their claims to promotion and management positions in companies, in the sciences, in the media and state institutions ever more loudly are searching for political opportunities to articulate themselves. These women must be involved more strongly than before in those political initiatives which, above all, seek to strengthen the rights and participation opportunities of less privileged women. New forms of solidarity with

weaker women equipped with less negotiating power are required if the new feminism is not to be of benefit solely to the world's middle class women.

Together with female and male homosexual activists the Foundation is actively seeking alliance partners, particularly in the South – a politically extremely difficult environment. All over the world, men in a wide variety of functions have now also embarked on mission of breaking down old gender stereotypes and foregoing old privileges. Understanding them as independent players in the gender discourse and not as mere vicarious agents of women's politics is a key prerequisite for the formation of corresponding alliances. The foundation is already creating wide-ranging bridges for corresponding "gender dialogues" and future alliances.

Furthermore, the objective is to bring the gender perspective to socio-political, sector-specific and mixed gender organisations and networks – be this in social policy; in international climate policies or in the work of social movements.

The **transnational exchange of strategy and experience** among others on legislative and implementation issues; regarding globalisation or on the significance of religion and women's rights is a task to which the Foundation with its international network and its partner structure devotes itself to a special degree.

### **III. On the relationship of gender democracy and feminism in the Heinrich Böll Foundation**

During the merger phase of the three individual foundations in the mid-1990's the Foundation decided on the one hand to set up a "*Joint task force for the shared task of gender democracy*" and, on the other to found a small "*Feminist Institute*". Up until today they have been places where gender politics and/or feminist politics were "guaranteed" to be subjects for action. Parallel to this, all specialist departments and "service providers" were requested to implement the model of gender democracy as a shared task in their relevant sphere of activity and responsibility. This took place in a diverse manner and with varying intensity by means of corresponding consulting and training offerings (among others via gender training courses, manuals and guide lines).

The issue of how feminist and gender democratic policy approaches relate to each other; of their interaction was, however, never discussed. Both approaches were merely described as parallel discourses.

The merger of both units into the new *Gunda Werner Institute* is intended to document that both approaches productively complement each other while retaining their own special value. With the founding of the "Feminist Institute" as an independent organisational unit (anchored in its Charter) the merged Heinrich Böll Foundation has explicitly affirmed its affiliation to the feminist roots of the Green movement. Feminist political theory and practice consistently examines the causes of differences between "male" and "female" in the division of power, social and legal status and availability of economic resources. Although there is neither one standard feminist theory nor undisputed feminist political concepts, objectives and strategies, all feminists refer to a radical criticism of socially engineered structures and norms.

Feminism is, in this sense, partisan. Despite all the difference and breaks, it sides with women; articulates female interests and demands the taking into consideration of a feminist perspective.

A utopian goal of feminism is, and remains, the radical transformation of hierarchical gender relationships. In the light of the predominant principle of hegemonial masculinity, this historic goal has, from the view point of the Heinrich Böll Foundation, most certainly not yet been achieved.

Hegemonial masculinity not only denotes the subjugation of women by men but also dominance relationships among men. This also includes the systematic devaluation of homosexuality and forms of behaviour perceived as being "feminine".

The analysis of gender relationships requires a precise consideration of both sexes. In this context feminist and woman-specific as well as reflective men's politics and non-heterocentrical perspectives and field experience – depending on the analytical starting position – must be strengthened and promoted.

The Heinrich Böll Foundation thus underlines that extremely diverse strategic access points are possible for the achievement of the goal of gender democracy. For the Foundation feminist analyses and practices are, however, a particularly central element for the placing of political impulses; initiation of discourse and creation of pressure for change. Feminist analyses and strategies with radical objectives but also measures for the specific support and linking up of women – for the empowerment of women – will retain their prominent value and a corresponding allocation of funds in the Heinrich Böll Foundation.

### **C. The Gunda Werner Institute for Feminism and Gender Democracy**

To date feminist and gender politics have been located in two separate units – in the “Joint Taskforce for Gender Democracy” and in the “Feminist Institute”. The merger of both units into the “Gunda Werner Institute for Feminism and Gender Democracy” (GWI) is intended to document internally and externally the productive partnership of feminist and gender democratic approaches in the political handling of gender relationships and hierarchies. This is not an issue of “Either or” but rather of **complementary** strategies which should, as far as possible, be based on a gender analysis. A joint institute provides better anchoring of the preconditions for productive and constructive handling of varying and, sometimes, also contradictory perspectives. This enables us to better bundle our strengths, whilst also mutually benefitting from the political profiles and networks built up in the past.

The “Gunda Werner Institute for Feminism and Gender Democracy” will, however, only be able to work on selected gender political issues and spheres of action. To this end it will be furnished with special personnel and financial resources. **The GWI does thus not replace the shared task of gender democracy.**

In keeping with the mission statement, the Institute’s objective will be to support and promote the social emancipation and equality of women and men in all social spheres.

The GWI will in particular:

- analyse power strategies, communication forms and concepts for action in politics and society from a gender perspective and counteract discriminating and exclusive tendencies,
- introduce new gender democratic and feminist perspectives into politics and society; support the development of corresponding approaches in and for politics as well as encourage social debate on these approaches,
- assist and promote an exchange of ideas between feminist, female and male-based political and gender democratic scientific approaches and research perspectives and new approaches for emancipatory work with men and women,
- promote the political participation of women in general and of gender-competent individuals in particular,
- actively contribute to the gender sensitivity and competence of women and men, also and in particular in the case of individuals in decision-making and leadership positions,
- develop diverse (advanced) training, further education and advisory offerings and provide them both externally and in-house,
- search for, support and develop conceptionally new ways of communication and education by and for women nationally and in the global context,
- develop offerings to win men for gender politics, to assimilate their viewpoints and to incorporate them as players,
- create space for the development of social blueprints in which the non-hierarchical co-existence of the sexes is at the centre of focus,
- contribute to the establishment and expansion of national and international women’s and men’s networks as well as gender democratic and feminist activities,
- assist feminist and gender-conscious young talents in the fields of science and politics, thus assisting the production of knowledge,
- actively act against the discrimination of lesbians, gays and transsexuals and end the wall of silence concerning homosexual forms of living.

## The work profile of the GWI:

The focuses of the GWI shall be defined in a work profile set out for the mid-term and shall be integrated into the planning bodies of our national and international work.

The following thematic focuses have currently been identified:

- *the independent securing of a livelihood* as the key and/or prerequisite for the creation of more just and equal gender relationships,
- *Gender politics in Europe* in the sense of a transnational exchange of experience regarding approaches for emancipative and transformatory political concepts which, on the one hand, are intended to provide impulses for the national context and, on the other, to search for new options for action and strategies with a view to EU politics as well as in connection with the EU project “Fit for Gender Mainstreaming – Transcending gender sensitive boundaries between East and West”,
- the continuation of the *peace and security policy activities from feminist and gender-oriented perspectives* with a special focus on the global implementation of UN Resolution 1325 as well as
- the (target group-specific) *guaranteeing and expansion of spaces for thought and reflection*, such as the Ladies Lunch, Men’s Forum or international dialogue processes in order to discuss perspectives of feminist and gender democratic politics.

## D. Gender politics as a shared task

Shared tasks and cross-sectional policies are a huge challenge for all organisations – also for the Heinrich Böll Foundation. They demand a fundamentally different approach to the one commonly used in conventional political and institutional practice.

Gender democracy as a cross-section and/or shared task presupposes **gender competence**, i.e. knowledge regarding the significance of gender relationships and effects in the most varied political fields. The category “gender” in one (if not the only one) criterion for the analysis and solution of social, economic and political problems. The gender competence of personnel is thus a critical qualification which is reflected, among other things, in the mission statement for human resources policy.

The diversity of the sexes in all circumstances and phases of life and its wealth of experience (diversity) will be taken seriously and form the basis of all considerations. The setting of targets is not limited to the creation of a balanced *quantitative* relationship between the sexes.

Gender politics has consequences for all social spheres: for the shaping of employment and business, of life styles and family; of social security and contribution; of education and the sciences; of research and technology. In this context we wish to push forward programmatic discussions regarding the setting of targets; roles and spheres of action. This also concerns the forms of cooperation between the new Gunda Werner Institute, the national department and the scholarship programme. The Federal Republic of Germany requires a repoliticization of the gender issue. This repoliticization will, however, only be successful if we are able to reformulate the gender issue under changed conditions; to analyse developments; to identify new problem areas and to search for solutions – nationally and internationally.

In our national and international work, with regard to the scholarship programme or in our public relations work the consistent theme will thus be to realise gender politics’ claim to be a cross-sectional task. Regular reviews of the situation and assessments are one basic precondition for evaluating learning experiences and for making the Foundation’s political education work productive. In addition to political challenges there are practical and methodological questions: How much analytical effort is required? What resources should we use to this end?

## .... and in organisational development

The Heinrich Böll Foundation is a role model for other organisations in the implementation of gender democracy and *gender mainstreaming*. It is thus often requested to provide support and advice. The foundation has developed and tested a wealth of orientations and instruments for action (modules, handbooks for gender training courses, guidelines, etc). This consulting offering will, in future, be continued under the umbrella of the **Green Campus** advanced training and continuing education academy and further gender-oriented educational offerings will be developed. These include, for e.g., the gender competence module in the field of political management and advising organisations and associations on the introduction and implementation of *gender mainstreaming*. The same applies for organisational development: gender-specifically compiled data and statistics (personnel statistics, budgets, etc) and clear guidelines from managers are an indispensable prerequisite. The Gender Democracy/Diversity steering group coordinated by the Executive Board assists the process of integration of gender and diversity perspectives in educational work; human resources and organisational development; advising of managers and the evaluation and conception of advanced training and continuing education offerings for personnel.

Berlin, October 2007