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Press Release, 17 March 1975: Special Tribute to Women Marks Opening of WFP Governing Body Session

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UNITED NATIONS

Press Section
Office of Public Information
United Nations, N.Y.

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Press Release WFP/376
17 March 1975

SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO WOMEN MARKS OPENING OF WFP GOVERNING BODY SESSION

(The following is reproduced as received from the FAO, Rome.)

Women's struggle for equal rights will have to be waged well beyond International Women's Year being observed in 1975 by the United Nations, women representing developing and developed countries told the governing body of the World Food Programme (WFP) today in Rome.

"It is essential that, in the eyes of the world, woman should be re-instated as the partner of man, and that she be given the position which has been denied her for so many centuries", Mrs. Marie-Therese Basse, Director of the Institute of Food Technology in Dakar, Senegal, declared.

"The International Women's Year", she added, "is but the starting point of the long-term effort that women of the world are determined to carry out until they get full exercise of their rights. It would be a mistake to think that after 12 months, when the theme has changed, the situation will go back to what it was before."

Women in Senegal, as in other countries, want to be represented in all fields of activity, she said. "They want to be present and have their share in the decisions that will change the life of all."

"Equal rights for women is an integrated part of the struggle towards social and economic justice", said Miss Ruth Jacoby of the Department of Development Co-operation of the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

A change in the status of women, she added, "calls for a radical change in traditions and attitudes and a new perception of the sex and family roles in society". She warned that "continuous and concrete efforts, during many years to come", would be needed to attain women's goal.

Francisco Aquino, Executive Director of the WFP, in opening the special tribute to women which preceded the regular business of the meeting, recalled that the WFP had not waited for International Women's Year to promote the role of women in its development projects.

(more)

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"It was helped mothers to raise healthier families", he said, "and been instrumental in teaching them about nutrition, child care and family planning. Our food has helped to make it possible for many young and older women to be educated, receive training and, in the case of older groups, to become literate."

He added that the WFP was committed to the aims of International Women's Year and had issued guidelines to programme officers "as to ways in which the emphasis of our work should change" to further those aims.

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