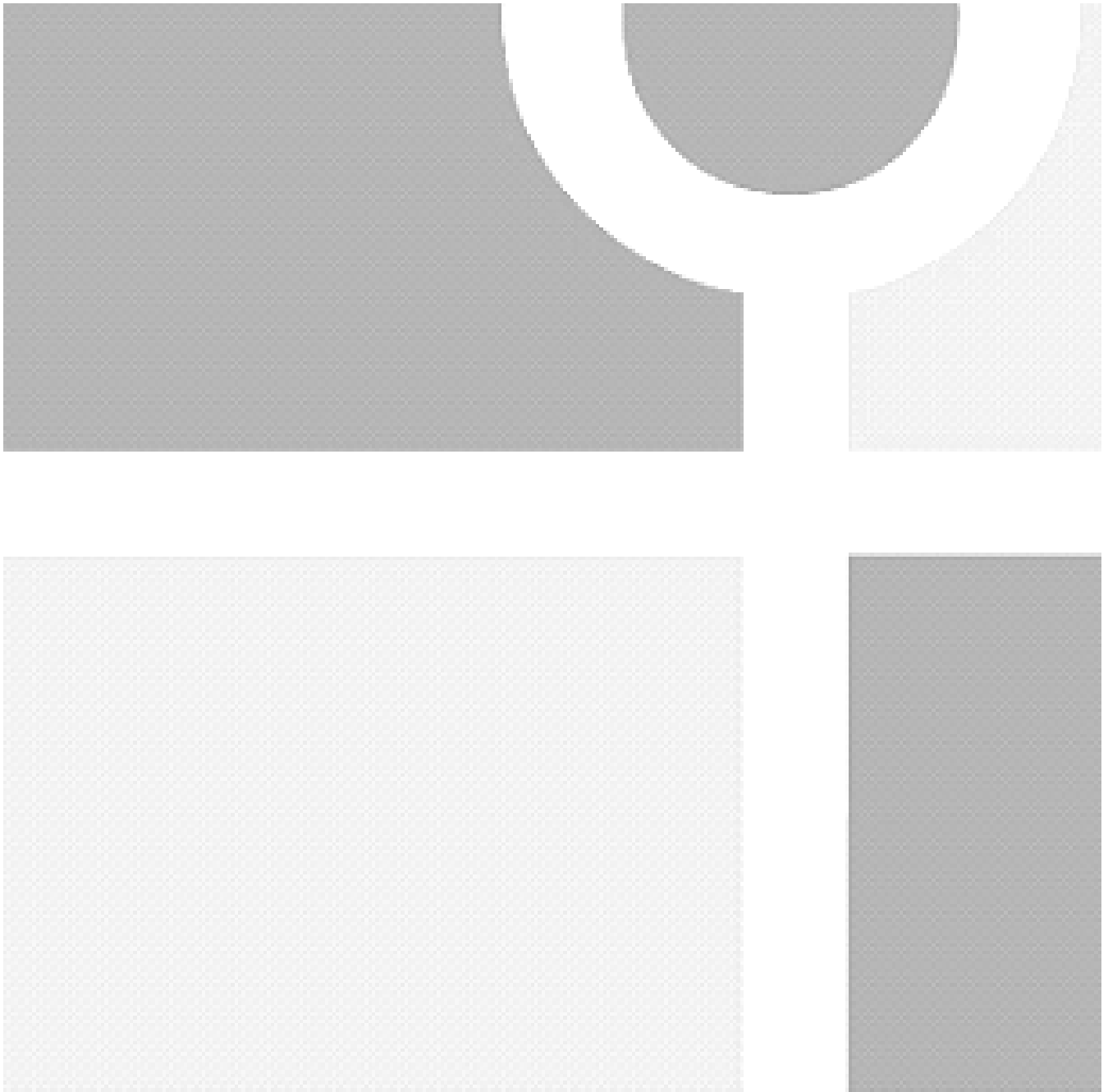
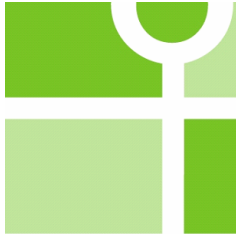


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# Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights 2008 ACTIVITIES REPORT





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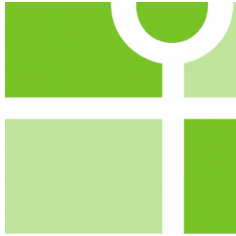
The Portuguese Platform for Women's Rights (PLATAFORMA) is a non-governmental organisation whose members are associations active in the promotion of gender equality and women's rights. It is independent from political parties, religious institutions or governmental structures. It represents Portugal in the European Women's Lobby (an NGO that brings together over 4000 women's organisations from all over Europe) and the *Association des Femmes de l'Europe Méridionale* (an NGO whose members are women's rights organisations from France, Italy, Portugal and Spain).

PLATAFORMA aims to provide to its members - women's rights NGOs - an organisational instrument that:

- contributes to their empowerment and increased visibility, at all levels;
- facilitates their articulation and mobilisation for collective actions;
- promotes joint reflection and discussion about strategies to achieve gender equality;
- defends their interests in institutional interlocution and structured civil dialogue;
- organises common actions to promote the introduction of a gender equality perspective in the organisational cultures and the action plans of NGOs working in other fields;
- promotes transnational cooperation, particularly in the European Union.

In so doing, PLATAFORMA wishes to strengthen and support these NGOs' important social role as actors in the process of implementation of gender equality in Portugal and, more widely, in Europe, and to reinforce the cooperation with other Portuguese, European and International NGOs.





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## Introduction

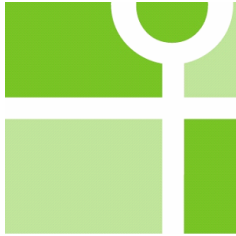
Throughout this year, PLATAFORMA worked on strengthening the consolidation of its role as an active and responsible agent in the Portuguese civil society, while maintaining a high level of alertness to political, economic and social issues.

At the request of partner international organisations, various lobbying sessions at the national level were initiated and implemented, as well as regular announcements through email and all sorts of initiatives - seminars, conferences, campaigns, communications, book launchings, financial aid resources, etc. - , in the area of gender equality.

The international representations for EWL and AFEM were guaranteed and European initiatives were transposed to Portugal with the involvement of NGOs members of PLATAFORMA, particularly in respect to Migrant Women and Parity.

This year was marked by the CEDAW process and the revision of the responsibilities assumed by Portugal in respect to this Convention, process in which the NGOs were part of, as a national focal point for the elaboration and presentation of the so called “shadow report” and also by the informal national participation of the PLATAFORMA in the Project *Eu Acuso* as a follow up of the commitments assumed in the Europe-Africa Summit.





## Organisational Structure

The following was the structure of the PLATAFORMA during 2008:

1) Human resources:

I. General Assembly

- i. President - ADP (Portuguese Democratic Alliance) - Regina Tavares da Silva;
- ii. Vice-President - REDE (Portuguese Network of Young People for Gender Equality) - Alexandra Sofia Silva;
- iii. Secretary - GRAAL (Grail) - Vanessa Viana

II. Executive Board

- i. President - REDE - Ana Sofia Fernandes;
- ii. Vice- President - ADP - Ana Coucello;
- iii. Treasurer - AMCV (Association of Women Against Violence) - Margarida Medina Martins

III. Fiscal Board

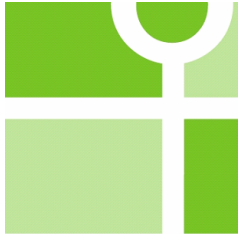
- i. President - GRAAL - Margarida Santos
- ii. Member - *Mulheres Século XXI* (XXIst Century Women) - Isabel Gonçalves;
- iii. Member - AMCV - Liliana Azevedo

IV. Representatives in International NGOs:

- i. EWL - Official - Marta Costa (REDE)  
Substitute - Liliana Azevedo (AMCV)
- ii. EWL's Violence Observatory - Raquel Vieitas (AMCV)
- iii. AFEM - Official - Nelly Bandarra Jazra  
Substitute - Cátia Santos (REDE) and Rute Castela (GRAAL)

2) Logistics:

- a) Logistics for meetings and the development of work in Lisbon offered by GRAAL and AMCV.
- b) AMCV and REDE support in the collaboration with the European Women's Lobby, ensuring the distribution of announcements and lobbying at the national and international levels throughout 2008.



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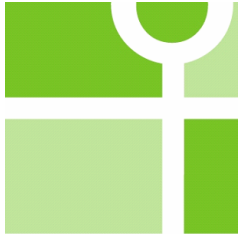
## PLATAFORMA's representation in the European Women's Lobby (EWL) and associated activities at National and European levels

In the 4<sup>th</sup> trimester of 2008, PLATAFORMA was represented in the Administrative Council of the EWL by Marta Costa - official representative and Liliana Azevedo - substitute. Previously, the representation of the PLATAFORMA was assumed by Liliana Azevedo and Maria do Mar Pereira.

As the Portuguese coordination for the EWL, PLATAFORMA actively participated in the following EWL's promoted activities:

- ✓ Participation in all Administrative Council and General Assembly (GA) meetings, from which resulted meeting reports;
- ✓ Regular dissemination of the EWL's Newsletter;
- ✓ Co-organization, development and participation in the writing of the conclusions of the Media and Gender group during the GA, which took place in October, in Lyon;
- ✓ Co-organization and intervention in a Sexual and Reproductive Rights group during the GA in Lyon;
- ✓ Representation in the seminar "Local Authorities as Actors Promoting Equality between Women and Men in Europe: Realities and Perspectives", whose main objective was the promotion and empowerment of the national representatives of the EWL. The following points were highlighted during this activity:
  - Importance of the NGOs in the promotion of gender equality at the local and regional level ;
  - The fundamental role of the EWL, its influence and efficiency regarding gender equality policies at the local, regional, national and European level;
  - Regional examples (Spain and Belgium) of gender equality intervention projects, mainly in respect to conciliation of personal,





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- professional and family life, highlighting the importance of new legislative measures for the operationalisation of the Lisbon Strategy and the Roadmap for Equality;
  - Evaluation project on gender impact at the structural level, in architecture and in space management;
  - The fundamental role of regional authorities mainly in respect to political participation processes and the involvement of men in gender equality.
- ✓ The active involvement in EWL's promoted campaigns and lobbying, namely "Women all over Europe call for peace and justice and call for a halt to militarisation", where a translation to Portuguese of the EWL's position was done, in cooperation with the Global Women's March.

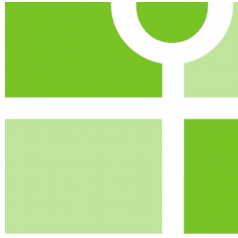
Among the lobbying actions, emphasis must be given to the 50/50 Campaign: ***No Modern European Democracy without Gender Equality.***

PLATAFORMA has been collaborating in the 50/50 Campaign since august of 2008. At a time when European elections are so close and having the necessity to encourage the equal participation of men and women in the European Parliament and the European Commission, the EWL developed a European campaign, made up of an online petition, lobbying actions and seminars, among others.

The participation of the PLATAFORMA during the second semester of 2008, in relation to the Campaign was based on:

- ✓ Translation to Portuguese of the lobbying kit and materials of the campaign and it's dissemination;
- ✓ Identification of people and official invitations to the supporters of the campaign;





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- ✓ Wide dissemination of the online petition.

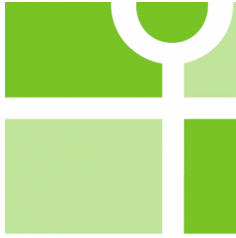
Implementation in Portugal of the EWL's project "Equal Rights, Equal Voices", which involved 15 Member States of the European Union, in which a Seminar took place "Perspectives on the Integration of Immigrant Women in Portugal", in Portugal, on November 22nd. The results of the Seminar were disseminated to the different key gender and immigration representatives involved and to the EWL. The Seminar counted with the participation of 56 women, 4 men and 8 children, in representation of immigrant associations, universities, NGOs, 2 unions and 1 political party.

This project has been put into practice since 2007, having had periodic meetings since October of the same year and is in the process of creating an Informal Migrant Women's Network in Portugal.

In the first meeting the participants identified concerns and priorities in the following domains: Sexual and Reproductive Rights - maternity protection, the right to adoption, access to Planned Parenthood; Employment - precarious conditions in the labour market and salary discrimination (gender gap); Education - recognition of skills and diplomas; Health - health access by women in irregular situation; Defending their rights - training on the rights of women and gender equality, for women and men; the role of the media in informing people of their rights; implementation of "linking agents" (individuals of reference) in troubled neighbourhoods; Violence - Informing migrant communities of the existing resources to support victims of violence; access to support services; Legal Status - Recognition of the specific situation of the migrant woman and the necessity for personalized policies; independent legal status; Social Rights - Greater offer of social equipments (namely for child care); the right to leisure and culture.

In the second meeting group expectations were shared, namely: contacting women of other associations; formation of a Immigrant Women's Network in





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Portugal with the following proposal of initiatives: organisation of various thematic meetings/workshops in areas specifically identified as critical and a priority - domestic violence, health and social services, among others; organisation of sessions for the clarification of legal matters; identification of discrimination situations in order to define future lobbying sessions, based on a questionnaire specifically designed for that effect.

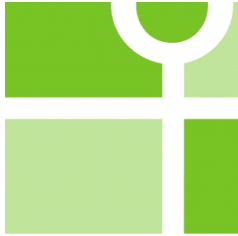
Finally, the third meeting occurred in the form of a training session on domestic violence where the importance of this network in Portugal was strengthened.

The network involves 10 immigrant associations, the PLATAFORMA, GRAAL and ACIDI, I.P. (High Commissioner for Immigration and Intercultural Dialogue).

- ✓ Representation of the PLATAFORMA in the follow-up meeting “Equal Rights, Equal Voices” in Brussels, on April 28 of 2008.
- ✓ Representation of the PLATAFORMA in the conference “The European Integration Forum” in Brussels, on 29 and 30 of April of 2008.
- ✓ Representation of the PLATAFORMA in the meeting “European Network of Migrant Women” in Brussels, on 29 and 30 of November of 2008.
- ✓ Representation of the PLATAFORMA in the seminar “Incorporating Gender in Integration Policies: the Way Forward” in Brussels, on December 1st of 2008.
- ✓ Presentation of the Portuguese version of the DVD - “Not for Sale” and the EWL’s positions on traffic/prostitution in a UMAR course, in March of 2008.

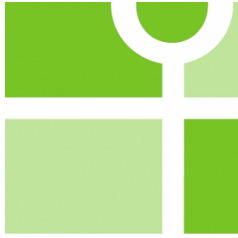
In the last trimester of 2008, the EWL’s Observatory on Violence Against Women retook their activities thanks to the financing of a Daphne III project. Therefore, it was possible for the national experts to meet, in Sofia, Bulgaria, and share the difficulties and advancements encountered in the various countries.





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Four groups for future development were created: Campaigns; Media Observatory; Migrant Women and Policy, as well as the contribution of the national experts to the development of a website for the Observatory, as well as the sharing of information regarding the campaign that will happen in the 16 days Against Violence. As a follow-up to this meeting, national suggestions were sent for the development of the website, which will be presented in 2009.



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## PLATAFORMA's representation in the Association des Femmes de l'Europe Méridionale (AFEM) and associated activities at National and European levels

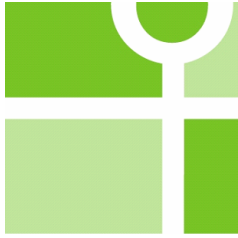
During the year of 2008, PLATAFORMA was represented in the Administrative Council of AFEM by Nelly Bandarra, Cátia Santos and Rute Castela (substitute).

The work related to the representation of this communitarian NGO involved accompanying the dissemination of information related to their activities within the scope of PLATAFORMA's own activities, as well as the drafting and submission of articles relating to Portugal to the *Gazette de l'AFEM*, widely distributed at the communitarian level.

- ✓ Translation to Portuguese of updated information in the AFEM site ([www.afem-europa.org](http://www.afem-europa.org)), as well as the translation of the AFEM leaflet and member application, in order to give AFEM greater visibility and intervention at the communitarian level and in each of the Member States in which it is implemented.
- ✓ Participation of PLATAFORMA in the AFEM's General Assembly and Administrative Council (June 7<sup>th</sup>), from which resulted the respective reports.
- ✓ Participation of PLATAFORMA in the EuroMed Civil Society Forum entitled "Circulating and living together in EuroMed space" in Marselha. The final declaration of the Forum contemplated women's human rights and gender equality as a result of intense lobbying activities, which was later presented at the European Union's Ministers of Foreign Affairs Conference (November 4<sup>th</sup> of 2008). This declaration was widely disseminated at the local level.

At the meeting, PLATAFORMA was invited by the President of the Forum to study the possibility of building **national coordination of the EuroMed Civil Society Forum.**



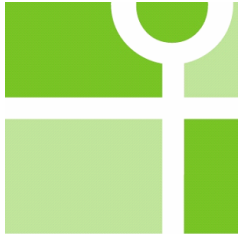


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- ✓ The PLATAFORMA was invited to participate in the second national French meeting for Migrant Women, organised by the Mediterranean Forum for Women in collaboration with the French coordinator of the EWL, with the EWL and with participation of AFEM, on the 28<sup>th</sup> of November in Marselha. However, due to various factors, it was not possible to have a representative of PLATAFORMA present.
  
- ✓ Participation in AFEM's Administrative Council (December 11<sup>th</sup>), from which resulted a report.
  
- ✓ Through the representative of AFEM, PLATAFORMA has followed the legislative proposals in the European Union, discussed in the European Parliament, in particular in the Commission for the Rights of Women and Gender Equality:
  - Proposal for Directive that applies to the principle of equal treatment between persons, regardless of their religion or belief, disability, age or sexual orientation;
  - Proposal for the revision of Directive 92/85/CEE of 19 of October of 1992 regarding the implementation of measures to encourage improvements in the safety and health at work of pregnant workers and workers who have recently given birth or are breastfeeding;
  - Proposal for Directive regarding independent workers and their spouses, that would allow for benefits such as vacation time, maternity leave, retirement pensions and other social rights.

Participation in the launching of the EWL's 50/50 Campaign in Brussels, presided by the Commissioner Margot Wallstrom.

In regards to activities related to European citizenship, PLATAFORMA was represented in the following events, through their AFEM's representative:



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- ✓ Seminar organized by the Global Contract in the European Parliament regarding Climatic Changes and the Mobilisation of the Civil Society on November 11<sup>th</sup>, from which resulted a series of measures on reducing the effects of global warming, which were proposed by the European Commission to the European Parliament;
- ✓ “Agora”(Now), participation in the European Parliament’s meeting with organisations of civil society;
- ✓ Participation in the Colloquium on citizenship (Citizens panel) organized by ECAS and *Madriaga* Foundation (November 4<sup>th</sup>), where local development and the participation in decision making processes were discussed, in order to listen to the voices of the citizens while fixating priorities and defining objectives;
- ✓ Participation in the Conference on the struggle against female stereotypes (November 27<sup>th</sup>);
- ✓ Participation in the meeting with the contact group and civil society on “Gender Budgeting” (January 19<sup>th</sup>).

At a more international level, and since Nelly Bandarra represents AFEM in the international European Movement, the PLATAFORMA was informed of the participation in the General Assembly that took place in Brussels, where voting for the structural bodies positions of the Movement took place. As part of a gender work group of the Movement, this representative also participated in a seminar about Women Entrepreneurs in Bucharest, where the Movement’s work was presented and networking encouraged.



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## PLATAFORMA's participation in the 42nd CEDAW session and associated activities at National and European levels

The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) of 1979 is a fundamental human rights international instrument and has presently been ratified by 186 countries - more than 90% of the members of the United Nations.

The 42<sup>nd</sup> session of CEDAW took place between October 20<sup>th</sup> and November 7<sup>th</sup> of 2008, in Geneva, where the following countries were examined: Belgium, Cameroon, Canada, Ecuador, Uruguay, Kazakhstan, Slovenia, Mongolia, Bahrain, El Salvador, Madagascar, Myanmar (Burma) and Portugal.

All States were considered on the basis of their periodic report(s), submitted by the government, regarding the compliance of the State with the CEDAW measures on the situation of women, as well as on the answers to the questions that were previously identified and submitted by the Committee to the government, for clarification purposes.

Portugal was analysed on its 6<sup>th</sup> (CEDAW/C/PRT/6)<sup>1</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> (CEDAW/C/PRT/7)<sup>2</sup> periodic reports and the answers<sup>3</sup> to the Committee questions.

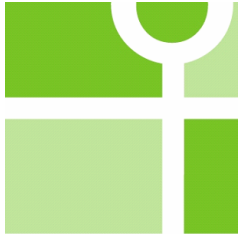
Aside from the official delegation, Women's Rights NGOs (WRNGOs) were also invited to participate in the process. This democratic process is based on an active participation methodology, not only of the government, but also of the civil society where WRNGOs are encouraged to submit a "shadow" or alternative report to the official State report and to participate in a training session on the CEDAW process and lobbying strategies. This support and monitorisation was offered by IWRAW -

<sup>1</sup> <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N06/409/11/PDF/N0640911.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>2</sup> <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/220/07/PDF/N0822007.pdf?OpenElement>

<sup>3</sup> <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/318/45/PDF/N0831845.pdf?OpenElement>





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International Women's Rights Action Watch - Asia Pacific.

PLATAFORMA elaborated the shadow report for this session and participated in the process with 2 representatives: Vera Fonseca of the Portuguese Network of Young People for Gender Equality and Ana Costa from GRAAL, (24<sup>th</sup> of October to November 4<sup>th</sup>).

The representatives of PLATAFORMA participated in the 2 day training organised by IWRAP, participated in a formal discussion with the CEDAW Committee in order to highlight the main points described in the shadow report, established networks with the Committee members (lobbying) and were present during the constructive dialogue between the Committee and the official Portuguese delegation.

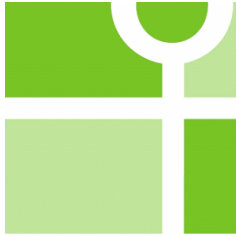
The Concluding Observations of the CEDAW Committee were made available on the United Nations website on November 7<sup>th</sup> of 2008<sup>4</sup>.

The shadow report, the intervention by the representatives of PLATAFORMA and the news published by UNOG - United Nations Office at Geneva in regards to this participation were disseminated at the national level.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://daccessdds.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N08/603/37/PDF/N0860337.pdf?OpenElement>





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## PLATAFORMA's participation in the Project Eu Acuso (I Accuse) and associated activities at National and European levels

In 2007, year of the Portuguese presidency of the European Union Council, PLATAFORMA collaborated with the Platform of NGOs for Development in the following initiatives:

- ✓ Drawing, subscription and dissemination of the “Chief of States and Government meeting in the EU-Africa Summit Appeal” (December);
- ✓ Preparation of the EU-Africa Summit with gender perspective contributions in the Manifesto “Civil Society in Europe-Africa Dialogue: New Dynamics of Solidarity”
- ✓ Participation in the e-debate in preparation for the Forum on Europe-Africa Dialogue.

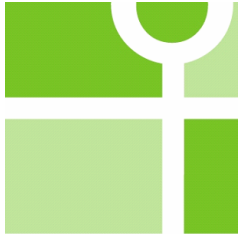
Again, in 2008, PLATAFORMA collaborated with the Portuguese Platform of NGOs for Development that identified the necessity of monitoring and increasing the work space that had been developed and proposed, as a follow up of the Europe-Africa Summit, the creation of the Platform “I Accuse” that would monitor the implementation of the **Strategic Joint Partnership between Europe and Africa** and the **Action Plan**, with the realisation of a Tribunal of Conscience (December 9 of 2008), at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation.

Aside from regular meetings, it was agreed that documents would be drafted exposing positive and negative actions with regard to government and non-governmental actors. Decentralised workshops were also planned.

The PLATAFORMA contributed with its know-how in the area of Women's Rights, having been directly involved in the Accusation regarding Gender Equality. All this initiatives ended at the Tribunal of Conscience where 7 accusations were presented in the following areas: Migration; Gender Equality; Millennium Development Goals; Peace and







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Security; Governance and Human Rights; Cooperation and Development; Food security and International Commerce and; Media and Development. A 119 page court judgement resulted from this Tribunal.

(short version)

