

Press Note

27th August, 2013

National Consultation on “**Women’s Reservation Bill [The Constitution (108th Amendment) Bill, 2008]** “ was organised by National Commission for Women on **27th August, 2013 at India Habitat Centre, New Delhi**. The Consultation was attended by experts and State Commissions for Women, resource persons and representatives of NGOs.

In her keynote address, Smt. Mamta Sharma, Chairperson, National Commission for Women, mentioned that even after 60 years of parliamentary democracy women remain under represented in the Parliament and State Legislative Assemblies. The Constitution (One Hundred and Eighth Amendment) Bill, 2008 commonly known as the Women's Reservation Bill, seeks to reserve one-third of all seats for women in the Lok Sabha and the State Legislative Assemblies which was passed by the Rajya Sabha on 9th March, 2010. Similar Bills had been introduced before in the late 90's but lapsed with the dissolution of their respective Lok Sabha. During her address Smt. Sharma highlighted the initiatives of our great leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, late prime ministers like Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi on the welfare and empowerment of women. She said that the bill in Rajya Sabha passed because of initiatives of UPA Chairperson Smt. Sonia Gandhi and also emphasized on the need of a basic educational qualification for elected leaders. The Members of NCW, State Women Commissions and other participants strongly voiced the need for early passage of the Women’s Reservation Bill.

After due deliberations a resolution was unanimously passed for early passage of the Bill which would be submitted to Hon’ble Prime Minister, Speaker of Lok Sabha Smt Meira Kumar and other important women leaders of the major political parties. It was also resolved that the Commission should make an effort to ensure the passing of the said bill in this parliamentary session which is extended till 6th September, 2013. The Food security bill was the most important bill which is passed unanimously hence now the most important bill which has remained to be passed is Women’s Reservation Bill. In view of the above Smt. Sharma said that there should not be any difficulty in passing the said bill before 2014 general elections.