

## **Speech by Mrs. Laura Hwang at the Welcome Dinner for the 8th International Congress of Feminist Approaches to Bioethics (FAB) , 26-28 July 2010**

Good evening everyone, and greetings on behalf of all 51 member associations of the Singapore Council of Women's Organisations.

A very wise woman (who is present here tonight!) once said to me, "Women are not Small Men" and I salute the work of FAB in its efforts to underscore our extra chromosomal difference.

May I make just 2 brief points, from a layperson's perspective:

First has to do with bio-ethical research - how can we ensure that the results of research and clinical trials are applicable not just to men, but women as well? Seems to the layperson that test groups have to include proportionate numbers of men AND women, even though it's more complicated to have women because of hormonal variations.

Second, I heard, with some alarm, the recent findings on the co-relationship of larger brain size to resistance to Alzheimer's. Men generally have larger brains and though I can say that bigger is not always better, and that generally, most men would agree with that general theory, I think that this gives another reason for women to be concerned about mental health. Given also that we have a longer life expectancy, and we have fewer brain cells to lose over that longer period of time, I do hope that FAB can stimulate more funding and research for better prevention and treatment of Alzheimer's and dementia.

Finally, may I wish all of you a productive conference, and to all visitors to our fair city, welcome and do enjoy your time here.