

Statement  
by the State Secretary to the  
Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,  
Women and Youth  
Ralf Kleindiek  
at the event  
"International Women's Film Festival Network"  
on 12 February 2015 in Berlin

Dear Britta Langowski, Ms Raebiger,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,

I.

Allow me to extend a very warm welcome to you here at the **Federal Ministry for Women's Affairs**. Minister Schwesig also sends you her warmest greetings. I am very pleased to be your host today.

I apologise in advance – and with great regret – that I will not be able to stay until the end of the event.

At the moment it is, once again, cinema-time in Berlin and we are being treated to numerous international comedies, documentaries and action films.

And, of course, there is no lack of dramas either.

One special drama is – as you already know – the percentage of women at all levels of the film business.

The opening film this year, at the 2015 Berlinale, was at least directed by a woman. („Nobody Wants the Night“ von Isabel Coixet)

Aside from that, however, there are only two other films from women in the competition. That makes three films out of 23 – in other words, 13 percent.

That is too little, far too little. This is not a problem of the Berlinale, it's a problem of the film business. And it's a reflection of the general situation.

This is why it is both good and important that you are meeting here today for the "International Women's Film Festival Network".

You have come together here to network and to try to figure out why women continue to be so clearly underrepresented in the film sector and, above all, to discuss what can be done to remedy the situation.

You are probably aware of a very recent initiative from Germany: Pro Quote Regie.

Esther Gronenborn, one of the directors who is an active member of the Association, is here with us today and will also take part in the panel discussion later on. Pro Quote Regie has set up a 'Multimediabubble' on the Potsdamer Platz – a project supported by my minister. A visit to this 'Multimediabubble' would be definitely worth your while!

II.

It seems as though the experiences of women in the film sector are no different from those of women in other areas of the working world. Not enough attention is paid to them. They are not allowed to participate properly.

In our opinion, the only solution here is a quota. This is the lesson we have learned from many years of voluntary commitments and expressions of good will. This is also a question of equity. We want to and we really have to achieve gender equality. This is a responsibility that the German constitution places on us. The quota is a means of fulfilling this responsibility.

However, the quota may not only exert an effect at the top, in the decision-making positions. Our policies must effect change on all levels.

It is the only way for the quota, in the best case scenario, to change the corporate culture across the board. Indeed, I hope that this culture change will soon also change the film sector. A culture change that empowers you and your colleagues to achieve your goals. And one which will allow more women to write screenplays, direct films and work as camera women than is presently the case.

A culture change in the cultural industry. That must be our goal.

On the Pro Quote Regie website, there are a number of statements in favour of a quota. Here are two examples of what you can find there:

I am in favour of the quota because it guarantees diversity.

I am in favour of the quota because good work must be made worthwhile again.

I consider all of this to be only right. And I would like to add: the quota is important because it is just. The quota will change society, will make it more just.

And then, hopefully, it will not be much longer before:

- one day, at the Berlinale, 12 out of 24 films in the competition will be written, directed and produced by women.
- More women will be shown in strong roles and less as simply sex symbols.
- And equality among women and men, even in the film sector, will exist in real life.

So far it is still a vision. But it is a vision worth fighting for.

As we travel this path, I want to wish you and us all a lot of staying power, good ideas and, of course, a very interesting and inspiring exchange of ideas here today.

Allow me to take this opportunity to wish you a successful event and I would now like to give the floor to Silke Raebiger from the International Women's Film Festival Dortmund/Cologne.