



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission on the Status of Women

#### Fifty-fifth session

22 February-4 March 2011

Item 3 (a) of the provisional agenda\*

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

### **Statement submitted by Association Nationale Al Hidn, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council**

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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\* E/CN.6/2011/1.



## Statement

1. It gives the Association Nationale Al Hidn great pleasure to take part in the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women. The Association is a Moroccan non-governmental organization with consultative status with the Economic and Social Council that focuses on women's development, child protection and family support. It takes great interest in the priority theme of this session, "Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work".

2. The Association notes that women's access to appropriate education and work on the basis of equality is an essential condition for the success of the sustainable development process. It affirms the importance of access to quality education that develops the knowledge and skills necessary for preparing girls to play an active role in society.

3. The Association is mindful of the resolutions and conclusions of the previous sessions of the Commission, and of the commitments regarding equal opportunities for girls in education and skills development in information technology contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Millennium Development Goals. In that connection, the Association makes the following observation:

- Insufficient progress has been made towards fulfilling basic commitments with regard to the advancement of women and assumption of their due status in society

4. The Association also expresses its concern with regard to the following:

- Women have not had sufficient access to vocational and scientific training, continuing education, and information and communications technology
- Financial resources and equal access to information have been inadequate, and there has not been sufficient support for scientific research
- Women continue to be underrepresented in financial markets and institutions, and tend to be employed in menial occupations
- Working women continue to suffer from violence and discrimination
- Women's capacities and abilities are discounted, and their advancement is blocked in a number of professions
- Women workers have not been provided with adequate protection given the current expansion in global markets
- The appointment of women, particularly mothers, to posts in remote areas, far away from their families. This unjust practice has an adverse effect on women's job performance and their role in the family

5. The Association notes with disapproval that, in certain countries, the right to education and work without discrimination on the basis of religion, ethnicity and culture is being curtailed. In particular:

- Muslim girls are prevented from pursuing their education in public schools because they cover their heads

- Freedom of movement for women who wish to cover their heads is restricted. Many embassies, notably those of France, require women to expose their hair and ears in order to obtain visas
- In some professions, women who cover their heads are not allowed to be the public face of the organization

6. Based on the foregoing, the Association Nationale Al Hidn calls on the international community to consider the following recommendations:

- Women must be taught the technological skills required to keep up with technological development and use technology in all areas of life. This could be accomplished through training programmes that afford girls and women equal access to and participation in skills development and training
- Women's leadership capacities should be developed, and they should be involved in the making of financial policies and decisions, especially where those policies and decisions impact the economic lives of women
- The adoption of labour policies that give women equal access to job opportunities and labour-market and social services
- The adoption of legislation that prohibits employment discrimination, workplace harassment and all forms of exploitation of women and girls
- The adoption of educational curricula and materials that respond to national and local needs and are based on the cultural background of the students
- Girls should be guaranteed protection against all forms of violence and intimidation in all educational settings
- National gender- and age-disaggregated data should be made available to policymakers so that they can understand the dynamics of the relationship between education and employment for women and allocate sufficient resources
- Frameworks should be formulated to universalize and facilitate the acquisition and transfer of knowledge and technology. Partnerships should be forged and relationships established among researchers, society and the private sector
- Policies on women in the sciences and technology should be monitored, assessed and adjusted through the use of gender-disaggregated indicators, which are an important tool for speeding progress towards gender equality and for making decisions on the ground
- Scientific cooperation agreements should be concluded with universities, and scientific research should be supported
- Scientific collaboration among women should be promoted