



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission on the Status of Women

#### Sixtieth session

14-24 March 2016

**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”**

### **Statement submitted by Northern Ireland Women’s European Platform, 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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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## Statement

The document *Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* states on a global level gender inequality remains a key challenge and gender equality is inextricably linked to sustainable development. Northern Ireland Women's European Platform argues this observation is borne out when we consider:

- women provide 60 to 80 per cent of household food production in developing countries so when we are talking about food security, food sovereignty, and ecologic agriculture we are talking about women
- women are already central in farming, water and resource management, and household consumption decisions, making them uniquely poised to chart a new social, economic, environmental, and political course

As governments adopt the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in order to address gender inequality it is vital that they focus on the roles they play in:

- producing and selling weapons that undermine development, peace and security are coming under scrutiny
- protecting women who are hit first and worst by the impacts of environmental and climate disruption
- resourcing the 80 per cent of women who are global climate refugees
- tackling the issue of women being more susceptible to harmful effects of pollution in the air, water, and soil and particularly pregnant women and their developing babies
- increasing women's participation in decision making roles such as politics, peace negotiations and peace building in order to have their voices bring the concerns and issues of women to the table

## Recommendations

Sustainable development has the potential to address fundamental challenges for humanity, but it requires more clarity of meaning, a concentration on sustainable livelihoods and well-being rather than well-having. A plan for long-term environmental sustainability requires a strong basis in principles that link the social and environmental to equality.

Population growth, economic development and women's socioeconomic status are shown to be closely linked. Member states need to understand how economic policy directly affects the socioeconomic status of women, and in turn how this impacts population variables and long-term adjustment and growth.

Sustainable development strategies should combine the need for the sustainability of the natural resource base with present or future levels of production and consumption. Eliminating gender bias in resource allocation over long-term economic transformation will require more comprehensive steps. Member states views of future social and economic relations between men and women will need to be the central elements to productive change.

Member states should be strongly urged to develop a sustainable development strategy and incorporate gender issues in strategy development and implementation. The strategy should recognise the need to reduce vulnerability which sometimes imposes unequal burdens on household members, especially women.

Member states need to link from its sustainable development strategy to other strategies such as health, addressing violence against women, economic and gender equality in decision making and reducing poverty. It should be timebound and measurable.

Member states in developed countries should work collaboratively together, such as through the European Union and at a regional level (England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland), such as to ensure a cohesive approach to addressing sustainable development by ensuring strategies and plans will have actions that will make an impact to address gender inequality.

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