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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the 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 Asociación Civil Educación, Ambiente y Territorio, 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.



Statement

At the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the Asociación Civil Educación, Ambiente y Territorio, recognized as an entity in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and whose priority themes and objectives include “The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls”, wishes to make the following statement:

(a) It has acceded to and ratified the various international conventions such as the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention of Belém do Pará;

(b) It confirms that the region, and Argentina in particular, is undergoing a paradigm shift with the implementation of national legislation, the 1994 constitutional reform and Act No. 26.485, the Act on Integral Protection aimed at Preventing, Punishing and Eradicating Violence against Women within the context of their interpersonal relationships, which have signified qualitative progress in the recognition of women’s rights as human rights;

(c) While States have ratified international conventions and adopted national laws which clearly set out the magnitude of the problem of domestic violence, what has been written into law must be respected. In that connection, we refer to the real application of integral public policy deep inside the territory of these countries;

(d) We are aware that public policies on this issue are met with resistance and budgetary resources are insufficient when it comes time to implement them and translate them into action, particularly regarding access to the national justice system;

(e) There is a deficit in human resources with gender training. Only by overcoming this can women be heard in a new way, beyond the myths and prejudices of the patriarchal imagination that grant men impunity in their use of power and normalize women’s undervalued and subordinate position;

(f) The situation has not substantially changed. The statistics in the most recent Report on the Investigation of Femicides in Argentina, prepared by the Adriana Marisel Zambrano Femicide Observatory in Argentina, coordinated by the Asociación Civil La Casa del Encuentro and covering the period from 1 January to 30 June 2012, are a glaring example of that: 119 women and girls were victims of femicide and “femicide by association”, 11 men and boys were victims of “femicide by association”, and 161 daughters and sons saw their mothers murdered by gender violence;

(g) Nor do they have the necessary infrastructure to install prevention and assistance devices in the interior of countries, in rural and aboriginal communities. There is an alarming shortfall in the resources that municipal and provincial budgets allocate to addressing the problem of gender violence. This is a major indicator and an obstacle in the implementation of legislations;

(h) There is still no map of violence in all countries that would generate a profile of the perpetrators and identify specific situations that give rise to violence as well as its incidence;

(i) Gender violence is a phenomenon that must be dealt with by the entire system and not only a matter of legislation which, while necessary, is not sufficient. It is created by the gender division of labour, and the patriarchal norms and practices underlying the functioning of institutions. In order to eradicate gender violence, public policies must promote women's financial self-sufficiency through productive investment programmes and full employment;

(j) Gender-sensitive public policies must address discrimination as the root cause of violence and view the recovery of women's economic and social self-sufficiency as a stepping stone to a life in which they enjoy rights;

(k) In that connection, we are convinced that strong support must be given to non-governmental organizations working in the interior of the country, particularly in the most marginalized sectors where local governments grappling with their multiple and complex realities cannot make it on their own but only through a strategic partnership with civil society.

This document was elaborated on the basis of information published by the Gender Violence Observatory of the non-governmental organization Centro de estudios sociales y culturales para la comunidad.
