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Fifty-seventh session

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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 Dones per la Llibertat i Democràcia, 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

Dones per la Llibertat i Democràcia is a women's association founded in Barcelona in 2001. Its main activities are based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its main objective is to promote women's right to act in freedom in a democratic environment with equal opportunities, in full conformity with the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of the review of the Beijing Platform for Action and the World Summit for Children, and the Millennium Development Goals.

With regard to the priority theme of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women, Dones per la Llibertat i Democràcia calls on Member States to:

- Reaffirm their commitment to guarantee the full realization of women's and girls' human rights as an inalienable, integral and indivisible aspect of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Violating women's rights creates a huge obstacle to attaining true democracy, peace and the right to exercise citizenship, apart from the injustice and cruelty of it.
- Ratify as a matter of priority the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its subsequent optional protocols, and fully apply its measures through the promulgation of laws and the elaboration of effective policies and plans of action
- Guarantee that in all processes to enforce the law, there are sufficient resources to effectively combat acts of violence against women and girls and respond to them rapidly, with understanding and respect, and that they will be subject to prosecution
- Increase policies and programmes to raise awareness among magistrates, judges, attorneys, prosecutors and persons working with victims of violence to ensure that all judicial proceedings are conducted from a gender perspective
- Examine and revise, amend or derogate all laws, regulations, policies, customs and practices that discriminate against women and girls, or that have the effect of discriminating against them
- Coordinate the joint work of all institutions to ensure that in situations of violence against women or their sons and daughters, a network of genuinely effective specialized resources and services is available
- Severely punish those who promote and benefit from various forms of sexual exploitation of both women and girls, including prostitution, sexual tourism, pornography and exploitation through the Internet
- Review, increase and apply measures for the eradication of trafficking of both women and girls and of child prostitution
- Provide special protection to women and girls in vulnerable and risky situations, such as street dwellers, refugees or victims of war or kidnapping

- Provide special protection to women and girls against violence after disasters such as floods, hurricanes or earthquakes, which create conditions that make them more vulnerable
 - Obtain institutional and legal recognition for all types of economic violence against women related to the control of resources and financial dependence, as a fundamental step in the fight against all types of violence, since economic violence is another more subtle and lesser known form of aggression
 - Provide impetus for equality and gender training programmes in the schools, aimed at both pupils and teachers, as a building block for a climate of respect with a view to attaining genuine equality of opportunities
 - Encourage schools to facilitate a safe and appropriate environment for girls and to take measures to eliminate violence against girls and the possibility of sexual harassment in school
 - Foster the positive representation of women and girls as leaders and decision-makers at all levels, including through the elaboration and application of laws, programmes and awareness-raising campaigns against stereotypical attitudes and behaviour contributing to discrimination and violence against girls and women
 - Promote gender-sensitive studies on the causes of violence against women and better and more effective forms of combating it, and subsequently disseminate the findings and proposals and implement the recommendations of those studies
 - Provide impetus for evaluating the results of measures to eradicate violence against women and girls, and promote their publication and dissemination.
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