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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 Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, 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

More than 150 delegates from 48 countries, including United Nations officials, peace mediators, police and security officers, female peacekeepers, Government officials, directors of national and international organizations, judges, attorneys, technical advisers, scholars and policy experts, attended a conference on breaking barriers, held from 26 to 28 September 2012.

This conference marked the fifth biannual international conference of the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace and Justice, held at the Joan B. Kroc School of Peace Studies at the University of San Diego, United States of America. Convened to advance the knowledge of international gender experts from across disciplines on issues affecting women, peace and security, and to make recommendations thereon, the conference demonstrated the depth of gender expertise available to advance global security.

On the basis of the input gathered, the conference co-conveners call upon all relevant actors to heed the actionable recommendations set out below, recognizing that, unless and until these points are taken into account and expanded upon, any investment in peace, justice and security will be both inefficient and insufficient.

Security

The conference co-conveners and delegates recognized the challenges faced by traditional security apparatuses in protecting all civilians and addressing the root causes fuelling violence and its recurrence.

They also realized that, for women and girls, insecurity existed as much in the domestic sphere as in the public sphere; that physical threats to women and girls presented an equal or larger threat to their security after conflict; and that the presence and actions of armed police and security forces could create insecure spaces for women and girls.

They also reaffirmed the wide-reaching provisions for human security enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010), the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Millennium Development Goals.

Accordingly, they urged Member States to adopt a human security framework as the dominant paradigm of national security to lessen dependence on and resort to traditional security mechanisms. An integral part of a robust human security framework would include military and security forces with a revised mandate aligned with human security priorities.

They called for priority to be accorded to human security (freedom from fear and freedom from want) as the dominant measure of national and global security. They recommended that:

(a) National and local approaches to security should involve the whole community, bringing together a wide range of stakeholders, such as the police, armed groups, the military, civil society, displaced communities, the business community and policymakers, to address human security needs as the overall objective;

(b) Member States should implement in spirit and in letter Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security, in addition to continuing to critically assess the effectiveness of existing policies;

(c) The outsourcing of security duties to non-State, for-profit companies or individuals should be strongly condemned;

(d) Member States should adopt the recent recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, in which the Committee prioritized State responsibility to protect and address threats to women human rights defenders under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;

(e) Consultations with women should be systematized at every step of the United Nations peacekeeping process, from pre-assessment to the transition to peacebuilding. For example, United Nations peacekeepers generally meet male representatives of political parties, local authorities and some human rights organizations. Women are rarely involved in these meetings or consultations and their voices are not heard;

(f) Male and female local actors and leaders should be involved in and consulted on the development of local protection mechanisms that are culturally and gender sensitive. For example, in Afghanistan, new schools for girls are at risk of being burned down. However, if boys attend in the morning and girls in the evening, the schools are not destroyed;

(g) There should be understanding of the gender hierarchy in the local culture. Women should not be exposed to further violence through gender-blind operations. In order to consult and work with women, it may be necessary to identify and educate male leaders. Within a human rights framework, excuses of culture or tradition should not be accepted as reasons to allow harm or violence towards women to continue;

(h) More women should be appointed to leadership positions in United Nations peacekeeping operations, particularly as special representatives or deputy special representatives of the Secretary-General;

(i) Job experience requirements for leadership positions should be changed, given that few women currently meet them. For example, instead of requiring 10 years' diplomatic experience and finding only a pool of men, the requirements should stipulate, for example, grass-roots peacemaking experience or activist experience with relevant political awareness.

Justice

Recognizing that the prevention of violence and the upholding of rights were dependent upon the passing of just laws and both prosecutorial and transformative justice mechanisms that were accessible, transparent and locally relevant to women and men, the conference co-conveners and delegates recommended the following measures to combat impunity and increase the effective provision of human rights for women and men, girls and boys in societies in peacetime, wartime and transition:

(a) Increase education and awareness of justice mechanisms to ensure that people know about their rights and possible legal recourse and processes;

- (b) Transform prosecutorial justice mechanisms so that they do not contribute to a second violation of women's rights;
- (c) Create stronger, more accessible and transparent mechanisms for reparative justice that include guarantees of non-occurrence and rehabilitation, and which facilitate the economic empowerment of women survivors and victims;
- (d) When designing transitional justice mechanisms, ask:
 - (i) What does justice mean for women affected by the conflict?
 - (ii) What were women's experiences of conflict?
 - (iii) What were the pre-existing gendered power relations?
 - (iv) What has been the impact of the violations experienced?
 - (v) For which violations do we seek redress?
- (e) Invest in and develop robust witness protection programmes;
- (f) Enable women economically so that they can enter decision-making circles (for example, identify existing women-led organizations and gender-sensitive leadership within civil society rather than creating a new elite);
- (g) Take into account cultural contexts through customary mechanisms, such as customary or tribal law, which must be in line with international human rights standards, and address human rights gaps where they exist;
- (h) Document the existing work being performed, including recognizing the lessons learned from traditional processes;
- (i) Urge all Member States to ratify and fully implement the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

Peacebuilding

Recognizing the trends of violent extremism occurring in societies around the world and within multiple religious faiths, the conference co-conveners and delegates urged political, military, religious and civil leaders to promote tolerance, education and understanding of diversity, while urging Member States to close the gaps between the intent and the implementation of resolutions on women, peace and security.

Cross-cutting recommendations

We recommend that:

- (a) Research, policy and practice must reconceptualize the concerns and possible solutions with regard to security, justice and peace, based on context-specific, sex-disaggregated and gender-disaggregated data, and should focus on achieving holistic outcomes that benefit the majority of women and men, as well as marginalized groups;
- (b) Civil society should actively utilize the universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council and the reporting procedures of the human

rights treaty bodies, such as the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, to hold States accountable in terms of addressing gaps in women's rights;

(c) All relevant actors should take account of these essential next steps in their deliberations on and planning and promotion of gendered peacebuilding and peacekeeping.
