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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 World Mission Foundation (Crusaders Against HIV/AIDS), 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

HIV and AIDS and other sexually transmitted infections continue to burden young African women for various reasons, chief among them cultural issues that prevent them from negotiating for safe sex. Over the years, the burden has become much heavier for women, who mostly know about but cannot use preventative measures, such as female and male condoms, because they first have to seek approval from their male partners. This dilemma of placing their health on the line, and having male partners decide whether to protect them from or expose them to HIV and other sexually transmitted infections, still remains a challenge in Africa. This challenge is not confined only to poor rural women, as even educated urbanites still cannot negotiate for safe sex owing to the fear of being battered for carrying condoms. World Mission Foundation is committed to working with our partners to make these women's voices heard, and to provide these women and girls with viable solutions that focus on empowerment and leadership.

We commend the unprecedented global movement, spearheaded by the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon, to mobilize and intensify global action to improve the health of women and children around the world. Working with leaders from Governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and civil society, the Foundation's Every Woman Every Child campaign aims to save the lives of millions of women and children and to improve the lives of millions more. The Foundation pledges to support this campaign and collaborate with our development partners to create sustainable programmes for women and children. The health of women and children is critically important to almost every area of human development and progress, and has a direct impact on the success of achieving all of the Millennium Development Goals.

Violence against women is a hideous crime that cannot continue to be overlooked and ignored. The World Mission Foundation recognizes this epidemic and will work tirelessly to end efforts to control and prevent women from exercising their human rights and allow them to live with dignity.
