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Commission on the Status of Women

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 Young Professionals Forum, 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

The Young Professionals Forum has analysed the priority theme of the fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women. In 2006, following the launch of the in-depth study of the Secretary-General on all forms of violence against women, the General Assembly adopted resolution 61/143 on the intensification of efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and considers violence against women to be a violation of basic human rights.

Violence against women is a worldwide human rights crisis, requiring a comprehensive and corresponding response from civil society, States and the international community. The elimination of all forms of exploitation, abuse, harassment and violence against women, adolescents and children entails preventive actions and rehabilitation of victims.

The Forum reaffirms that in order to achieve and to maintain the Millennium Development Goals, all forms of gender-based violence must be prevented and eliminated.

The General Assembly, at its fiftieth session, endorsed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Forum emphasizes the importance of the World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action) of 1993, the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women of 1993 and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995.

The Forum considers it essential to implement treaties, recommendations and declarations promulgated by the United Nations that directly address the rights of women and girls in all Member States, and remind Member States of their obligations in protecting these rights.

In order to do so, the Forum exhorts them to uphold the global framework (General Assembly resolution 34/180) on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and build upon the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women and relevant resolutions adopted by the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

The Forum thinks that there is a need to empower, enlighten and educate women directly at all sessions of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women because they are the ones directly affected, and they should have the right to advocate for themselves or seek help when faced with any violence. Violence against women violates existing universal human rights norms, and women around the globe face some form of violence. All forms of violence against women and girls are rooted in gender inequality.

In this respect, the Forum calls on all international, national, regional and local communities to engage in the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women, including other forms of gender discrimination that are contributory factors to the increase in the risk of violence.

The Forum refers to the need to counteract prejudices, customs and practices that are based on the idea of the inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes.

The Forum affirms that gender equality and the empowerment of women are prerequisites for achieving political, social, economic, cultural and environmental security among all peoples.

The Forum re-emphasizes that women share common concerns that can be addressed only by working together and in partnership with men towards the common goal of eliminating and preventing all forms of violence against women and girls around the world.

The Forum respects and values the full diversity of women's situations and conditions and recognizes that some women face particular barriers to their empowerment. This requires a strong commitment on the part of Governments, international organizations and institutions at all levels.

The Young Professionals Forum recommends the establishment of a new era of international cooperation among Governments and peoples based on a spirit of partnership, a fair, international social and economic environment, and a radical transformation of the relationship between women and men to one of full and equal partnership that will enable the world to meet the challenges of eliminating and preventing all forms of violence against women and girls around the world.
