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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 African Action on AIDS, Associated Country Women of the World, European Union of Women, Federation of American Women’s Clubs Overseas, Hadassah: Women’s Zionist Organization of America, International Association of Democratic Lawyers, International Council of Jewish Women, International Council of Women, International Federation for Home Economics, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, International Federation of Social Workers, International Federation of University Women, International Inner Wheel, Pan Pacific and South-East Asia Women’s Association of Thailand, Salvation Army, Servas International, Socialist International Women, Soroptimist International, Women’s Federation for World Peace International, Women’s International Zionist Organization and Zonta International, non-governmental organizations 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

Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls

The above-mentioned non-governmental organizations,

Referring to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

Recalling the outcome document of the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna from 14 to 25 June 1993, in which women's rights were recognized as human rights,

Referring to the Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women,

Considering Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2009), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2010) and 1960 (2011),

Recalling the inter-agency statement on eliminating female genital mutilation, issued in 2008,

Recognizing that, for centuries, during and after armed conflicts, women and girls have been exposed to systematic rape and sexual violence,

Deploing domestic violence and traditions that regard female members of a household as the property of the male members,

Considering that sexual harassment happens in the workplace and in schools and other institutions, often taking advantage of dependency status,

Emphasizing that violence against women often goes hand in hand with discrimination, violence-inducing rhetoric and harassment of women and girls who do not conform to "norms",

Referring to discrimination and violations of women's human rights, often disguised as religious or traditional practices, such as honour crimes, forced marriage, female genital mutilation and sex-selective abortion,

Considering that Governments enforce legislation, such as inheritance legislation, and implement programmes, such as to limit access to education and public health, including reproductive health, which include forms of structural violence against women and girls,

Deploing the continuing stereotyped presentation of women and girls in public communications, the media, teaching materials and everyday language,

1. *Stress* the importance of:

- (a) Giving comprehensive support to victims of sexual violence, domestic violence and stalking;
- (b) Removing the statute of limitations for sex crimes;
- (c) Providing adequate funding for shelters, other protective measures, counselling and treatment;

(d) Prohibiting a perpetrator from approaching the victim and her children and sanctioning all forms of intimidation;

(e) Implementing legislation to enable international prosecution of perpetrators;

2. *Emphasize* the importance of empowering girls and women through access to education and training for jobs, so that they can earn a decent living and determine their own way of life;

3. *Underline* the need for all sectors of society to design, promote and implement programmes teaching equality between men and women in order to promote non-stereotyped gender roles;

4. *Urge* Governments to ratify and implement international instruments for the protection of female victims of violence in international organized crime;

5. *Call upon* national Governments to adopt and implement legislation to abolish any form of structural violence and:

(a) To inform women and girls about their civil rights and grant them individual rights independent of their status;

(b) To guarantee health care;

(c) To respect the human rights of children;

(d) To protect domestic workers, irrespective of the social status of their employers;

6. *Urge* Governments and international organizations:

(a) To condemn the use of sexual violence against women and girls as a tactic and weapon in armed conflict;

(b) To provide adequate funding to sustainably support female victims of armed conflict;

(c) To establish rules guaranteeing the participation of women in peacebuilding and reconciliation programmes;

7. *Call upon* Governments and international organizations to comply with all commitments made under international conventions, treaties and conference resolutions on the human rights of women;

8. *Call upon* the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women to consider violations of women's human rights through religious and traditional practices, such as female genital mutilation, in the framework of general recommendations Nos. 12, 14 and 19.