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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 the Dhammakaya Foundation, 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

Attaining the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls through the peace revolution programme

The purpose of our presentation is to show how a free, innovative education programme can promote access and participation of women and girls in education, thereby attaining the Millennium Development Goals.

Gender inequality is a world issue. Women and girls still do not have equal access to, and many times even risk their life to acquire, an education. Economic factors also pose major obstacles. Education leads to empowerment and empowerment leads to understanding the centrality of world peace. The alternative to world peace is world annihilation.

In 2003, the Dhammakaya Foundation founded the “Peace revolution” self-development programme. The programme is a 42-day challenge for youth aged 18 to 30 that teaches simple techniques about developing the skills for inner peace. Participants learn about meditation, write about their experiences and are supported by online peace coaches along the way. Applicants under the age of 30 receive free airfare to study in Thailand.

We believe that the core of a happy and fulfilled life is inner peace. Inner peace is a feeling that arises when we are content with who we are, aware of our thoughts and emotions, and when we are not lost in the future or past. In this manner we can live every day of our lives with a focused and relaxed mind. The way to obtain inner peace is through meditation.

Under the programme, women and youth have the opportunity to keep a journal and share their thoughts with others around the world. They investigate their feelings about self, family, spouse, community, school or work. Participants undertake self-exploration and follow acts of self-discipline that help improve their peace of mind. Thousands of young women around the world have used this self-development programme, and those who complete it can apply for fellowships in Thailand, Europe and Latin America.

Peace revolution fellowships are a complement to peace revolution’s face-to-face training. It is a process of transformation from a “peace rebel” to an “agent of peace”. When participants return to their home town/country, they are empowered to teach others how to meditate and practice self-development as a means of attaining individual, community and, ultimately, world peace through meditation. Those who feel they can make a valuable contribution to peace by developing themselves on a deeper level in order to actively share what they have learned with adults are encouraged to apply to www.peacerevolution.net.