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to the special session of the General Assembly entitled
“Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for
the twenty-first century”**

Statement submitted by International Shinto Foundation (ISF), 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.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

Make the most of a women's intuition for tackling management and world issues

Up until now, social and industrial structures have been based on men's sense of value and their way of thinking, and feminine intuition was hardly taken into consideration. World development and prosperity have been made without making the most of women's potential. In other words, it would not be an exaggeration that the challenges we are now facing in the world, including starvation, poverty, conflicts, economic crisis and environmental issues including global warming are products of a male's way of thinking, behaviour with rationale.

It has already been scientifically and physiologically proven that women are superior to men in their intuition. Here intuition means an ability to convey and to actually express what is sensed in the realm of the sub conscious. According to Dr. Ihoko Kurokawa of Kansei Research Inc., Japan, due to a much thicker, and in average 20 per cent of the corpus callosum than that of men, women's right and left parts of the brain have better and deeper mutual communications, which provide them with a sharper, clearer sensibility and the ability to grasp things with emotion and human kindness, instead of intellectual, logic or ethics, which is needed in order to be able to empathize.

There are a number of examples in Japan where women's intuition could have contributed to enhancing the resilience of corporate constitutions and produce users heart-touching products.

A Japanese company that produces and distributes pet grooming items had been suffering from plunging turnover and loss of market share. Feeling stuck in unchanging circumstances after making every effort based on the extension of conventional practices, the president of the company in a bold decision, comprised a "women's only" project team inside its men-lead product development department, to seek and identify what their customers really desired in both products and designs. The president prohibited the male staff from intervening in the "women's only project team". Thus the completed product led to a remarkable recovery in both sales and market share, and the company itself was empowered with the energy to remain prosperous.

In another example, a Japanese company developed a sole care product, but it did not have enough budget to spend on advertising, it had no network for distribution, and not enough personnel. Nevertheless, more than 7 million copies in total have been sold, which is the equivalent of 1 million sales a year, being exported to roughly 45 countries. According to the managing director of the company, the main reason of that miracle was "women's power". The company's female staff, while having their own challenges in their careers and in their private lives as well, had a strong wish to convey the wonderful effect and charm of their product. That emotional energy worked to create unexpected sales routes, to succeed in very difficult negotiations, and to make the impossible, possible.

True gender equality does not only mean the same in terms and conditions, the same rules, and the same treatment between men and women. Such factors are important of course, but it would be much more significant to make the most of the endogenous characteristic nature of both men and women, so that they themselves

can naturally feel happy and self-satisfied. And it could be said that in general, women have the strongest motivation to please and satisfy others, which means to feel others five senses as if it were their own. Meanwhile, men set much higher values on their objective estimations. Women of course can objectively estimate themselves, but generally have less interest in that than men.

It is indispensable, needless to say, to have an objective estimate with regard to social activities. We believe however, that unless intuition valued phases are taken more into consideration in the management of organizations based on objective estimate, organizational resilience and continuous prosperity could hardly be expected, because people are always touched by smiles and emotions that are behind glorious achievements. Without such room for the invisible and unmeasurable factors, any organization will become rigid and inflexible, and find it difficult to respond to unexpected changes or trends.

This is why we believe it is important and necessary to invite women directors and managers on the boards of any entity, to keep an atmosphere and environment available so that women can comfortably express their feelings and opinions without being discriminated upon, or unreasonably blamed or avoided. We believe that there will be a certain brightness and hope in our world which is facing so many difficult challenges, when a women's essential nature to empathize with others circumstances and their dedication to others are truly valued and utilized in both the political and industrial worlds.
