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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”**

Statement submitted by Future Hope International, 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

Women's lives have changed in the wake of the Beijing Declaration. A growing number of women are entering the labour market, running for political office and claiming their sexual and reproductive rights. But while much has been achieved, women across the globe experience inequality in the workplace, political institutions and the home. The rise of religious conservatism is jeopardizing women's rights over their own bodies.

Women's empowerment has emerged within the agenda for mainstreaming development as a way for Governments, non-governmental organizations and many other entities all over the world to achieve equitable and sustainable development. In most countries, little is known about how women themselves experience the process of empowerment or about strategies that can enhance the empowerment and socioeconomic well-being of women. To gain insight into the process and relevant strategies, and as part of the campaign and advocacy for the post-2015 development agenda, grass-roots women's movements should dialogue with a diversity of actors to better understand the day-to-day lives of women throughout society.
