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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 Yoga in Daily Life USA, 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

How yoga supports gender equity

Many of the differences that we see between men and women are caused by the society that we live in! Men should be “tough”, women “soft”, men can freely move about and feel safe but women cannot — society has created this inequity by treating women differently than men, by giving men another position.

As long as we think and act like that, we will never reach gender equality! We have to see the individual, not the gender stereotype. Yoga, derived from ancient Vedic culture, teaches respect for and understanding of the uniqueness of every single person and at the same time their equality — that every single one of us, man or woman, is a wonderful, individual being equal “under the skin” to all others.

The reasons to follow yogic paths are to bring balance within body, mind and soul; enhance concentration, improve focus, remove negative patterns of behaviour, develop clarity in thinking, develop inner strength, reduce stress and induce self-healing. These inevitable benefits of yoga practice are vitally helpful for the well-being of women and men equally.

The goal is to release women from the oppression of men. However, the goal is not matriarchy or the suppression of men by women. It is equality, fairness and justice between the genders.
