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**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and
to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and
peace for the twenty-first century”**

Statement submitted by Fair Pay Innovation Lab, gGmbH (FPI), 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

Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes

Gender equality is essential to the success of all the goals. Gender Equality has been acknowledged as the most important cross-cutting issue among the Sustainable Development Goals, and accordingly, as the basis for reaching all other SDGs. This means that only when we succeed in placing women and men on an equal footing other injustices can be addressed in a targeted manner. It also means that only when we ensure fair pay for everyone, everywhere in the world, in every organization, will we be able to implement fair solutions to mitigate climate change.

Women's economic independence is important from a global perspective because women handle money differently than men. Women plan and calculate differently. If there is anything left over, they invest in their children's education, buy solar cells so that they can study without daylight, or start micro-enterprises that enable them to better feed their families. Money in women's hands is invested differently, usually more sustainably. In some countries, companies prefer to pay salaries to the wives of their employees – so that the wages are not spent on alcohol or games, but instead moves to where they can make a difference: the families. More education means better job opportunities and overall greater independence from patriarchal structures, including greater self-determination for women in family planning.

To achieve equality, the very first step is economic independence for women. And to reach this goal, the first step is equal pay, as set out in Goal 8.5 of the 2030 Agenda: “Decent work and sustainable economic growth for all,” the United Nations calls for in Goal 8, and under 8.5 quite explicitly “equal pay for work of equal value.”

Women's Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work

During its 61st session, the Commission on the Status of Women underlined the importance of fair pay and set out a comprehensive catalogue of measure to decrease and eliminate pay gaps. Among these measures are “laws and regulations that uphold the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value in the public and private sectors as a critical measure to eliminate the gender pay gap, provide in this regard effective means of redress and access to justice in cases of non-compliance, and promote the implementation of equal pay policies through, for example, social dialogue, collective bargaining, job evaluations, awareness-raising campaigns, pay transparency and gender pay audits, as well as certification and review of pay practices and increased availability of data and analysis on the gender pay gap” (Art. 40(f) [E/CN.6/2017/L.5](#))

Many international actors know how important it is to create equal opportunities for all employees and to close all other pay gaps along the gender pay gap. To help them on their way, discrimination in pay must be measured and eliminated. For this purpose, there is a whole range of indicators that can be used to identify unequal treatment.

The Fair Pay Matrix of the FPI Fair Pay Innovation Lab lists key performance indicators for fair pay and bundles discriminatory factors, which can be used to calculate the implementation progress in terms of fair pay and to measure the success of equality measures. The Fair Pay Matrix can be used as a basis for auditing procedures that show organizations where action is needed and where levers can be tightened to implement equality and fair pay.

All demanded measures on fair pay by the Commission on the Status of Women are known or already in place, yet pay gaps remain high. Various countries across the world currently adapt and strengthen their legislation. Consistent and coordinated action is required combined with a clear set of sanctions in case of noncompliance to drive pay gaps down and keep them closed. The principle of fair pay is enshrined in international language since 1951 – in the ILO Convention No. 100 – yet 70 years later, still no country has closed its gender pay gap. Reporting requirements, transparency, the gender pay gap as an indicator and certification mechanisms, such as the Universal Fair Pay Check, gain importance, although their full potential has not been close to be reached. Reporting mechanisms, such as the Global Reporting Initiative or the metrics of the World Economic Forum align with the Agenda 2030. The Fair Pay Innovation Lab stresses to use all measure already in place to its full capacity to close pay gaps sustainably, as not reaching fair pay is clearly a deficit of transposition and implementation rather than a deficit of knowledge.

The Fair Pay Innovation Lab calls for bold actions to close pay gaps, to create fair workplaces across the world, and ultimately, reach the ambitious goals of the Agenda 2030. The implementation of the entire United Nations 2030 Agenda depends to a large extent on whether equality can be achieved as a cross-cutting objective. Making women and girls paid fairly is the basis for sustainable development of the entire economy. Anyone who wants to implement the Agenda 2030 therefore needs fair pay for all by 2025.
