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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 Sociedade Filantropica Maria de Nazare, 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

Women vs. weapons

It is well known that there are practical and economically feasible ways, using digital technology, to guarantee a better-quality education for girls and women all over the world, enabling them, even those living in the poorest and most remote regions of the planet, to be included in the world of formal education and basic professional training, as well as in the primary elements of civics and political awareness.

Simplified digital applications that offer internet access, even if via satellite, and a minimally effective and trained organization of teachers recruited to make the necessary cultural and linguistic adaptations in this global movement of mass education, are perfectly achievable when there is – as has been known all along – political will on the part of the governments of the wealthier and more developed nations, in the sense of an appropriate orchestration of material and human resources, with the engagement of non-governmental organizations and volunteers not affiliated to specific political, religious or social advocacy groups.

It is lamentable to observe, year after year, the neglect of the greatest humanitarian cause of our time – in our opinion – because it encompasses, directly or indirectly, literally or metaphorically, all other minority causes: the rediscovery of the sacred value of femininity and, consequently, the empowerment of all women, since girlhood.

While an ocean of financial resources is continuously dedicated to space exploration and other investment fronts of more or less questionable value in pragmatic and also moral terms, such as the powerful arms industry, we note, with horror, the contempt, to a demeaning degree, suffered by half of the human species – that of the female gender –, especially in poor countries or in cultures where misogyny and patriarchy are more deeply rooted or even fiercely celebrated.

The time has come to put a stop to such a serious crisis of planetary conscience, tragically symbolized in the oppressive and genocidal feature of hypertrophied and degenerated masculinity in stereotyped and apocalyptic phalluses: the nuclear missiles, both those considered “merely” tactical and strategic, in a surreal threat of nuclear Armageddon, in the middle of the third decade of the 21st century.
