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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 Precious Gems, 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

Precious Gems was founded in 2012 and its aim is to empower the livelihoods of marginalised women, youth, and girls in the areas of education, healthcare, technology, and inequities. In facilitating this goal, we undertake work and advocacy to improve the overall disparities that are highlighted in the 2030 SDGs as a strategy to improve the structures that have stifled communities socioeconomically.

As of the end of 2023 and the first quarter of 2024 we have seen the need to give attention to Gender-based violence affecting women and girls. We have most recently seen the devastating effects of gender-based violence, which has greatly increased during the period of COVID-19, women and girls are victims of rape, sexual exploitation, sexual assault, and abuse, forced sex and sexual violence, domestic violence, trafficking of women and girls, forced prostitution, sexual harassment and discrimination and denial of rights and this is of great concern.

Precious Gems has been working in several countries to empower women and girls economically, to enable them to be independent, initiating and running projects in Malawi, Togo, Tanzania, Rwanda, Nigeria and the United Kingdom to provide the much needed assistance to women in the community.

Combating Gender-based violence entails us investing in the education of women and girls, assisting with addressing barriers to access to healthcare, increasing women's access to land, training resources for smart farming and micro-credit and gender & digital technology. Fostering the inclusion of women in leadership roles and processes.

There have been extensive reports that confirm that equity and a steady income for women is necessary to meet families' rudimentary needs. Precious Gems has witnessed the destructive effects of Gender-based violence on women and communities have been enduring in The United Kingdom, Cote d'Ivoire, Nigeria, Togo, Rwanda, Malawi, Botswana, Kenya, and Tanzania.

COVID-19 and increased societal and family burdens have increased gender-based violence, increase in the equity divide for women and girls, increase in migration, and increase in security risk to women and girls, decrease supply chains and access to healthy and food security, healthcare, and other multifaceted issues.

Precious Gems also looked into the welfare of elderly women, A lot of the geriatric population lack good health care and patronize unprofessional services for their health care. Precious Gems worked on ways to curb this problem and protect the human rights of elderly women.

Precious Gems took the opportunity of taking health care to the elderly ones at their home base. This was achieved by first doing a survey in designated areas.

A health survey done showed hypertension and diabetes Mellitus to be the prevalent cause of the elderly ill health hence the need to provide an awareness and treatment programme that will empower the women to take charge of their health. Some of the ways this was done was by bringing healthcare to their doorsteps through medical outreaches and health awareness programs. Also, a health facility was remodelled in Nigeria and brought back into service, volunteer medical personnels were put in place, drugs and other health essentials were made readily available and these elderly women can now access healthcare in their local health facility at little or no cost. Both organizations reached out to medical doctors nearby for no cost consultations so these people can be encouraged to come and access healthcare. Drugs were made available, there was a mini mobile lab provided to run blood checks, urine analysis and other basic tests. Medications were distributed per requirement.

Provision of a Telemedicine machine was made available by the World Telehealth Initiative (WTI), and this also enabled the geriatric population to have top-notch health consultations. There is no doubt that the lack of medical care for the elderly is a breach of the fundamental rights of older women to freedom, respect, equality, dignity and autonomy.

Precious Gems is committed in these respects and working to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals By 2030 through partnership collaborations with relevant United Nations agencies, member nations and partner non-governmental organisations.
