
Statement at High-level Plenary, Beijing +10

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Thank you Madame Chairperson, Delegates, and Members of Civil Society.

The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security (NGO Working Group) joins thousands of members from civil society organizations globally in commending Member States for achieving consensus and unequivocally reaffirming the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Women's advocates from both the United Nations and civil society, like the NGO Working Group, and Member States were provided an opportunity to debate the substance of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Outcome Document of the 23rd Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly during this 10th Year Review and Appraisal. Unfortunately, we lost crucial time last week by addressing a dangerous amendment which was ultimately withdrawn. As a result, rather than making significant progress, we merely maintained the status quo.

During this 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the NGO Working Group has sponsored interactive workshops on Security Resolution 1325 as a tool for prevention of conflict, protection and participation of women in conflict areas. During these workshops, courageous women from civil society globally have shared with us their bold initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and Security Council Resolution 1325 at the local and national levels. They have called for increased support from the United Nations and Member States for implementation at the national level and awareness raising at the local level. The NGO Working Group will detail many of the initiatives in its "Five Years On Shadow Report" to be released this October.

Now, during the remaining days of this Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, we urge Member States, to support women in conflict areas globally by:

- **First**, seizing the opportunity to draw upon the expertise of civil society participants here at the Commission on the Status of Women and to increase transparency in negotiating the language and progress of all tabled resolutions; and
- **Second**, strengthening tabled resolutions and ensuring that, where appropriate, they include unequivocal provisions committing to the following five goals of both Security Council Resolution 1325 and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, such as:
 1. Ensuring equal access and full participation of women in power structures and all levels of decision-making on the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts as well as on the maintenance and promotion of peace and security;
 2. Putting in place institutional mechanisms and temporary special measures including quotas in order to achieve women's full participation in decision-making on peace and security issues;

3. Eliminating impunity for violations of human rights, in particular gender-based and sexual violence, by calling for the strengthening of existing legal provisions and systems and new legislation where necessary and the harmonization of national laws with international human rights standards;
4. Ensuring that refugee, internally displaced and returnee women and girls are fully involved in the planning design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of all assistance programming. Guaranteeing their protection, including physical and material security in order to ensure their participation is essential; and
5. Promoting peace and human rights education to foster a culture of peace.

The NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security is encouraged that during this session of CSW, the clear and inherent links between the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Security Council Resolution 1325, the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Millennium Development Goals and the High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, have been recognized by UN entities, Member States and civil society repeatedly. We urge Member States to work in close collaboration with civil society for the next six months to ensure that explicit commitments paired with timelines and budgetary allocations to support gender equality and women's empowerment are the result of the High Level Summit on the Millennium Development Goals this September. The world's leaders must recognize that gender equality and women's empowerment are central to achieving the human security and development goals of the High Level Summit. We must not allow gender to be "mainstreamed" into obscurity at the Summit.

In closing, Madame Chairperson, esteemed Delegates and Colleagues from Civil Society and the United Nations, the NGO Working Group looks forward to engaging in substantive debate about the goals of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at the 50th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. We look forward to collaborating with this global community of civil society activists, Member States and UN entities to make gains for women and men in conflict areas both at the Millennium Summit and over the next year.