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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 Sociologists for Women in Society, 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

Sociologists for Women in Society (SWS) is a non-profit professional organization of sociologists dedicated to improving women's lives and creating feminist social change. Based in the United States and with international scholars as part of its membership, SWS publishes the leading academic journal on gender studies, *Gender & Society*, and collaborates with feminist partners globally. We reiterate our former statements and support women's and girls' total equality, as we have done over the past 30 years, especially on the anniversaries of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. As scholars and practitioners, we understand the processes that facilitate inequality, violence and disenfranchisement for women and girls, which still transpire at alarming rates today.

We are disheartened at the insufficient progress since the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. There is a severe backlash to the Declaration, feminism, and women's and girls' rights taking place across the globe, including in the United States. As noted by the UN, a "Shadow Pandemic," in which all types of violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence, has intensified post Covid-19.

After decades of dialogue and negotiations among Member States with a myriad of non-governmental organizations engaged in transnational advocacy to promote women's individual and collective empowerment and gender equality; we will not go back. This is a moment to celebrate the significant advances in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action's twelve critical areas of concern and an opportunity to address issues that remain stagnant and have been subject to setbacks.

We recommend that Member States review the current barriers to the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and respond to setbacks and backlash, particularly regarding:

- Sexual and reproductive health: In the SWS CSW 64 statement on the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, we stated that "when a conservative pushback in relation to women's rights and gender equality is taking place in both global north and global south countries... Sexual and reproductive health services are dire for women, other minority genders, and their families." This is still true today.
- Migration of women, girls, and other minority genders: In the SWS CSW 61 statement we emphasized the "importance of promoting and protecting the rights of refugee and migrant workers, pregnant workers, female workers, and rural workers." 25 years later, this is still a priority, as these vulnerable groups still do not have rights and protections to ensure equal treatment in the workplace.
- Violence against women and girls: In the SWS CSW 65 statement, we noted, "right-wing movements using sexism, homophobia and racism for political and electoral mobilization is evident in societies that have more recently transitioned from authoritarianism to democracy as well as in consolidated democracies... Women contend with daily risks and traumatic experiences across sexual, domestic, carceral, and intersectional threats and victimization. Black, Indigenous, and Women of Color are particularly subject to racialized and carceral state violence, ranging from online misogyny, terroristic threats and interpersonal homicides to police killings and various forms of misconduct through state detainment and supervision." We are troubled and angered to report that since this report, all these words are still accurate, if not truer than in 2021.

- Women and armed conflict: We are also increasingly concerned about violence against women in armed conflict given their rise across the globe and the devastating impact on women and girls. In the SWS CSW 63 statement, we state that, “Conflict situations disrupt social protection systems, public services, and infrastructure. Women and girls especially bear the brunt of violent conflict.” In the SWS CSW 65 statement, we stated that, “Violence against women, especially gender and sexual violence, occurs in every recorded armed conflict and genocide.” These statements have been echoed by feminist international scholars and organizations doing contemporary research on conflicts and genocides, in Sudan, Palestine, Ukraine, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Ethiopia, the Sahel, among others. They remain true today.

When considering the critical areas of concern that we highlighted, assessing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and responding to setbacks in the transnational agenda, it is vital to note the need to improve data collection and dissemination. Sustainable Development Goal 17 underscores the role of data, monitoring, and accountability in achieving development goals.

We recommend that Member States:

- Collect and disseminate data on the combined effects of socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, age, location (urban/rural), immigration, and refugee status to measure the progress and remaining challenges to social equality.
- Establish national femicide watches, as recommended by the former UN Special Rapporteur on Violence against Women, Dr. Dubravka Šimonović. Femicide watches would track gender-related killings of women and disaggregate femicide data by the age and ethnicity of victims, the sex of the perpetrators, and the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim. Report femicide data annually on November 25, International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and affirmed by the EDVAW Platform entities.
- Establish a stronger institutionalized role for the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in addressing gender-based violence by including violence against women as a standing agenda item for the CSW.
- Foster lines of communication between the UN CSW and other multilateral entities focused on women by inviting them to participate in interactive dialogues at the CSW and include their reports in the CSW’s work.
- Fully implement the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) recommendations, in which UN Member State undergo a peer review of its human rights records every 4.5 years, paying particular attention to concerns regarding violence against women.