

# UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.  
GENERAL

E/CN.4/845/Add.1  
25 February 1963

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS  
Nineteenth session  
Item 6 (b) of the provisional agenda

Dual distribution

## DRAFT PRINCIPLES ON FREEDOM AND NON-DISCRIMINATION IN THE MATTER OF POLITICAL RIGHTS

### Comments by Non-Governmental Organizations

#### WORLD FEDERATION OF CATHOLIC YOUNG WOMEN AND GIRLS

(Category B)

The World Federation has studied most carefully the draft principles on freedom and non-discrimination in the matter of political rights, as also the comprehensive study of Discrimination in the Matter of Political Rights prepared by Mr. Hernan Santa Cruz, the discussions and recommendations of the Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination, of the Human Rights Commission and of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Our organization is deeply impressed by the scope and depth of the principles which have been proposed. Particularly must we emphasize the felicitous way in which the exercise of political rights is seen as interdependent upon the exercise of freedom of opinion and expression and freedom of peaceful assembly and association, and the access to the facilities and means for their exercise. When in so many countries these basic freedoms are denied to all but certain groups acceptable to the ruling power we know that there is no freedom of political action, even when such denials of freedom are supposedly justified in the name of "the just requirements of public order (ordre public), the morality and the general welfare in a democratic society." May the widespread publicizing of these principles help to educate world opinion to the danger of arbitrary and hasty denials of the basic freedoms which alone produce an alert, conscious, intelligent electorate.

GE.63-2705

As to the form in which the principles are drafted we would confine ourselves to comment upon the suggested amendments proposed by the Commission on the Status of Women. While we are both cognizant and appreciative of the political and other inequalities under which women have suffered and yet suffer in many parts of the world, we consider that the addition of a preambular paragraph concerning the Convention on the Political Rights of Women serves no useful purpose, but rather only emphasizes a distinction between men and women as voters and perhaps perpetuates a discrimination against the latter in this capacity. Again in Principle II the words "or other status" appears to us broad enough to comprehend "marital status" without specific inclusion of this phrase.

However, in Principles IX and X we do believe, with the Commission on the Status of Women, that the words "duties or personal interests" should be replaced by the words "financial or professional interests". The determination of one's duties or personal interests is a moral and not a legal question and should not be legislated. In Principle XI, the addition of the words "equal for all nationals" in paragraphs (a) and (b) appears to clarify the paragraphs in question.