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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 Islamic Women’s Institute of Iran, 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

“Greater participation of women is essential and necessary for sustainable development”

In today’s world, especially in developing countries, most of the focus is on the evolution of comprehensive development, namely sustainable development and human development.

Since women make up half the world’s population, education of women and their participation in community development is not just a tool for economic growth but a necessity of human development.

Nowadays in some communities, traditional culture, which sometimes has turned into a form of law, has limited women’s abilities and reduced their productive potential. In developing countries, mostly men have been beneficiaries of development and Women because of discrimination, violence and lack of access to power, are victims of it.

Because development for women means more time working outside the home, positive achievements of development often are taken by men.

According to statistics released by the United Nations last year, in 2012, globally, the female employment rate was 25.1 percentage points lower than the male’s. The gender gap in employment in North Africa, Southern Asia and Western Asia, respectively was 50.0, 48.9 and 48.3 percentage points.

Hence, to improve women’s access to development outcomes, it is necessary that more attention be placed on women’s issues. And the relationship between development and improvement of the general condition of women should be considered internationally.

Because development programs in less developed and developing countries depends on the gender of the development many experts believe that higher representation of women in national politics leads to better decisions and hence better outcomes for citizens. Also, Women often tend to address social issues, therefore the more room for women in decision-making and in the decision making process the more it will help to improve social conditions, especially the status of women in society.

Our suggestion:

- Communities, especially female communities, should be educated to reach a level of consciousness that women need to participate in decisions and the decision-making process.
- Governments, civil society, international agencies and other stakeholders are responsible for providing women’s talent.
- To improve the employment situation of women, it is necessary to take into consideration the appropriateness of training and expertise provided with the needs of the community and also ensuring appropriate income.

Hoping for a better future for all women and men around the world.