



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission on the Status of Women

#### Sixtieth session

14-24 March 2016

**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 Solidarité agissante pour le développement familial, 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.

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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## Statement

The NGO Solidarité agissante pour le développement familial, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, welcomes this opportunity to set out some guidelines at the end of the submission period.

We support the United Nations and encourage its activities in this period focused on combating poverty, climate change and gender inequalities. We have observed that, since time immemorial, women have a special relationship with nature which differs from that of men. Since they often assume roles connected with reproduction, the home, children and health, they are aware of what is essential for them, for the family and for the community. “Women are special because of their intuition of life, of what is truly vital, and this makes them sensitive to what is in danger in the world”. In certain societies, women also had a sacred character, wielded power to varying degrees and played different roles. They were, and are all over the world, important pillars of societies. They are close to nature because they depend on it. Many studies and conferences describe this relationship between women and nature and its importance in the development process. The following events are a few examples of this: the Meeting on the interdependence between women and the environment (Barcelona, 1988); the Assembly of African Women (Harare, 1989); the World Assembly of Women and the Environment (Miami, 1991); the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (Brazil, 1992); the World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995); the Conference of Francophone Women “Women, power and development” (Luxembourg, 2000). Women have developed an important link with the environment. In many instances, particularly in rural areas, they have been seen to respect nature, because nature is what enables their families and their communities to survive, particularly in the case of subsistence agriculture and production and carrying of water and firewood. Judith Bizot. “Conversation with Vandana Shiva”. This is confirmed by Paulette Yambo: “Men destroy trees, game and their fellow men to protect their family. Women plant, pick and clean, preserve the elements necessary to the existence of their family and give life by bearing children.” Women – and particularly African women, in the case of interest to us – are therefore more inclined to protect the environment. We know that they take good care of their family in addition to the long hours devoted to daily chores and work. Not only do they depend on the environment and protect it but they act as producers and users of the land’s resources. Rural women in developing countries are a very important active workforce.

We therefore ask the United Nations to intervene and to take direct and effective action to assist all the organizations defending women in the world and particularly in Africa, my continent, regardless of the languages that are dividing the world. We thank you.

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