



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
15 December 2017

Original: English

Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-second session

12–23 March 2018

**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 Research and Information Artistic and Cultural Institute, 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

The arena of social life being the third area of search and strive of son of Adam for attaining to perfection, in which a great portion of aptitudes and abilities are put in practice and flourishing, as they be effective also in realizing individual maturities and success in family life. Further the social life is becoming nowadays much more miscellaneous and extensive than it was in the past. The examples for this can be seen in employment, art, sports, minute and enormous management in the society, parties and associations, legal procedure, and arbitration, education and training.

In the absence of gender equality, a society would not only face deprivation, economic inequality and other social evils but would also be unable to tread the path of life with a win-win mindset. As for its relation to religion, Islam enjoins to promote gender equality in all walks of life, be it economic, social, worldly or religious. However, so we should take into account the true meaning of gender equality in any cases of supporting women's right. So when we talk about gender equality it means giving each one that to which he or she is entitled.

Both the male and the female are equal in terms of their humanity. In one sense, equality between men and women is possible and reasonable because they are both human, with similar souls, brains, hearts, lungs, limbs, etc. In another sense, equality between men and women is impossible and an absurdity due to their natural differences in physical, mental, emotional and psychological qualities, inclinations and abilities. Between these two we must tread to illuminate how they are equal, and how they are complimentary.

Islam also recognizes that such equality does not mean that men and women are the same. It notes their different physical and emotional strengths and in view of this sets out their key roles in life. So according to Islam, men and women have been created in different forms for different but complementary purposes. This stresses a difference in role and nature but not a difference in status. The roles are therefore not a question of superiority or inferiority, but a question of natural capacity and proper functioning.

As for Islam, gender equality is part of its jurisprudence and fundamental teachings. Numerous Verses of the Qur'an and Prophetic Traditions enjoin gender equality which categorically proves that gender inequality is not faith-based. Before the advent of Islam, women were treated extremely harshly. It was acceptable for female babies to be buried alive and women were treated more as chattels and objects of sexual pleasure. Islam changed all this, and taught equality of both genders.

O mankind! Fear your Lord Who (initiated) your creation from a single soul, then from it created its mate, and from these two spread (the creation of) countless men and women. (Al-Qur'an, 4:1)

This Verse clearly expounds that man or woman are created from a single entity and are basically equal genders. As a gender, one is not superior to the other. It is piety and only piety that is the measure of ascendancy, nobility and closeness to Allah:

Verily, the most honourable of you in the Sight of Allah is that (believer) who has At-Taqua (abstain from all kinds of sins and evil deeds which He has forbidden), and love Allah much (perform all kinds of good deeds which He has ordained). [Surah 49:13]

It is natural for a man to need and find fulfilment with a woman and for a woman with a man, since they are created one from the other and for one another. They both

are inseparably bound to each other. Neither can they find fulfilment except when in the company of the other as legal and honourable mate and spouse.

Therefore, men and women have the same religious and moral duties and responsibilities. They both face the consequences of their deeds.

Islam gave women the right to an education over 1500 years ago. On the intellectual level Islam stresses that education is equally important for men and women. The Holy Prophet (saw) said:

It is the duty of every Muslim man and every Muslim woman to acquire knowledge.

The general rule in social and political life is participation and collaboration of males and female in public affairs. Men and women have similar obligations and responsibilities to reform and correct the society to the best of their capability. Men and women shoulder the responsibility of enjoining good and forbidding evil equally, as Allah, the Exalted, states in the Qur'an:

The believers, men and women, are protectors one of another; they enjoin what is just and forbid what is evil: they observe regular prayers, practice regular charity, and obey Allah and His apostle. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is exalted in power, wise (Qur'an 9:71)
