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**INTEGRATION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF WOMEN AND THE GENDER
PERSPECTIVE**

**Written statement* submitted by the federation of cuban women, a non-governmental
organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[21 January 2005]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

ISSUE 12: INTEGRATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE GENDER PERSPECTIVE

Millions of women all over the world are excluded from their most elemental rights, are subjected to economic violence that is produced by the lack of access to the development, they are victims of trafficking and sexual exploitation, suffer social and labor discrimination, die or suffer from troubles or inconveniencies derived from the delivery.

The feminization of poverty is an extended phenomenon throughout the planet, but its most serious consequences are more felt in the Third World countries. The economic policies promoted by globalized neo-liberalism have forced women to accept dangerous jobs, with exhausted labor hours in free zones and maquilas, in domestic works, in the sex industry where the exploitation rules and their labor and human rights are nullified.

As a result of budget cuts for social programs and the diminish of the role of the national governments for the assurance and protection of rights and welfare of their citizens, women mainly die due to preventable causes and as a consequence of the multiple effect of being women, being discriminated because of their ethnic or racial origin and poorness. Women also die for the reason that budgets devoted to public health in the poorest countries have been cut by the economic policies imposed by the USA. Today 99% of all maternal deaths happen in developing countries.

An African woman has 100 times more possibilities of dying during the pregnancy or delivery than a woman from Eastern Europe. Two thirds of 113 millions of children without access to education are women, and 37% of these boys and girls live in Sub Saharan Africa. Thousands and thousands of women get infected with AIDS with the risk of leaving their children orphans, without access to the most elemental services for medical attention.

In the USA, a country which with double standards considers itself the main defender of Human Rights, 13 % of white women has no medical insurance. The rate increases to 42% in the case of Latin women, to 25% for Asian women and to 23 % for Afro-American women. Every year 50,000 women enter the USA, victims of trafficking. Their destiny is the prostitution and there are many very young girls among them.

The contribution of women is fundamental for the development and Cuban women have witnessed that, at the same time we enjoy a different reality. From our organization –Federation of Cuban Women- we denounce the injustice, which is becoming a world tendency, we denounce the economic order that rules today, the hegemonic policy of the USA that tries to impose policies like the FTAA (Free Trade Agreement of Americas) to our peoples, and they are intended to sink our continent in the dependence, poverty and desolation.

The advancements of the Cuban revolutionary project and those attained by Cuban women within it are unquestionable today. It would be enough just to mention some indicators:

- Cuba has reached its lowest infant mortality rate in its history, 5,8 per 1,000 live births.
- Women represent 36% in the parliament even surpassing many western developed countries that want to teach us lessons of democracy.
- Women are 66,6% of all professionals and technicians and 62% of university graduate students.

Cuban women believe in a better future that we try to construct and for that we demand that the rights of this small country for self-determination, national sovereignty should be respected, as well as to the right to choose its own way, its social project. We demand that the genocide blockade imposed to our people for more than 45 years that affects our families, our children and tries to surrender by hunger and calamities a whole population has to cease.