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Commission on the Status of Women

Fifty-eighth session

10-21 March 2014

Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives

Statement submitted by Temple of Understanding, 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.



Statement

Temple of Understanding, as one of the oldest interfaith organizations in the United States of America, pursues peace through promoting interfaith understanding and values-based collaborative actions.

We welcome the fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women and States consideration of the priority theme on the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for Women and Girls and the review theme of access and participation of women and girls to education, transportation, science and technology, including equal access to full employment and decent work and the global development agenda.

We collaborate with and have endorsed the comprehensive statements of our colleagues, including the Center for Women's Global Leadership, Equality Now and the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries.

Our intention here is to raise one additional point: that the issues of clean water and sanitation (Millennium Development Goal 7C) crucially undergird work towards many of the Millennium Development Goals, notably Goals 2 and 3, and particularly impact women and girls.

Expanding access to sanitation and eliminating open defecation can save lives and reduce cases of diarrhoea in children under five by over a third. Yet, two years shy of the Millennium Development Goals deadline, only 64 percent of the global population has improved sanitation, far short of the target of 75 per cent. And while the international community has reached its Millennium Development Goals water target, more than 768 million people still lack access to improved drinking water sources.

For girls, a lack of appropriate sanitation available at schools may lead them to stay away during their menstrual cycles, creating an inappropriate burden that can lead to their dropping out altogether. For girls and women, distant and dark or non-existent facilities can significantly increase the risk of gender-based violence.

Thus the water issues embedded in Goal 7C directly impact the work towards Goals 2 and 3.
