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Statement submitted by Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfi, 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

Mobilizing the Youth for Empowerment of Women in Decision-Making Positions

Gender inequality is an issue that needs greater awareness. Inequality that women have to confront every day is hardly perceived. Although women and men enjoy legal equality, the gap between legal rights and practical life is enormous. Women still earn less than men for equal work; have lower income in retirement and despite their professional qualifications/skills women are mostly not present in decision-making processes.

According to the “In-depth study on all forms of violence against women” of the United Nations, women around the world aged 15-44 face higher risks from rape and domestic violence than from cancer, car accidents, war and malaria. Every year, an estimated 15 million girls under 18 are getting married worldwide, with little or no say in the matter. Four out of five victims of human trafficking are girls. One in three women worldwide have experienced either intimate partner violence or non-partner sexual or physical violence in their lifetime. Approximately, 62 million girls are denied education all over the world. Around the world, only 22 per cent of all national parliamentarians are female. That is double the number in 1995, but still a marker of slow change. Women with full-time jobs still earn only about 77 per cent of their male counterparts’ earnings.

Bearing in mind all these facts, it is without a doubt that existing gender inequalities are considered to be the major obstacles of a just and sustainable development. As a means to overcome the existing practices of discrimination, the Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfı (Journalists and Writers Foundation) wants to underline that we have to critically reflect on socially ascribed gender roles and their overall impact on society. This we believe is fundamental to discover potentials for improvement and bring concrete proposals that include gender-specific issues of both women and men.

As underlined in the Sustainable Development Goals, especially in Goal Number 5 and 10 (Gender Equality and Reducing all forms of inequality), sustainable development demands an equal opportunity for all members of society to take part in social and political change as well as economic progress. As mentioned before, women and girls are widely excluded from decision-making processes. Due to prevailing socially ascribed gender roles, women and girls are mainly left to do the housework and have limited access to education and resources. As a result of continuous discrimination, women lack self-esteem and confidence and are therefore highly exposed to male dominance. Accordingly, women and girls are highly vulnerable to violence, sexually transmitted diseases as well as impacts of climate change.

Seeing the necessity of activities and efforts to be pursued in line of Sustainable Development Goals Number 5 and 10, the Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfı (Journalists and Writers Foundation), which holds United Nations Economic and Social Council General Consultative Status, has set up a project that aims to mobilize the Youth for Empowerment of Women in Decision-Making Positions: She4All.

She4All- Mobilizing the Youth for Gender-Equality

One billion young people will reach working age within the next decade. Being the best educated and best trained generation of young men and especially young women ever, the youth constitutes the largest segment of population in many regions. Therefore, the role of youth in shaping the future is vital.

Youth is an essential asset — a pool of talent, ideas and energy — that plays a critical role in addressing the challenges relating to gender inequality. Recognizing young people’s own contribution to promoting women’s empowerment in decision-making processes is very important, if we are aiming at a sustainable solution.

With the project “She4All” — based on the United Nations campaign “HeForShe” — we want to increase understanding and awareness on this subject and emphasize gender equality and women’s empowerment in decision-making positions. This project aims to call the attention of the international society on gender equality, provide necessary information on the issue and utilize the experiences of women who are already in decision-making positions for better understanding.

By creating awareness among young boys and girls on this extremely important issue, we aim to contribute to the establishment of a platform for future generations that it is a subjective responsibility for the present generation to leave a more peaceful and humane world. In the age of globalization it is important to encourage the youth to think beyond boundaries. In this regard, we aim to ensure that young students from Austria and Germany will focus on both local and global approaches.

Consequently, they will acquire a more comprehensive perspective on the issue, which will include a variety of solution-approaches and realize the context-sensitive difficulties concerning gender equality. In the end, students will be required to write a “Call for Action” to improve gender equality and voice global and local solution-approaches — together, hand in hand.

Most of the effort of promoting women’s empowerment in decision-making positions is the process of promoting this idea at the social level, and establishing it as a widely accepted cultural value. With this idea in mind, the Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfi (Journalists and Writers Foundation) and its local partners (Eringerfeld Education Institutions/Germany and Friede Institut für Dialog/Austria) have seen the significance of social media, especially in the contemporary age of information and networking. Hence, a short video will be produced and a global social-media campaign will be started in March 2016 with reference to the International Women’s Day, on “Mobilizing the Youth for Gender-Equality”. Bringing together journalists, writers, academics, activists, decision-makers and the Youth from different perspectives, we want to give the Youth a real say in our campaign and strengthen the dialogue between the generations.

The Objectives of She4All:

- Contributing to achieve Sustainable Development Goals No. 5, 8,10 &16
- Improving the position of young women in society by getting the attention of the public and the decision makers

- Calling for political action in order to fight against and prevent discrimination and exclusion at local, regional and international levels
- Informing young women of their rights
- Creating opportunities for young women to develop new leadership and advocacy skills

In conclusion, the Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfı (Journalists and Writers Foundation) believes that promoting gender equality and empowerment of women requires the participation of the youth. Our project “She4All” is an effort, which is focusing on mobilizing the youth for gender equality. Addressing the causes of unjust treatment in society and the specific conditions where women are subject to such treatment is mandatory if we want to live in a just world. Being aware of our responsibility, the Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfı (Journalists and Writers Foundation) wants to contribute to the establishment a platform for future generations to leave a more peaceful and humane world.

In this line, the Gazeteciler ve Yazarlar Vakfı (Journalists and Writers Foundation) calls on the international community to focus on mobilizing the Youth for Gender-Equality and invites all stakeholders to join its social media campaign “She4All”.
