Economic and Social Council

Commission on the Status of Women

Fifty-eighth session

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**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 Modern Advocacy, Humanitarian, Social and Rehabilitation Association, 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

In contrast to the discrimination and marginalization that had challenged women for several centuries up to that point, the eighteenth century can be acknowledged as a new dawn for the equality and empowerment of women, including in respect of goals which have today engaged the attention and support of the highest authorities and institutional bodies at the global level. The international community has recognized the important part that women have played in the development of society, highlighted, most importantly, through the achievements of the Commission on the Status of Women, which has been responsible for organizing and following up the world conferences on women in Mexico (1975), Copenhagen (1980), Nairobi (1985) and Beijing (1995). For example, the valued position of women is very well reflected in the preamble of the 1975 Declaration of Mexico on the Equality of Women and Their Contribution to Development and Peace, which takes into account the role played by women in the history of humanity, especially in the struggle for natural liberation, the strengthening of international peace, and the elimination of imperialism, colonialism, neo-colonialism, foreign occupation, Zionism, alien domination, racism and apartheid.

Although rhetorical high-level policy discussions have duly acknowledged the huge importance of women, who comprise the majority of the world's population and thus form a very vital force for global development goals, it has been a hurdle to actually and strategically engage such female energy in an equal and unbiased manner, considering the lesser male population, towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls. Deeply entrenched customary or traditional rules and habits that have enabled a degree of acceptance by, and created a comfort zone for, women and girls in respect of the dominant and take-charge position of their men remain an obvious criterion for this consideration. As such, certain community preoccupations within poor countries are generally regarded and accepted as the duty of the man. The concern here regards the fact that, while global governance is rapidly being taken over by advanced information, communication and technology mechanisms, such traditional communities have adopted beliefs that that domain belongs mostly to men.

As a result of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, and its agreed conclusions on access to and participation of women and girls in education, training and science and technology, there is a high possibility to relate the conclusions to the challenges of the Millennium Development Goals. For example, Goal 3, on promoting gender equality and empowering women, obviously faces challenges from the following dimensions:

- **Technological processes**. The actual development of modern times, including both economic and other human development measurement considerations, has been promoted through advanced technological processes. In addition, such modern networking parameters and e-governance approaches are consistently gaining global approval and increasingly fostering avenues for societal growth. Thus, with regard to the gender equality measures of the Goals, there are many impediments since, more often than not, men comprise the top-ranking leaders of such issues within the society.

- **Accessibility**. The girl child's educational orientation within the family in poorer developing countries is guided towards subordinate societal roles,

including in home management, child care, nutrition, hospitality, nursing and other secretarial and assistant-related duties, which the community regards as normal occupational options for women. According to the *Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*, research from 51 countries reveals that the proportion of women managers as a percentage of total managers in the private sector ranges from 10 per cent to 43 per cent, with the majority of countries falling between 20 per cent and 35 per cent. This is a psychological and systemic concern that has not only acted as a preponderant challenge to achieving Goal 3 but is also a chronic factor that could continue towards retarding the post-2015 development agenda for policies on global gender equality and women's empowerment.

- **Systemic policy placements**. The placement of women as leaders within certain particular governance domains, such as health, social affairs and family matters, instead of within more inclusive governance domains, such as territorial administration, mines and energy, and telecommunications, as with the example of Cameroon and other less developed countries, can be considered as one of the reasons behind the challenges to achieving Goal 3. Those governance areas, for example, involve very sensitive political power and influential activity domains that are tactically denied to the women in leadership positions in the country. Equality cannot be fully achieved when such overall power domains, which have so much impact and influence on the daily organization of the community and people's lives, are willed in the favour of men.

- **Policy debate**. Furthermore, the policy debate arising from Economic and Social Council agreed conclusions 1997/2 addresses the concept of gender mainstreaming as the process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies or programmes, in all areas and at all levels, though a utopian ideal to redress the gender equality challenges of the Goals. However, it still leaves open the extent to which such interventionist mechanisms between men and women should be harnessed. Thus, the lack of proper guidance on the distinctive reach and procedures that local communities should adopt with regard to gender mainstreaming issues could well be said to have fostered an impediment to achieving Goal 3.

Having outlined some of the silent challenges that may in several ways have impeded the achievement of the Goals, it is also worth acknowledging the following reflections on the fifty-eighth session:

- Facilitative and supportive measures should promote girls and women in the involvement of very advanced technological management endeavours. This measure strives to safeguard the empowerment of women or gender equality control in every aspect of evolutionary global e-governance trends.

- The psychological battle should be addressed through consistent and persistent strategic girl child education against the traditional reasoning of women and girls in community settings within poor countries. This position serves to automate an intrinsic consciousness of equality and self-management potential within women in relation to their men and as such will invigorate their human zeal towards equal level participation in and management of societal eventualities.

• The need to re-emphasize that national and local government policies and other political management options should consider and include measures for women in every administrative endeavour within both the Government and private sectors. This should help to fight certain biased governmental and political offices that are tactically kept for certain categories of men, in part because a notion exists that a woman cannot handle such offices and in part because other men are driven by egoistic goals.

The lesson to retain is that information communication technologies are gradually taking over the global governance order and that, in terms of a general assessment, women all over the world, especially within underdeveloped countries, are most lacking within this domain. There is thus a crucial need for women and girls to receive related education or training to promote their full employment and their inclusion in the options offered by improved modern science and technology.

Modern technological growth is modern power that needs to be made equal for men and women.

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