



STATEMENT TO THE 64th SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

A public statement from the Associated Country Women of the World, co-signed by organisations in Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council

25 years on from the ground-breaking Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, organisations like ACWW are still required to campaign on the issues that they were founded on. 25 years on, not one of the 12 critical areas of concern is resolved. The 2030 Agenda mandates governments, business, and civil society to work for genuine sustainability. 5 years on from the launch of the Global Goals, it is already clear that we will fail. Governments cannot, in good conscience, stand at the General Assembly, at the High Level Political Forum, at the Commission on the Status of Women and convincingly declare they intend to Leave No One Behind.

There have been achievements, there has been progress, and this should be acknowledged. However, the road ahead is long and it is clear that many of us will not make the full journey. Whilst our organisation primarily advocates for women in rural communities who we know to be at the bottom of every system, we stand with our sisters around the world in highlighting the current reality for diverse groups all over the world whose oppressions are just as intersecting as the conditions in which they're forced to live. No woman alive, young or old, single, married, or widowed, in the most or least developed world can be identified as suffering only one form of discrimination. The basic human rights of all, enshrined and agreed by this very body, are not too much to ask for women. The realisation of these basic rights should not require encouragement, congratulation, or celebration, nor should it be in doubt.

Like so many civil society organisations, the Associated Country Women of the World comes to this meeting with an agenda. We seek to amplify the voices of rural women, so that the problems they face and the solutions they raise are heard and acknowledged by representatives of States Parties. All countries have a rural population. All rural populations face unique challenges as recognised by Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and many sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women. Despite this recognition, our members in more than 80 countries report the same challenges, the same obstacles to progress, and the same discrimination that they faced when our organisation was formed 90 years ago. We are proud to work with other civil society organisations and to support their calls for action as they support ours.

In order for UN States to achieve the commitments they have made to their peoples, and particularly rural women, we implore governments to pay more attention to the voices of rural women, collaborate more closely with civil society organisations already present in rural contexts, and allocate suitable funds to working with and for rural women to ensure their human rights. Institutional national mechanisms are the mandated, preferred, and best system for raising the voice of women within each state, and we call on all State Parties to support and, where necessary, found and fund, such mechanisms.

We acknowledge and appreciate the critical value of the United Nations System as a table at which the decision makers of the world can sit. We acknowledge and appreciate the hard work of dedicated advocates within that system and in every nation around the world. Their work must be supported, and their causes championed by States Parties, caucuses, and alliances to ensure success. When we meet to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, ensure that we are celebrating its achievement, not merely the passing of time.

Written and signed by the Associated Country Women of the World

Co-Signed by (1) Casa Generalizia della Societa del Sacro Cuore; (2) IOGT International; (3) International Council for Adult Education; (4) International Presentation Association; (5) Sorooptimist International; (6) Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur; (7) World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts; (8) World Association of Industrial and Technological Research Organisations

[Associated Country Women of the World](#)

A04 Parkhall | 40 Martell Road | London SE21 8EN | Registered Charity No.1174798
+44 (0)207 7993875 | info@acww.org.uk | www.acww.org.uk

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