



ORAL STATEMENT

58th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW58)

March 20, 2014

New York, NY

Moving Beyond the MDGs for the Realization of Gender Equality, Women's Rights and Women's Empowerment

Your Excellencies,

As we near the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), it is essential that the future development agenda be explicitly shaped by, and grounded in, **human rights and environmental sustainability, ensuring gender equality, the realization of women's rights and women's empowerment**. We, as the Post 2015 Women's Coalition seek **fundamental structural and transformational changes** informed by the concrete realities of women across the life cycle. It **must tackle intersecting and structural drivers of inequalities, and multiple forms of discrimination** based on gender, age, class, caste, race, ethnicity, place of origin, cultural or religious background, sexual orientation, gender identity, health status and abilities.

One of the strengths of the MDG framework is its focus on time bound goals and targets, though there are significant weaknesses and omissions in many of the indicators used to chart progress. Clear weaknesses of the framework are that the goals, targets and indicators: (i) only apply to developing countries; (ii) ignore economic inequality within and between countries; and (iii) detach development from accountability mechanisms provided by human rights. A clear weakness in the goal of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is a lack of focus on realizing women's rights.

We support the call for a standalone goal for gender equality and call for a **transformative process for the promotion of gender, economic, social and environmental justice and peaceful societies**. The changes and the realities on the ground make it clear that the post 2015 sustainable development agenda must focus on the enabling environment and economic structures that limit the realization of women's rights. Progress towards ending poverty from an intersectional approach, the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against girls and women as well as links between gender-based violence and impunity, militarization, military spending, and the prevalence of small arms must be addressed if meaningful gains are to be made. It is critical to recognize that there can be no development without disarmament and the full and equal participation of women.

Furthermore, discriminatory gender stereotypes result in, and perpetuate, the unequal distribution of care work, thereby impacting on women's equal enjoyment of a wide range of interlinked rights, including to decent work, education and health. Thus, there is a need to transform the gender division of labour by expanding care services and redistributing paid and unpaid work; eliminating inequalities in resource control and ownership; as well as ensuring universal primary education and parity of access.

We believe that a genuine new global partnership would have those most marginalized, women of the global south at the center, and ensure truly democratic processes, transparent decision making and accountability; linked to existing human rights accountability mechanisms at the regional and global levels. In this multipolar scenario, governments and the United Nations must be honest about the regulations necessary to hold corporations to account. Business as usual is no longer a viable option!

In moving forward, we recommend that a human rights approach to sustainable development processes be strengthened through enhanced recognition of state obligations to respect, protect, and fulfill women's human rights, including their sexual and reproductive rights, gender equality and women's empowerment. We call for a change in the current policies of international institutions that serve to entrench inequalities through neoliberal reforms that leave countries struggling to meet their sustainable development objectives. It is up to you [Member States] to ensure that post 2015 agenda will be a time of people, and in particular women and girls above profits.