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Statement submitted by Women’s Federation for World Peace International, 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

The Earth, Our Home, All Life, Our Family

This statement is presented by the Women’s Federation for World Peace International (WFWPI) on behalf of its members in 97 countries, addressing the priority theme of the 66th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, “Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.” This voice is strengthened by the organizations that have signed this statement.

All life in the Universe is interconnected and interdependent. Mutual prosperity and sustainable development for all are at the core of the mission of global peace. This is a collective goal to which humanity can all aspire. In essence, one can imagine this world as one family where every individual lives for the sake of the other and for the shared well-being of all life on earth. The family is the cornerstone of world peace and peace begins at home. WFWPI envisions a world of peace and prosperity where women lead alongside men with the feminine leadership paradigm, invoking the feminine maternal instincts of love, virtue, nurturance, well-being, cooperation and education, ensuring all life-sustaining needs are met for the sake of the world as one human family. Implementing the collective, universal principles that serve all life, mothers, wives, daughters and sisters are empowered to unite as the agents of peace, sustainable development and planetary healing which are the most pressing global issues facing us today.

The Sixth Assessment Report of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change 2021 paints what many are calling a catastrophic picture of the effect climate change is having on the world. According to the report, human actions have already significantly altered three-quarters of land and two-thirds of marine environments. Additionally, the report notes that “human-induced climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes” around the world (Summary for Policymakers, p. 10).

A significant area of human impact on the environment is the fashion industry, which, according to an article published in March 2019 on United Nations News, is “widely believed to be the second most polluting industry in the world” where “every second, the equivalent of one garbage truck of textiles is landfilled or burned” (“UN launches drive to highlight environmental cost of staying fashionable”). According to a story reported on the United Nations Environment Programme website in November 2018 and updated in June 2021, the fashion industry “produces between 2 to 8 percent of global carbon emissions...If nothing changes, by 2050 the fashion industry will use up a quarter of the world’s carbon budget” (“Putting the brakes on fast fashion”).

During this time of COVID-19 pandemic and environmental crisis, it is essential for men and women leaders alike to build together a world strategy of how to move forward as a world family by working collaboratively to address the urgent environmental crisis. The current problems of the world cannot be solved by nationalism. The pandemic-born nationalism, leading to the closing of borders, inequity in all forms, and the flare-up of racial and ethnic violence only demonstrate nationalism’s limiting nature. National pride and self-determination are good and right only when they are dedicated to serving the global community. We are beginning to see that the light at the end of the tunnel for these global problems will need to include a unified peace mission and a shared responsibility to implement sustainable actions for the sake of life on earth. We need to move beyond nationalism, beyond globalism, to a higher universal holism that values the well-being of all life on earth.

WFWPI Solutions to the Environmental Crisis

WFWPI mitigates environmental catastrophe by working in partnership with governments and the private sector in our chapters throughout the world to promote permaculture education, circular fashion, and green community livelihood projects.

WFWPI recently launched Giving for Good International (GFGI), a global campaign which raises awareness and funds to address the environmental crisis through circular fashion. GFGI provides opportunities for communities to kickstart environmental projects that help reduce their carbon footprint. Since its launch in 2020, Giving for Good has raised \$250,000 to fund climate action projects in countries such as Paraguay, Brazil, the Philippines, Albania, Ghana, South Africa, Mali, Kenya, Burkina Faso, Zambia and Cameroon.

Some of the projects that GFGI sponsors include the Cloth Nappy Project, a program that creates sustainable diapers that can be reused in order to eliminate waste; the Permaculture Literacy Program, a holistic education and leadership program that focuses on regenerative land management and design; Circular Fashion, a campaign encouraging people to buy second-hand and reuse their textile waste; and Reforestation projects, which plant new trees into the Earth while spreading awareness on environmental protection. These projects specifically contribute to goals 8, 11, 12, 13, and 17 of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite the development of civilizations and science, the continued emission of greenhouse gases and the pollution of the environment seriously hamper the quality of life for our future generations. Women need to unite as leaders, mothers, wives, daughters and sisters to be the agents of peace, healing the Earth by paving the path towards holism, sustainable development and mutual prosperity.

Recommendations

WFWPI encourages Member-States and civil society to work together in solidarity and cooperation, supporting policies for environmental literacy among the youth, women, families and communities, to empower them as stewards of the planet and contributors to their community and nation. A set of universal principles must be respected and implemented in order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

WFWPI encourages Member-States to consider integrating the planetary blueprint of sustainability into the fundamental governing principles in national policies, investing in environmental literacy and stewardship programs, in partnership with local governments and the civil society sector to reach the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Holistic preventive measures are needed to avert further environmental crises.

WFWPI encourages Member-States, religious leaders and business leaders to work in mutually beneficial cooperation, investing in technology, environmental literacy and climate-action initiatives instead of investing in weapons and wars. Scientific development should be aligned with the principles that allow all life to flourish and to co-exist harmoniously.

In conclusion, WFWPI and all signatories would like to remind the Member-States of the notion of the global family that was implied in the Preamble of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A family “leaves no one behind,” seeking “universal peace in larger freedom” (A/RES/70/1). In this time of global introspection and existential worry, we are all challenged daily in our private and public lives to live in solidarity, taking care of, considering and living for the sake of one another as one extended, global family. This is a defining moment.

This statement is endorsed by:

Association de l'Intervention pour les Mères

Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd

Graduate Women International (GWI)

International Alliance of Women

International Federation of Business and Professional Women

Latter-day Saint Charities

Montage Initiative, Inc.

National Alliance of Women's Organizations

Soroptimist International

Universal Peace Federation

Widows Rights International

Women's World Summit Foundation
