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BANGKOK, THAILAND

ASIA PACIFIC CIVIL SOCIETY DECLARATION ON BEIJING+25

INTRODUCTION

On the 24 - 26 November, 2019 over three hundred women's rights and feminist organisations, networks and movements from across the Pacific and the Asian Regions, represented their much larger networks and associations at the national, regional and international levels, at the NGO Forums and Young Feminist Forum held at Nouvo Hotel and UN ESCAP, Bangkok. We collectively called for government accountability to speed up and implement commitments made over the last 25 years under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) to advance gender equality and the rights of women and girls.

This Asia Pacific CSO Declaration on Beijing + 25 represents the collective voices of diverse women and girls; rural women, older women, women with disabilities, single and widows, sex workers, lesbian, bisexual women, people with intersex variations, trans and non-binary persons, women from religious minority communities, Dalit women, ethnic minorities, Indigenous women, refugees, displaced and stateless women who participated in the Asia and Pacific Civil Society Forum, the Young Feminists Forum; the Beijing+25 on-line Forum and the large networks of members, affiliates, and organisations who are linked through those who attended these Forums and participated at the national, sub-regional and regional levels. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (BPfA) has been hailed as the most comprehensive articulation of international commitments related to women's human rights and has advanced global human rights discourse by establishing "women's rights are human rights", recognising rape as a war crime and a weapon of war, and creating an international framework for the implementation of women's human rights at the national level across the globe. The participatory and inclusive practices around the BPfA and the Commission on the Status of Women Sessions set the groundwork for civil society organisations to mobilise and advocate for Women's Rights in a concrete way and by the integration of civil society fully across these processes, has opened other spaces such as the ARRIA Agreement on UNSCR 1325. With annual sectional reviews and full review and evaluation every 5 years the BPfA processes have also challenge the 'gender binary'; sought to leave no-

one behind and creates space for the most vulnerable groups to bring their voice and seek joint action.

The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) draws its mandate strongly from the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), three previous world conferences on Women (Mexico, Copenhagen and Nairobi), and the Vienna Conference on Human Rights. The principles and many of the actions within the BPfA are integrated into the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Forward-Looking Agenda 2030.

We recognise in recommitting to the Beijing Platform for Action and its ambitious and visionary strategies across 12 critical areas of concern, and to the Women Peace and Security Agenda, many commitments will remain unachievable unless structural barriers are addressed.

We welcome the national, regional consultations and reports and parallel reports prepared to serve as a resource to government and UN as part of the Beijing +25 process and we strongly acknowledge the partnerships of civil society with UN entities and reiterate the importance of strengthening, promoting and supporting the active, equal agency participation and leadership represented through civil society, women's and feminist groups in implementing, monitoring, evaluation and follow up of all policies affecting them.

We remain concerned about the constant push-backs, lack of resources, strategically changing environments and shrinking spaces for civil society engagement in all processes to advance women's rights and gender equality at the local, national, regional and global levels. We especially condemn the persecution of human rights defenders and those who work to advance women's rights.

We acknowledge that while there continue to be challenges and pushbacks, the BPfA has been a crucial space and mechanism for feminist and women's movements to drive transformative change, from creating and strengthening gender machinery, to changing discriminatory laws and policies, building political will and accountability frameworks and shifting local and global conversations around gender equality, women's rights and women peace and security. The integration of civil society fully across these

processes has opened other spaces such as the ARRIA Agreement on UN Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1325 and allowed expansion of participation, protection and prevention for women and girls in all their diversity in contexts of armed conflict, post war and post conflict, through other Women Peace and Security (WPS) Resolutions. With annual sectional reviews of the BPfA and full review and evaluation every 5 years the BPfA review processes have challenge the 'gender binary'; sought to leave no-one behind and creates space for the most vulnerable groups to bring their voice and seek joint action. Despite these spaces, for too long human rights associated with sexual orientation and gender identity have failed to be recognised.

We present to you, through this Asia Pacific CSO Declaration on Beijing + 25, our shared vision for a region that is defined by development, economic, social, gender and environmental justice and peace. We recognise and remind you that this is not a new vision, the shared vision presented to you in this Declaration is already enshrined in global frameworks, declarations, and treaties such as the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA); the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030; the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the International Conference on Population and Development +25 (ICPD+25). We also recognise this vision is enshrined through the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Conventions and the Vienna Conference on Human Rights; UN Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and other Women, Peace and Security resolutions, the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability (CRPD), and the Paris Agreement on climate change. We recognise and applaud these frameworks. However, we remain extremely concerned that despite these frameworks and commitments made on the Beijing Platform for Action, we are still far from achieving gender equality and the realization of women's human rights, and twenty-five years into the BPfA and five years into the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) we know we have a long way to go to get there by the SDG timeframe of 2030. We call on States to re-focus, prioritise and accelerate actions around the BPfA, CEDAW and Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 and other gendered SDG targets, and remove structural and systematic barriers faced by women and girls in all their diversity.

ASIA AND PACIFIC REGIONAL CONTEXT

The Asia and Pacific Region, is the largest and most diverse in the world. It is a region reeling under the impact of climate crises; intensifying natural disasters, growing conflicts and militarisation; rising religious fundamentalisms; conservatism and resurfacing of ethno-religious nationalisms. It is a region severely impacted by rising authoritarianism, fascism, militarism, capital imperialism and neo-colonialism, nationalism, xenophobia, supremacist ideologies and fundamentalisms that create deep fractures in systems of democracy and multilateralism. Discrimination and oppression is increasing and we recognise the role patriarchy, misogyny, heteronormativity, CIS genderism, ableism, classism, racism, casteism, religious discrimination, state capture and corporate power reinforce one another to entrench structural barriers to gender equality and that impact negatively on the lives of women and girls in all their diversity. We are concerned about the grossly imbalanced global economic and financial system, and the growing automation of work impacting on women already at the bottom of deeply unequal global supply chains. Technological advances and innovations have served to increase inequalities and raised new challenges not only in the area of economic security, but also in the form of on-line gendered violence, bullying and impacting on the lives of all.

Asia and the Pacific is a region defined by deep and entrenched inequalities. Gender inequality reinforces and is itself reinforced by extraordinary levels of inequality in wealth, power and resources. This region contains two-thirds of the world's poorest people, women comprise the majority of the poor. Women in all their diversity remain marginalised and are denied human rights. Migrant, indigenous, rural, urban poor, women and girls living with disabilities, women and girls with disabilities, women and girls living with HIV, women of diverse identities, diverse women and girls of different ages, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics including trans, non-binary and intersex women and people, women marginalised on the basis of caste, and work and descent, community, ethnicity, and location, internally-displaced, refugee and asylum seeker women, women living in institutions, women of documented and

undocumented migration status, single heads of household, sex workers, informal workers, rural women, single women, the elderly, women farmers, women living in institutions, women who are displaced and living in humanitarian crises are the most likely to experience marginalisation and a denial of their human rights.

Patriarchal, militaristic and authoritarian governments are rising across the region. This has led to increased attacks on women and feminist human rights defenders, especially indigenous and environmental rights defenders. We exist in an environment where civil society organisations are being terrorised and pressured through government agencies; where bank accounts set up to hold foreign aid funds are coming under high levels of scrutiny; and where inconsistent changes in local policy / legislation regarding changing organisational registrations are becoming common tools that impact on and hamper essential services and supports for women and girls in all their diversity. We exist in an environment where women's human rights defenders are arbitrarily detained, persecuted and murdered.

We are deeply disturbed by the shrinking spaces for Civil Society engagement in all processes to advance women's rights and gender equality at the local, national, regional and global levels. We appreciate and value the hard work of UN women and its people, especially within the current challenging context of geo-politics and UN austerity. We recognize the value of high-level events to raise the profile of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and CSW with its statutory role in watching over the implementation of the BPfA. It is important that the observance of and the preparation processes of the BPfA remain highly participatory and accessible to civil society actors. As we move forward into Generation Equality and the anticipation of a global forum in Mexico and France, we cannot forget that many women and girls from this region will not be able to attend these Forums, and the review of the BPfA and Commission on the Status of Women remain key spaces of advocacy for women of this region. We cannot leave the women and girls in all their diversity from this region behind by creating new global structures that are out of reach and do not speak to the issues from the Asia and Pacific regions.

As the most disaster-prone region in the world, the climate crisis is a lived reality for all in this region. The climate crisis is a defining challenge for our

people, planet and species and is a structural barrier to realising the commitments of the Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) and subsequent agreements. The escalating climate crisis related impacts coupled with geostrategic competition is exacerbating in the Pacific region and Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Small Island States are sinking and yet governments continue to refuse to acknowledge this. Women and girls face the brunt of this. The impact of increasing floods, hurricanes, earthquakes, drought, tsunamis and fires are impacting on women and girls' right to live in safety and security, right to development, right to earn a livelihood. Increasing violence at times of climatic disaster combined with the lack of safe and secure spaces is wielding a heavy blow to women of Asia and the Pacific.

Climate anxiety is rising, and young women and girls are rising in speaking out on these issues to their governments. This is a time of ecological crisis; and the impact of climate crisis from the loss of land, livelihoods and increased violence, reduced access to services such as education and health are lived realities of women in the region. If this goes unchecked, it not only stops progress on International Human Rights treaties and conventions, it impacts on life itself. We recognise that addressing the climate crisis at the intergovernmental level cannot be siloed to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and instead needs a holistic approach with the commitment of every international institution, entity and process at all levels and encourage the UN, States and other stakeholders to address this immediately.

Over the last 25 years women and girls in all their diversity in the Asia and Pacific region have been severely impacted by the onslaught of macroeconomic regimes of neoliberalism, - all of which threaten and are incompatible with women's rights and gender equality. Neoliberal economic policies and the yoke of colonialism benefit corporations over people and the planet, and have adverse impacts on women and girls, including by aggravating the burden of their unpaid work and care, and their experiences of violence and harassment. The Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement and other Free Trade Agreements are non-transparent and rely on an exploitation of labour without the right to labour bargaining. Trade liberalization and privatization of basic services prevents women and girls from accessing and realizing basic rights to education, health and food

sovereignty. Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clauses are increasing the power of corporate hegemony over governments, peoples and women, and are holding peoples' movements and women's human rights at ransom.

The shift in international aid and development funding from one which addresses poverty eradication to one which supports economic empowerment and directly links trade, combined with persistent budget cuts to aid budgets, has had a profound negative impact on women in all their diversity and severely threatens progress on gender equality in this region. Shifts and changes due to the climate crisis and rising conflicts in the region are not being fully captured statistically. The BPfA and SDG's articulate the importance of gender disaggregated data, however progress in this area is needed to ensure comprehensive and more accessible data and statistics are more readily available.

Government control and corporate capture of lands, water bodies, forests, seeds and knowledge deny us development and environmental justice. Rural women and farmers are the largest proportion of workers in Asia-Pacific and deserve special attention in overall macroeconomic, employment and social protection policies.

The feminisation of poverty is growing across the region, with the numbers of older women falling into poverty and homelessness increasing. Social protections which are not gender responsive and payment structures which are conditional and punitive towards women who continue to perform the majority of unpaid work and care, are pushing more and more families into poverty. Poverty is a cause and a consequence of migration, including forced migration. Rates of poverty are high with poverty among migrant, refugee, single mothers and indigenous families amongst the highest. In the Asia and Pacific region women in all their diversity are finding themselves in positions where they have limited options and negotiating power. Long hours of work, low wages, lack of access to food, restrictions on mobility, rest and at times the right to communicate with families back home.

Systemic failure to value unpaid work and care, and the gradual undermining of social protection systems remain a key challenge, along with those whose migration laws remain impunitive for many seeking work. Social protections

provide crucial safety nets for women and other vulnerable groups and yet these, where they exist, are being under resourced and failing those most in need.

The rise of the digital economy and digitalisation, concerted within the fourth industrial revolution, and the future of work, offers a broad variety of opportunities for women's empowerment and for a more equally gendered participation in labour markets, financial markets, and entrepreneurship. However, women in all their diversity often find themselves trapped in a vicious circle, where current gender gaps, such as imbalances like gaps in entrepreneurial skills, lack of developed social networks for female business founders, insufficient number of female role models of entrepreneurship and prevalence of financial constraints may keep women from recognizing and pursuing those entrepreneurial opportunities hinder the chances for future improvements. Prevailing legal and cultural restrictions towards women's autonomy in many emerging and developing economies in this region tend to prevent women from accessing digital devices that could help overcome some of these restrictions.

Lower female enrolment rates in higher education, especially in STEM fields (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics), deters women from fully realizing the full range of opportunities and chances offered by digitalization. The gender pay gap still exists in this economy and accordingly, women are missing out on digital age opportunities. In addition, the current gender gaps in higher education and digital literacy that are particularly strong in emerging economies may deprive women of these opportunities, and they may hinder them to occupy those high-profile jobs in management, STEM occupations or entrepreneurship that are expected to flourish best in the digital age.

On average, women's political representation in the Asia and Pacific regions is below the global average. Political accountability to women begins with increasing the number of women in decision-making positions, but it cannot stop there. What is required are gender-sensitive governance reforms that will make all elected officials more effective at promoting gender equality in public policy and ensuring their implementation.

We are alarmed by the pushback on Sexual and Reproductive Health

and Rights (SRHR) and the severe impact this has on gender equality in the Asia and Pacific Region. Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights are core human rights for all women and girls, and not limited to just health-care services. We fully support the human rights of women, including their right to control over and decide freely on all matters related to their sexuality, including family planning, information and education.

Across the region sexuality education is failing to meet the needs and expectations of young women and gender diverse young people. While some countries have national curriculums that include sexuality education, the curriculum lacks a cross-cutting gender lens. Gender equitable policies and procedures and cultures are needed across school communities, respectful relationships education should not be at the expense of sexuality education.

It is disturbing that women's bodies and labour are instrumentalized within neo-liberal policy paradigms, and this control is exercised through the everyday denial and violation of rights and autonomy of women to make decisions regarding their own bodies and sexuality. The state, the market and social institutions work in collusion to constrain our choices and perpetuate structural violence through reproductive coercion and gender-based violence. Policies, laws and practices relating to women's and girls' bodies and sexuality restrict their rights to information, to marry freely, and to safety and protection in their workplaces. T

he BPfA places a special emphasis on sexual and reproductive health rights through its strategies and actions regarding family planning, which states that it is the right of all women "to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, as well as other methods of their choice for regulation of fertility which are not against the law."; [and] urges state governments to re-evaluate punitive measures placed on abortion, provide family planning and a range of contraceptives as alternatives to abortion as well as quality abortion after care. The Platform also presents a safe, healthy pregnancy as a human right which is to be attained through quality resources and healthcare available to all women regardless of economic status.

All forms of violence against women and girls in all their diversity is rising to epidemic proportions. State and non-state violence remains

widespread, systematic and culturally entrenched in the Asia and Pacific Region. Violence is multiple and intersecting and is amplified by changes in context such as armed conflict, militarization, religious fundamentalism, land grabbing, caste-based gender violence and pre and post disaster among others. Women and girls in all their diversity continue to experience violence across the life-cycle, at dangerously high levels in both public and private domains, on a continuum that includes financial control, discrimination in the workplace, acts of harassment, murder, femicide and the disappearance of women and girls. Perpetrators of violence remain impunitively to justice.

This violence is rooted in historical and structural inequalities that affects women from marginalized communities most acutely. We face violence of epidemic proportions within our homes, workplaces, and public spaces and occur in multiple ways across the life-cycle. We are extremely concerned with increased surveillance and securitisation of States and the ensuing targeting of women human rights defenders and feminist organisations.

We are extremely concerned about the **pushback on women's human rights in the Women, Peace and Security Agenda** in a context of increasing surveillance and securitization. Sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls in all their diversity in the context of conflict and militarization is systemic. Rape and violence continue to be employed as a weapon and tactic of war and terrorism, torture and repression, to humiliate and instil fear in a community, ethnic, religious or political groups.

We fully recognise that Violence against Women and Girls in all their diversity is complex, often understood in terms of power dynamics and social structures and are consequences of the value placed on women and girls by society. Violence persists across all areas of a women and girl's life and flourishes in an environment where women and girls have unequal access to education, wealth, health and justice.

Harmful traditional practices are forms of violence that have been committed primarily against women and girls in certain communities and societies for so long that they are considered or presented by perpetrators as part of accepted cultural practice. Forced marriage, Female Genital Mutilation / Cutting (FGM/C), Dowry brides and other so called traditional cultural practices reflect values and beliefs held by members of a community for

periods often spanning generations and must be eliminated. These practices are violations of international law and are a violation of the human rights of women and girls in all their diversity.

Compared to their peers, women and girls with disability experience significantly higher levels of all forms of structural and economic violence more intensely and frequently and are subjected to violence by a greater number of perpetrators. Their experiences of violence last longer, more severe injuries result, they are far less likely to receive service support to address violence, they are often not believed when reporting sexual assault and other forms of violence, are often denied the right to legal capacity and effective access to justice, and they have considerably fewer pathways to safety. There is a lack of expertise and a range of structural barriers within domestic violence, sexual assault and women's crisis services, law enforcement and other state institutions such as police, army, that prevent appropriate responses to support women with disability. Women with disabilities are still subjected to forced sterilisation and have their fundamental rights to sexuality denied.

Women and girls of diverse sexual orientation and gender identities and expression (SOGIE), women human rights defenders and peacekeepers on the ground also experience intensified and severe forms of gender-based violence. They are targets of so-called 'corrective rape', 'honour killings', acid attacks and other forms of torture intended to dehumanise them, and which are perpetrated by the state, family, community and informal courts. For women, girls and non-binary people of diverse sexual orientations, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics, there is a lack of access to justice and protection against violence, and which is limited by the heteronormative definition of family.

Increasingly cyber bullying is being used to threaten, intimidate and harass women and girls in all their diversity. Gender based violence on line has created an internet forum which is often used as a platform to defame, force marriage, publicly shame, harass, stalk, exploit, blackmail, extort, intimidate, disclose confidential information, images or videos, threaten or advance hate speech, terrorism, cyber obscenity or pornography, revenge porn, doxing, trolling or sexual harassment and advances on women and girls in all their diversity often from strangers within their homes, at school and at times i

n the sanctuary of the bedroom. For some this is in clear sight of spouses, partners, parents, guardians and loved ones without them being aware of what is happening.

We acknowledge political will is needed to strengthen and implement the gender architectures required to address this region's human rights violations, both nationally and internationally, and the requirement to collect comprehensive and intersectional data which captures the lived realities of women, girls and non-binary people:

Genuine accountability will require state and collective political will; adequate financing; and stronger institutions and, most importantly, providing us - the civil society - with the space and security to engage with and inform agenda-setting, planning and monitoring of outcomes at all levels. This will require the strengthening of gender architectures both nationally and internationally, including UN Women, audit and human rights institutions and other relevant bodies to ensure accountability at the national level.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We are deeply disturbed by the increasing attacks on Human Rights Defenders and the shrinking spaces for Civil Society engagement in all processes to advance women's rights and gender equality at the local, national, regional and global levels. We demand that:

- Urgent action be taken to stop the persecution of Women Human Rights Defenders (WHRD); eliminate all forms of persecution of WHRDs and establish effective protection mechanisms for WHRDs;
- States recognise and support the important role of women human rights defenders in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms of women, in particular those related to the access to natural resources;
- Prevent violations and abuses against women human rights defenders, including through practical consultative steps to prevent threats, harassment and violence; and combat impunity by taking steps to ensure that those responsible for violations or abuses, including all forms of gender-based violence and threats against human rights defenders, committed by State, non-State or private actors, are promptly and impartially investigated and held accountable and brought to justice through impartial investigations;
- Feminist civil society members be given our rightful space in UN processes at all levels, as per the commitment to inclusive planning and decision-making within Article 71 of the UN Charter and ECOSOC Resolution 1996/31;
- Return observer status for civil society at all CSW negotiations;
- Reform the CSW to make it tripartite and give NGOs a recognized official space within the Commission, including a seat on the CSW Bureau;
- Increase resources for the CSW and provide institutionalised support and space for regional and national processes with democratic and meaningful participation of civil society, particularly women's rights and youth-led organisations, which should inform the final agreed conclusions of the CSW, which must be negotiated onsite;
- Provide the official documents in translation during the negotiations (zero draft, compilation text, and revisions) at the very least in the UN official languages.

- Include civil society speakers in every panel and dialogue, encouraging diverse representation;
- Consider removing or not renewing ECOSOC status for recognized hate groups and other organizations that do not support women's fundamental human rights, freedoms or gender justice;
- Cease suppression of independent civil society and provide legal infrastructure to foster functioning independent civil society;
- Ensure that CSW is inclusive and accessible to persons with disabilities, including by making both virtual and physical spaces accessible, publishing documents in accessible formats, and having simultaneous International Sign Language interpretation and live captioning for meetings.

2. In a region fraught with man-made and natural disasters, climate crises, and amidst growing climate anxiety, We demand States urgently:

- Take steps to address climate injustice through gender-responsive and human rights-based actions that enable the realisation of environmental justice, including to cooperate at all levels, both inside and outside of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), to address the climate crisis, including through incorporating the issue in the Commission on the Status of Women through a specific theme and within each theme;
- Uphold their commitments to the BPfA, SDG 13 and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and take immediate action to address the climate crisis and its adverse gendered effects on the most marginalised communities in the region, including women human rights and environmental defenders;
- Integrate gender-just transition through social dialogue led by women and indigenous peoples-led, and community owned renewables, ecosystem-based, and sustainable and community-driven policies in the climate and environmental decision-making processes;
- Act upon the gendered impacts of the climate crisis and more broadly environmental degradation and undertake a gendered analysis that involves the active participation and leadership of women and girls in all their diversity in all policy and disaster mitigation strategies;

- Recognise the climate crisis: Our dependence on fossil fuels and a growth-focused economy has put at risk the entirety of Asia Pacific communities' ways of life, driving migration, destroying traditional livelihoods, creating new public health problems, and upending the ecosystem and biodiversity;
- Commit to a zero-carbon economy: Re-affirm the UN secretary-general's call for an immediate global ban on new coal-fired power plants and coal mines and to rapidly phase out use of coal and rule out false solutions such as nuclear power. This commitment would stress on the polluter pays principle and the common but differentiated responsibilities (CBDR) among countries;
- Initiate measures for a just and equitable transition: to rapidly move away from fossil fuels, and start building sustainable, renewable energy systems that are feminist and human rights-based and planned in social dialogue with women and local communities and including women and community-owned and -led systems;
- Undertake a gender responsive approach to climate crisis: need to ensure that the benefits are equitable, progressive and effectively realised. Gender equitable benefits are important to curb the reinforcement of gender gaps and existing patterns of inequalities. It requires emphasis on instituting gender equitable processes, systems and institutions that produce gender equitable outcomes, impacts and benefits;
- Provide gender responsive resource mobilisation that considers and demands for climate finance to tackle specific forms of gender inequalities, needs, and vulnerabilities;
- Mainstreaming gender and human rights approach is key within institutional reform and policy integration. This can be done by ensuring language on mainstreaming gender and human rights approach as one of the key result areas/recommendations and through emphasizing gender responsiveness in sectors in which women are more susceptible to climate change related risks;
- Recognise and incorporate the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and urgently put fair, equitable and just climate actions that advances women's human rights, gender equality and accountability;
- Commit to climate finance that responds to the most affected yet least responsible for populations, climate frontline communities and

- countries by climate crisis, including addressing loss and damage;
- Urge banks, insurance industries and hedge funds to divest from fossil fuels: Governments need to urge banks and insurance industries to divest, and also pressure international finance institutions to withdraw from fossil fuel-based projects, particularly the more extreme ventures such as offshore, deep sea explorations, fracking, and others which could destabilise tectonic plates and contaminate water supplies.

3. Recognising the growing conflicts and increased militarisation in the Asia and Pacific Region, and noting the twentieth anniversary of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325, on women, peace, and security and its commitments, we demand that States:

- Ensure that the perspectives of women and girls are taken into account in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and in humanitarian emergencies and that they effectively and meaningfully participate, on equal terms with men, in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and activities related to conflict prevention, peace mediation, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction;
- Take into account the perspective of women and girls who are internally displaced, stateless, or who are refugees and make space for their meaningful participation in designing humanitarian response;
- Address the root causes of conflict, including gender inequality and discrimination, militarization and arms proliferation, and the political economy of war; climate change, and violations of human rights and humanitarian law;
- Ensure that the human rights of all women and girls in all their diversity are fully respected and protected in all response, recovery and reconstruction strategies and that appropriate measures are taken to eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls;
- Ensure women's right to full, equal and meaningful participation that is direct, substantive, and formal, as a non-negotiable priority in all conflict prevention and peace processes, in including all formal and informal processes.

4. Recognising the important role of International Development Assistance (ODA) to building gender equality in the Asia and Pacific Region, we request that States commit to:

- Increased budgets for Gender Equality work, and continue to priorities programmes which have gender equality as their principle objective, strengthen the mainstreaming of gender across all areas of international development programmes;
- Increase funding for Feminist Organisations, investing in long-term, flexible funding that supports core operations of such organisations, and direct funding to feminist organisations to support local organisations;
- Address the challenges of gender disaggregated data and increase support to country mechanisms to collect effective data;
- Increase efforts for systematic gender and age-disaggregated data collection, analysis and systematization efforts, including monitoring and accountable evaluation efforts.

5. Recognising the crucial contributions that social protection systems can make to the realization of human rights for all, in particular, for those who are trapped in poverty, are vulnerable or marginalized and subject to violence and discrimination, we urge States to commit to:

- Ensuring non-contributory social protections for rural women engaged in unpaid and informal work, that includes access to food sovereignty;
- Ensuring women's ownership and indigenous women's control over land, water, and commons, especially ensuring indigenous women's collective rights and self-determination are upheld;
- Implementing existing laws, and reviewing legislations to protect people's forest and land rights;
- Strengthen legislation and policy, and increase resources to support multiple forms of organization for all women including; women workers, environmental defenders, Women Human Rights Defenders, including women's right to organise, and protect and support women's right to organise in all sectors including in informal and formal sectors , including the right to form trade unions;
- Review and repeal legislation that discriminates against women;

- Implement Land reform measures to ensure women and girls rights to land and property within their own communities.

6. For women and girls in this region, it is vitally important to recognise all forms of work, including unpaid care work, sex work, and work in informal and entertainment sectors. We call for States to:

- Ensure inclusive work environments including the right to unionise and collective bargaining and a living wage, protection against all forms of gender-based violence including human trafficking and exploitation, discrimination in the world of work, and the right for their chosen work to be treated and viewed with dignity;
- Bridge the gender pay gap for all workers, 'equal pay for equal work' which includes the concept of equal pay for equal or similar work, but also addresses the systemic undervaluing of work in female-dominated sectors, such as health care and education, including migrant women workers, and commit to ratifying and implementing all international labour standards;
- End all forms of labour rights violations and ensure accountability including providing criminal liability for businesses/corporations and government officials complicit in the unlawful activity of corporations;
- Recognise and challenge the implicit biases and unintended consequences of economic empowerment programs and policies, especially within the private sector;
- Recognise the role of the private sector should be on accountability, transparency and ensuring that private sector providers of public goods and services are required to follow public service obligations and pay their share of taxes. And to ensure the private sector follows the pillars of Decent Work developed by the ILO and not contribute to a race to the bottom as generally fulfilled by corporate social responsibility endeavours.

We strongly urge States to:

- Investigate a complete economic paradigm change, which immediately takes on board and reverses the adverse consequences of neo-liberal macroeconomic policies by abolishing Free Trade Agreements and

Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanisms and supporting the process for a legally binding treaty on transnational corporations and other business enterprises at the Human Rights Council;

- Implement Trade agreements, policies and frameworks for trade and cooperation that are equitable, inclusive and in line with human rights by carrying out gender, human rights and environmental impact assessments, and that they promote sustainable livelihoods with rights and dignity for all women, including workers and farmers;
- Investigate the creation of a global architecture to prevent tax evasion and avoidance, and tackle illicit financial flows;
- Recognise the reduction and redistribution of women's unpaid work and state investments in universal social protection, public services and gender-responsive infrastructure to meet the Beijing Platform for Action requirements which feed into SDG target 5.4.

7. There is an urgent need for the current neo-liberal development framework in this region to be inclusive, people-oriented and gender-responsive particularly to rural, indigenous, migrant, refugees, urban poor, Dalit women, including women who are ethnic minorities, stateless women, lesbian, bisexual women, people with intersex variations, trans and non-binary persons. We urge states to urgently:

- Address malnutrition and food insecurity among the poor and marginalised and ensure public provisioning of essential services (education, health, water and sanitation, housing, transport, etc) to all by adopting various fiscal measures including progressive tax regimes across the region and rejecting exploitative trade and investment policies that privatise and limit the provision of services which ensure human wellbeing;
- Implement and use an intersectional framework to eradicate systemic poverty. This includes the implementation and promotion of:
 - proactive policy planning, create employment by enabling skills development and entrepreneurial programmes and promote social protection measures to benefit marginalized communities;
 - the rights of all citizens of a country to confer citizenship on their children on an equal basis by amending gender discriminatory citizenship laws and policies. Ensure non-citizen children of

citizens, stateless children and children at risk of statelessness have immediate access to healthcare, public education and equal access to economic opportunities by de-linking social service institutions (hospitals, schools etc) from law enforcement/military forces;

- institutional accountability mechanisms for both state and non-state actors (corporations/multinational corporations);
- Member States must protect and promote the rights of migrants in line with the Global Compact on Migration.

8. Recognising the importance of education and lifelong learning, promote and respect women's and girls' right to education throughout the life course, and at all levels, especially for those who have been left furthest behind. We Urge States to:

- To introduce various initiatives to promote advanced digital literacy and to increase interest in STEM fields among girls and young women and actively work to break down cultural and legal restrictions to digitization;
- Review and strengthening of national frameworks on gender and disability inclusion to ensure the representation and participation of women and girls with disabilities within policies and programming and ensure implementation of gender and disability training initiatives for service providers, especially at the grassroots level.

9. We recognise that despite concerted efforts, women's political representation in the Asia and Pacific region is below the global average. We urge States to:

- Increase, resource and support participation, representation and leadership of feminist groups, women's rights organizations, youth-led organisations and gender equality advocates in policymaking platforms at all levels is a must - including in whether in politics, economic policymaking, and peace processes;
- Ensure the meaningful participation and inter-generational gender-mainstreaming dialogue of women and girls in all their diversity to make decision-making beyond "tokenism";
- Budget for reasonable accommodations to ensure full access and participation; Budgetary allocations for meetings and conferences must

be made to cover disability-related accommodations, such as captioning, sign language interpreters, accessible formats, accessible venues, and accessible transportation.

10. We recognise that the Asia Pacific Region is far from achieving universal health coverage, which is the key solution for health and well-being, sexual and reproductive health information and available, accessible, acceptable and good quality services must be provided including contraception for marginalised women by providing comprehensive sexuality education and quality sexual and reproductive health services. We demand States:

- Provide adequate financial, human and infrastructural resources towards implementing health policies to ensure the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health for all including their sexual and reproductive health and rights.
- Improve public investment in health and develop social protection systems and health strategies to provide comprehensive sexual and reproductive rights for all women, especially the marginalized and vulnerable groups. Women's lives should not be compromised by governments in debt to aid providers who do not support such services;
- Decriminalise abortion, and where legal, remove conditionality and restrictions to all women and girls' right to safe abortion as a human right;
- Provide adequate financial, human and infrastructural resources towards implementing health policies to ensure the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health for all including their sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- Regulate the private health sector to provide acceptable, affordable, accessible, quality health services as a priority;
- Implement Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) in and out of schools that is age-appropriate, evidence-, and rights-based, non-discriminatory, gender sensitive, accessible and inclusive of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics, that is aligned to the United Nations International Technical Guidelines on Sexuality Education;
- Increase the availability of information and ensure non-discriminatory access to quality, respectful and dignified health services including

adolescent and youth-friendly SRH services especially for young people, irrespective of age, marital status, sexual orientation and gender identity;

- Ensure equal, accessible and affordable primary healthcare and SRH services to all including women in poverty, women with disabilities and those seeking such services during a humanitarian crisis such as natural and man-made disasters and in conflict settings;
- Recognise and respect indigenous traditional practices and medicines;
- Address mental health issues as part of sexuality education and services and put in place health policies covering universal access to quality and pleasure-centred SRHR for all;
- Improve and increase data/statistics/analysis of issues related to SRHR and social determinants on abortion, surrogacy, maternal mortality and women with disabilities;
- Continue engaging men while centering the choice and agency of women to improve SRHR services and addressing hegemonic masculinities;
- Enforce stronger ICT laws and policies to address cybercrime and online gender-based violence and restrictions on pornography in public spaces and create more awareness and recognition around SRHR violations arising from early, forced and child marriage, domestic and intimate partner violence etc;
- Provide Available, accessible, acceptable and good quality' (AAAQ), where the concept of affordable is included in 'accessible';
- Ensure and provide legal and social measures to ensure the right to form a family, without discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics, by ensuring women and girls equal rights to land, water, property and citizenship, especially single women in all their diversities and women and girls with disabilities, in line with Principle 24 of the Yogyakarta Principles;
- Uphold sexual and reproductive health and rights including access to safe abortion.
- Decriminalise abortion, sex work and behaviours, relationships, identities and expressions of people with diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics;
- Decriminalise sex work and align laws and policies around the age of consent, marriage and abortion;
- Distinguish the policy and laws between sex work and human trafficking as they are not the same.

11. It is essential that the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence, are recognised across the life-cycle, and international and national frameworks are guided by the principles of equality and non-discrimination as enshrined in the BPfA and CEDAW and that diverse non binary identities are protected under and national and international frameworks. We recommend states:

- Implement a gendered analysis of laws and processes to recognise impediments to women's access to justice, and unintended forms of discrimination, along with the implementation of survivor centred legal protection processes, with a focus on removing obstacles faced by women and girls in accessing services because of their identity, location, and lack of documentation proof and develop Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) to make actionable.

12. We are appalled that across the Asia and Pacific Region, all forms of violence against women and girls in all their diversity is rising to epidemic proportions. It is now time for urgent action. We demand States do better and act urgently to:

- Take immediate steps to end all laws that discriminate against women, including the urgent need to reform family laws and citizenship rights by recognising women's equal status in marriage and family and to improve their access to justice;
- Ensure all appropriate measures be taken to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women and those in the institutions with a view to eliminating prejudices, stigma, stereotypes and social norms and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of inferiority or superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women;
- Undertake urgent action to address the rising violence that is occurring in multiple ways across the life-course and call on member states to strengthen institutions of accountability whether in the public or private spheres; State as well as private actors must be held accountable;
- Broaden the definition of gender-based violence to include violence against women and people with diverse sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions and sex characteristics;

- Take immediate steps to promote women and girls in all their diversity in family laws and practices in compliance with international conventions on human rights, and to respect, protect and realize rights of women and girls in all their diversity to equality in the family across all types of family law, including those based on religious and customary legal standards, cognizant of recent findings connecting discriminatory family laws to lower levels of women, girls in all their diversity, labor force participation and economic empowerment, which impedes overall progress in implementing the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action;
- Promote equality and non-discrimination in the family, by reforming discriminatory family laws that includes access to inheritance, guardianship, rights pertaining to custody and adoption, dissolution of legally recognized relationships as well as the dissolution of marriage and recognizing the diversity of families, is crucial for achieving the BPF, the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda. Ensure gender-responsive budgetary allocation;
- Work with various forms of media, including social media to implement initiatives to change negative attitude and practice towards women and broadcast positive image of women for social awareness rising to change patriarchal mindset of people both men and women.

13. We recognise there is a need for greater investment made on gender disaggregated data for monitoring and strengthening policies and programmes addressing gender equality. We call upon States for:

- Collection and dissemination of high quality reliable data that is not only disaggregated by sex and gender, but also by axes of marginalizations that reflect the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination we experience in our lives and which must be monitored below the household level.

CONCLUSION

This Declaration demands States strengthen their accountability to existing commitments to advance women's rights and gender equality under the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and Sustainable Development Goals and targets and use this opportunity to re-focus, prioritize and accelerate actions around the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW and Sustainable Development Goal 5 and other gendered SDG Targets, and to remove structural and systemic barriers faced by women and girls in all their diversity.

The solutions to these crises lie not in States or Corporations, but in unity and solidarity across all levels of our communities. Civil Society actors permeate all levels of society: we are in the streets, the corridors of power, in markets; we are the oil that works the machine. We are deepening our intersectional analysis, creating positive narratives, believing survivors, loving indiscriminately, learning from the lived realities of those around us at a pace, and through media that were not even thought of in 1995.

We have changed the way we organise; we are listening to intergenerational and intersectional experiences of those who are across the movements and willing and able to work with our governments and industries to achieve women's rights and gender equality.

We trust you will take action to incorporate our suggestions into your further deliberations for your country and the Asia Pacific region. Allow us to remind you that you have the authority to represent your governments in negotiations, to expand and make bold steps in translating Beijing commitments into actions; and more fundamentally your authority comes from the social contract where people gave their consent.

We encourage you to be courageous and decide to be accountable to the peoples you represent in Asia and the Pacific and we will stand with you.