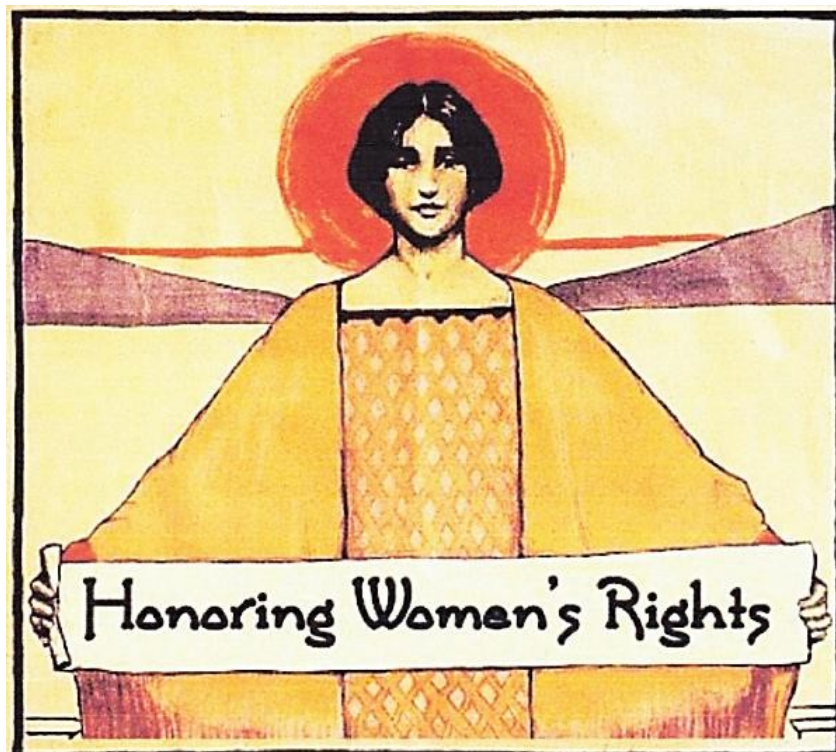


All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

**2017 and Beyond**

# **Guide To WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS**

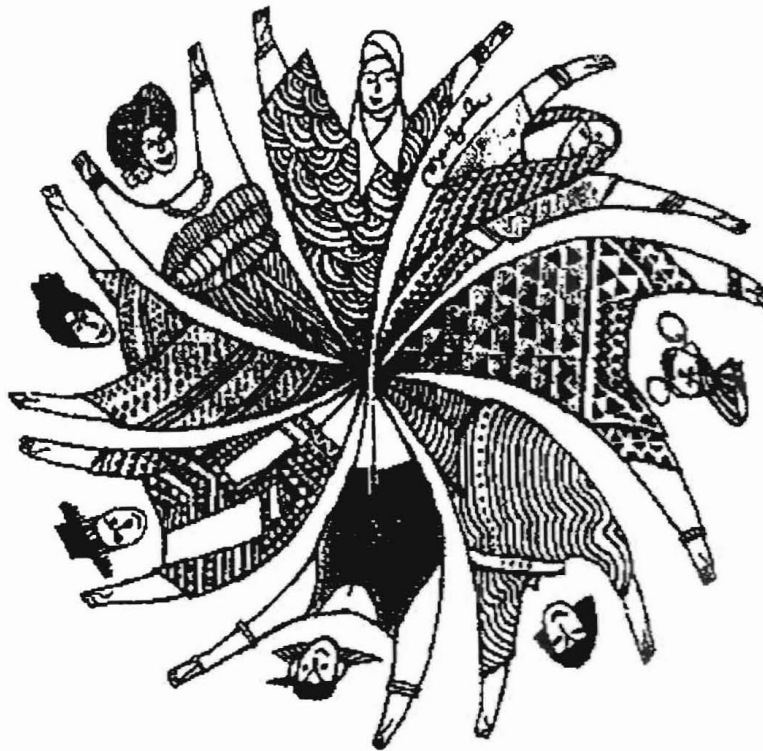
By  
Elizabeth Fisher  
and  
Robert Fisher



All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

## DEDICATED TO ELEANOR ROOSEVELT

For her central role in drafting and adopting the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* by serving as first Chairperson and United States Representative to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights from 1945-1953. *Viva Eleanor!*



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## What's in this Guidebook?

The purpose of this Guide is to present the most important facets of Women's Human Rights based on our years of involvement. Rather than an exhaustive catalog of all aspects of the movement, offered here is a working notebook of the crucial features.

- ❖ Starting off with **The Concept of Human Rights** and the values that are the basis for this worldview, we review the definitions of the rights and freedoms being discussed. A quick description of International Courts, how the Court has described rape as a war crime and a review of UN criticism of the Vatican and the US rounds out this orientation.
- ❖ We next showcase some of the **Guiding Luminaries** that have advocated forcefully and consistently for focusing on human rights protections for women.
- ❖ We immediately jump into **Reproductive Justice** since it is a central issue for women around the world with abortion and birth control being the top target of the war on women.
- ❖ This brings us to exploring the epidemic of **Violence Against Women** in a way that shows the many behaviors that lead to abuse and violence.
- ❖ The section on **Organizing for Women's Rights** surveys some of the leading responses in the world today and how to get involved with them locally.
- ❖ The **Landmark Milestones** gives a sense of the historical achievements that have placed women's human rights so prominently on the world stage.
- ❖ Although it may look like dense reading upon first exposure, the **Core Documents** included in this guidebook reveal the depth and wisdom of these official papers. It's amazing to discover how cavalier Americans are about their international inalienable rights.
- ❖ The **Resources** at the end are chock full of listings designed to give you an idea of the breadth of activities and approaches that are in play today in the struggle to secure human rights for women.

This booklet **aids the newcomer** to become confident with what Women's Human Rights is all about. This can be an exciting discovery that brings empowerment and a will to make a difference. **Experienced advocates will be equipped** with a clear and reliable tool that supports an effective, strategic approach to public education and production of events championing the fair and equitable treatment of women and girls.

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First Universal Human Right



## Authors' Perspective

The contemporary situation for women in the United States and around the world has been receiving considerable attention lately. The worldwide rape culture has produced a range of disastrous outcomes including the abductions of schoolgirls in Africa, targeting of young women on or near college campuses in the United States, and the sexual assault and murder of numerous Indian teen girls. Inequities in job opportunities, unfair compensation for employed women and the reversal of access to reproductive health services in the US and elsewhere abound.

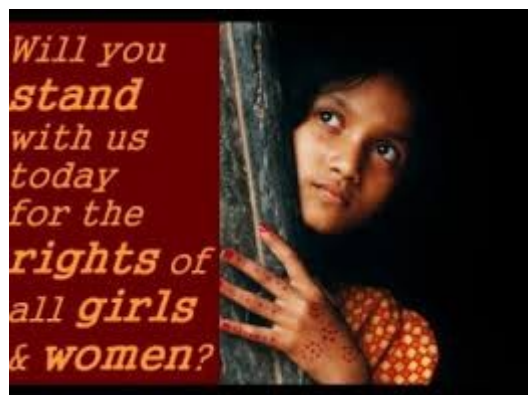


These are just a few of the issues that are the focus of the women's international human rights movement, a passionate effort of concerned professionals and citizen activists for over forty years. This persistent effort to formulate and implement a system for making judgments based on valuing the dignity and worth of each individual is a vital tool for transforming these shameful realities. We

have to honor how far we have come and acknowledge how far we have yet to go. Remember, it wasn't until the 1990s that abuses of women were considered legitimate human rights concerns. (Details are included in [Highlights](#), page 11)

The multifaceted abuse and repression of women and girls has made the need for human rights education all the more acute. But sometimes grasping the philosophy behind legal systems can be intimidating. It need not be.

This booklet is our most recent contribution to this much needed world-citizen education. Included is a brief overview of the essentials and suggestions for varied forms of advocacy—many creative and simple actions you can take, which when combined with those of others become major contributions to shifting global attitudes.



The women's human rights movement is an inspiration in times when despair over the cruelty of so many can be disheartening. In order to make this movement more accessible to a broader audience, we present the historical context and current activities in a clear and straightforward manner. In your hands, this knowledge becomes an effective tool for changing public opinion.

**You are about to gain hope. Hope makes action possible. Action brings Joy.**

My interest in the international human rights movement for women's rights started at an early age, in the 1950s, when I could not ignore the inferior status of girls and women around the world. I was a feisty girl with supportive parents whose values included opposing sexism. I made a commitment then to not allow myself to be discriminated against. Not always easy to do by myself, I found out. This dedication to fair treatment was stimulated by both my involvement with liberal religious philosophy as a teen and my interest in the values and principles from my civics classes where I learned that central to being a loyal American was defending "liberty and justice for all."

I came to realize that so many were left out of the definition of "all": women and African-Americans of both genders to name a few. Because I was proud to be an American citizen, I felt it was my duty to actively challenge inequities. I met a lot of others who felt as passionate about this responsibility as I did. It took some time, though, to discover the power of participating with others around these concerns.



In the 1980s, when I was in my thirties, I became acquainted

with the international women's movement through my friends within the *Unitarian Universalist Women and Religion* movement which I joined. Several key colleagues there, women twenty to thirty years older than I was, were deeply involved in the United Nations international women's conferences that took place in 1975, 1980 and 1985; they enthusiastically reported back about what had taken place in Mexico City, Copenhagen and Nairobi, the locations of the conferences (see page 80).

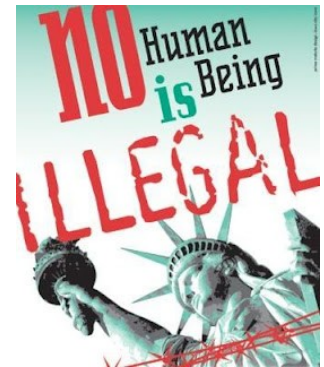
I was encouraged by them to attend the international non-governmental women's rights conference near Beijing in 1995, where a *Plan of Action* was adopted. By that time, hundreds of non-governmental organizations focusing on individual issues related to the cause of women's rights had formed. Ten days of activities organized by these non-governmental organizations were held. Despite controversy both in the US and China about what they disparagingly called the "radical feminist agenda" fifty thousand women made their way to this gathering in the Huairou district of Beijing. Many came after funds were raised by their friends back home. Poor women were sponsored so the event would be truly representative. I decided, despite major uncertainties in my own life that it was important to be there. It changed my life to be among these passionate advocates.



But where are the men? This was a refrain that I first heard in 1993 when viewing a film about the Vienna Human Rights Conference (see pages 48-49). There were indeed men at the Beijing Conference, but unfortunately not all were advocating for women's rights. Traditionalists from Roman Catholicism and conservative Muslim sects were present, pushing their female counterparts to oppose the *Platform*, so it appeared that women opposed their own civil rights. Thankfully, they did not prevail. Feminist Roman Catholics and Muslims were also present, advocating for this international movement for full equality for women.

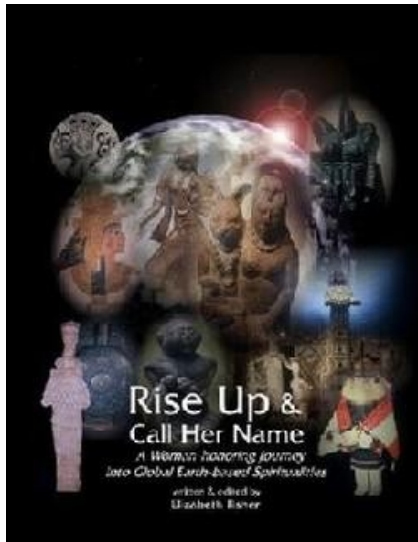
I am grateful that my partner and co-author Bob Fisher, who is largely responsible for the compilation of the material in this booklet, has embodied a lifetime commitment to these issues. He has consistently contributed to ongoing educational and advocacy efforts about human rights generally and has enthusiastically taken up the cause as it applies specifically to unequal treatment of women. Without his support in countless ways I would not have been able to participate at the level that I have. He is a model of partnership and non-sexism. (I have seen this commitment in the actions of other men as well. My father was another advocate for fair treatment of women.) Human rights advocacy calls us to demand participation by men and to acknowledge the work of men when they do speak up. Since 1993 men at every level of society have been acting on behalf of women but the numbers need to increase. Education is one tool to make this happen.

Our formal participation in human rights education started when we were active in the Sanctuary Movement of the 1980s. This movement focused on advocating for those seeking political asylum from El Salvador during the wars that raged there for many years. Currently, the Sanctuary Movement has been rekindled because of immigration policies which are destroying families. The deportation of thousands of Central Americans in the 1980s is now seen as largely responsible for the fleeing from violence of children from Central American countries today.



We then became the Co-Regional Volunteer Coordinators for Northern California for the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) for several years in the 1980s. At that time the UUSC regularly sponsored fact-finding trips for Congressional representatives to Central America and other key world hotspots. Many of these elected officials returned to advocate for human rights based on what they have learned during these trips. By including education about international human rights in presentations and publications, we joined the effort to make available a new context for legal reform throughout the world. Many people who were concerned about unfair treatment of other human beings had no idea this perspective was so well developed.

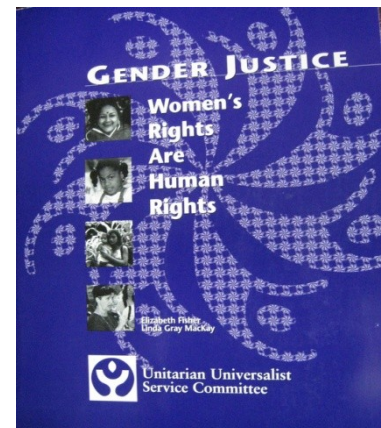




From 1989 to 1995 we spent most of our activist efforts developing the curriculum *Rise Up & Call Her Name: A Woman-honoring Journey into Earth-based Spiritualities*, first published in 1995 and reissued in 2007 in up-to-date technological formats while retaining the original material. This course, which I authored, presents material about the female divine in her many guises around the world and throughout time. We are reminded She can be outraged at injustices as much as She can understand and forgive. The course is also about **social justice and advocating for full human rights for women**. It has been observed often that if the gender of “God” were not exclusively male, the treatment and

status of women would be positively impacted, both within religious organizations and in civil societies which are profoundly impacted by religious beliefs. (Of course this issue is complicated. Attitudes and actions toward women in India, despite the presence of female divinities in religions prevalent there, are often pointed to as examples contradicting this assumption. I learned from my conversations with Indian women at the Conference and later that this is a complex issue. They reminded me that women do participate extensively in the democratic institutions of India and many women there are inspired to do so by the non-misogynist interpretations of Indian religious traditions. Indian women currently are at the forefront of the anti-rape movement in their country. Many are practicing Hindus and feminists.)

Following the Conference, I co-authored a curriculum entitled *Gender Justice: Women's Rights are Human Rights*, published by the UUSC. This participatory educational series, which was published in 1996, utilizes the *Platform for Action* as its framework. This program highlights the many activities around the world designed for maximum input into the final *Platform*. Even though much has happened in the last twenty-years, this program is still all-too-relevant. The core issues are just as pressing today as they were then. (This curriculum is still available; see resource section, page 83.)





PSR Shields for Beijing Workshop

As a part of post conference follow-through I made presentations at a number of locations and became involved in the Women and Religion Center at the Pacific School of Religion (PSR) where I taught *Gender Justice* and *Rise Up*. A group formed, which I facilitated, to explore the interplay of religious perspectives and advocating for women's fair treatment in religious organizations and societies around the globe. This topic was the focus of numerous

presentations at the non-governmental conference. Today, religion continues to be a crucial area in which women's rights need to be defended due to resistance by entrenched leadership in major world religions who defend male bias despite its clear violation of the principles and standards of Universal Human Rights. (I applaud the Anglican Church of England in voting at their General Synod to allow women bishops.)

In June 1996, I also facilitated the process used to gather input at a major participatory brainstorming conference of the California Women's Agenda (CAWA), a network of over 400 participating women's groups in California, organized around the priorities of the *Beijing Platform for Action*.



As part of this experience and on-going efforts to advocate for the *Beijing Platform*, I met with selected human rights professionals, organizational development psychologists, human rights attorneys, professors, educators, and religious leaders. Many of these women were working on the detailed development of documents, positions papers and formal presentations before the UN and other policy making bodies. What interested me the most was the overwhelming sentiment they expressed: that **without a grassroots movement of concerned citizens, the most carefully crafted human rights positions and arguments would not carry much weight in the governance of countries. With a grassroots movement, progress on these issues was inevitable.**

Over the last two decades Bob and I have participated in numerous public events advocating for women's human rights as concerned members of the public, not satisfied to leave these matters to the work of professionals alone. In 2008 on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the UDHR we published a version of this guidebook and circulated it widely. For the last two years we participated in the *One Billion Rising* worldwide dancing initiated by Eve Ensler to end Violence Against Women (not everyone has to dance...but just being there and viewing the many beautiful videos of actions around the world has been inspiring (see pages 35-37).



Here are a couple of current on-going efforts that are easy to support. [#Beijing20](#) a global campaign initiated in May-June 2014 asks each of us to imagine a world where gender equality and women's power is a reality and play our part to make it happen (see page 38). By sharing our visions we connect with others and keep the public presence alive.

On June 24, 2014 the **United States Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on International Operations and Organizations, Human Rights, Democracy, and Global Women's Issues** held a hearing on how the US and the international community can work to prevent violence against women, promote women's rights, and empower women and girls globally; and demanding that the US take action to ratify the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Details on both of these initiatives are included in this guidebook (See page 53). **Support these elected officials** as they continue to keep the issues before the Senate and the nation by sending encouraging e-mails and letters to their offices.

Other inspiring campaigns include:

- putting an end to international human trafficking of women and girls;
- eliminating the practice of Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) through education;
- appreciating the value of unwaged work often performed by women as a vital part of all nations' economies; offering ways to quantify it.

These are just a few of the on-going actions of grassroots women who contribute to the efforts on behalf of international human rights for women.

The year 2013 saw many milestones. The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women has been establishing many program goals. Their latest action is adoption of the Agreed Conclusions (see pages 41-42).

It is our hope that you will enjoy reviewing these documents and among the ideas for actions included here you will find something that is both satisfying and enriches your own community; or invent your own. This way we will build bonds and engaging minds and hearts in the on-going efforts for women's human rights.

**Elizabeth Fisher, 2017**

## Highlights

**Thanks for taking time to familiarize yourself with this important worldwide effort to establish Women's Human Rights. We hope you let others know about it in the populist educational tradition of "pass it on."**

This booklet reviews the *Universal Declaration*, gives you a synopsis of the concept of human rights and why they are important to all people, and especially those concerned with women's welfare.

December 10, 2017 marks the **69<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**. The UN Commission on Women always takes important steps to commit to specific areas related to Women's Human Rights. 2015 was the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action on Women's Human Rights.

### Eleanor Roosevelt and the forming of the Declaration

Working tirelessly using her well-honed diplomatic capabilities, Eleanor Roosevelt (often known at the time as ER) as chair of the committee drafting the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was able to bring this document to adoption on December 10, 1948. ER was adamant about including women in the document and was well known for her advocacy for civil rights in the United States for all citizens at a time when racial discrimination was the law.

### Women's Rights are Human Rights gains momentum

The slogan ***Women's Rights are Human Rights*** is an important development and has been carried forward by those concerned about women's welfare. Over the last forty plus years there has been an **active global women's rights movement** which has been aided by four UN world conferences on the rights of women held from 1975 through 1995, culminating in the Twelve Critical Areas of Concern and the ***Platform for Action*** (page 61) that clearly articulates *women's rights as human rights*.

The *Universal Declaration* (page 54) specifically details and defines human rights. However, until 1993 human rights groups did not focus on violations of women's human rights because what happens to women was considered to take place largely in the home or the private sector and therefore outside of human rights considerations.

**Violations of women's human rights were often justified in the name of culture or religion.** Thus, when human rights were considered, violations of women's human rights were historically invisible. Rights for women were not included in the mainstream human rights movement until the 1990s.

### Reproductive Justice

It is a violation of HUMAN RIGHTS when women are denied the right to plan their own families. Comprehensive sex education in public schools, access to birth control and safe, legal abortions are the practical applications of this right (pages 26-29).

## Violence Against Women

One of the most pressing concerns of the international women's movement is Violence Against Women in its many manifestations. The root causes are explored and examples of verbal abuse are given. The importance of public dance events such as **One Billion Rising** is reviewed; and, how celebrating International Women's Day (March 8<sup>th</sup>) and Human Rights Day (December 10<sup>th</sup>) can lead to more understanding and awareness.

## Universal Declaration of Human Rights — 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

The year 2013 coincides with the 20th anniversary of the Vienna Declaration and Program of Action, which was adopted at the 1993 World Conference on Human Rights and created the position of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The vision of the *Declaration* reinforces the commitment to universal dignity and justice and is not something that should be viewed as a luxury or a wish-list. As a result of the Vienna Conference and the recognition of Violence against Women as a key human rights issue, in December 1993 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a landmark resolution on gender violence called ***The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*** (page 33).

## UN Commission on the Status of Women

The Agreed Conclusions (pages 63-79) adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women in March 2013 is a major breakthrough. It has taken ten years to reach this agreement. The result is due not only to marvelous work of the negotiators but also to the persistence and advice of the more than 600 NGOs, and the real partnerships forged between them and some governments. This booklet contains the most important elements of the campaign to include women's rights in the policy of nations

## Commission's Multi-year Program of Work

The Commission on the Status of Women elaborated a multi-year program of work for the first time in 1987. In 1996, following the adoption of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, a multi-year program of work was adopted for the period 1997-2000. Subsequent work programs were adopted, most recently in 2009.

Priority themes on the Commission's agenda for the period 2010-2014 are:

- 2010 - Review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcomes of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and its contribution to shaping a gender perspective towards the full realization of the Millennium Development Goals
- 2011 - Access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and technology, including the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work
- 2012 - The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges
- 2013 - Elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls
- 2014 - Challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls



# I. The Concept of Human Rights

## UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

### The Declaration, a vision of what the world *should* be

Although the *Declaration*, which comprises a broad range of rights, is not a legally binding document, it has inspired more than 60 human rights instruments which together constitute an international standard of human rights. These instruments include the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* and the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, both of which are legally binding treaties. Together with the Universal Declaration, they constitute the **International Bill of Rights**.

The **Declaration** recognizes that the “inherent dignity of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world” and is linked to the recognition of fundamental rights towards which every human being aspires, namely

- ✚ the right to life, liberty and security of person
- ✚ the right to an adequate standard of living
- ✚ the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution
- ✚ the right to own property
- ✚ the right to freedom of opinion and expression
- ✚ the right to education, freedom of thought, conscience and religion
- ✚ the right to freedom from torture and degrading treatment

These are inherent rights to be enjoyed by all human beings of the global village – men, women and children, as well as by any group of society, disadvantaged or not – and not “gifts” to be withdrawn, withheld or granted at someone’s whim or will.



### Human rights have been defined as:

- An international **ethical vision** of principles to live by
- A **value system** that promotes the dignity and worth of all human beings
- The **universal rights** of all regardless of class, sex or ethnic background by virtue of one’s humanity

The *UDHR* includes President Franklin Roosevelt's Four Freedoms, articulated in the 1941 State of the Union address, that people "everywhere in the world" ought to enjoy:

1. Freedom of speech
2. Freedom of worship
3. Freedom from want
4. Freedom from fear



All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

19. Freedom of opinion and expression and to seek, receive and impart information.
20. Freedom of association and assembly.
21. Right to take part in and select government.
22. Right to social security and realization of economic, social and cultural rights.
23. Right to work, to equal pay for equal work and to form and join trade unions.
24. Right to reasonable hours of work and paid holidays.
25. Right to adequate living standard for self and family, including food, housing, clothing, medical care and social security.
26. Right to education.
27. Right to participate in cultural life and to protect intellectual property rights.
28. Right to social and international order permitting these freedoms to be realized.
29. Each person has responsibilities to the community and others which are essential to a democratic society.
30. Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

**Project Revision** is a movement to revise the Universal Declaration of Human Rights so only gender inclusive language is used. Currently it contains words like "mankind," "brotherhood," "he," "his," and "himself" over 25 times and does not fairly include women in its verbiage. This is a petition of hope designed to inspire the good people of the United Nations to update the Universal declaration of human rights. The petition reads: "we know that women's rights are human rights and the undersigned believe it is time for men and women to be included in humankind instead of limited by mankind."

**If you are in support of a revision that includes gender inclusive language, please sign this petition. This petition will be presented to the United Nations at the 59th Commission on the Status of Women in 2015.**

**Go to [www.AVAAZ.org](http://www.AVAAZ.org) Community Petitions.**

**For the full text of the Declaration see Page 54.**

## International Human Rights Law

International human rights law connects the rule of law with morality that both protects individual freedom and builds egalitarian communities at the global level. Even though International Laws are not legally binding in themselves on countries that refuse to abide by them, because of these laws human rights violations are no longer simply ignored. Publicly noting violations sometimes leads to policy change even in non-cooperative countries. **International human rights law also contains the legal basis for significant protections for women.** Making people aware of the existence of human rights laws builds support for women's rights. All countries and citizens worldwide benefit from respect for human rights because:

- ▣ ethical, moral and spiritual implications are highlighted
- ▣ issues of how to achieve peace rather than wage war are the focus
- ▣ global interconnectedness is a central tenant

## The International Court of Justice

The **International Court of Justice** (known colloquially as the **World Court** or **ICJ**) is the primary judicial branch of the United Nations, based in the Peace Palace in The Hague, Netherlands was established in 1945 by the UN Charter.

The World Court's workload is characterized by a wide range of judicial activity. Its main functions are to settle legal disputes submitted to it by member states and to give advisory opinions on legal questions submitted to it by duly authorized international organs, agencies and the UN General Assembly. The ICJ has dealt with relatively few cases in its history, but there has clearly been an increased willingness to use the Court since the 1980s, especially among developing countries.

After the court ruled that the U.S.'s covert war against Nicaragua was in violation of international law, the United States withdrew from compulsory jurisdiction in 1986. The United States accepts the court's jurisdiction only on a case-by-case basis. The UN Security Council enforces World Court rulings. However, such enforcement is subject to the veto power of the five permanent members of the Council, which the United States used in the *Nicaragua* case.

## The International Criminal Court

The **International Criminal Court (ICC)** was established in 2002 as a permanent tribunal to prosecute individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. As of May 2013, 122 states are parties to the Statute of the Court, including all of South America, nearly all of Europe, most of Oceania and roughly half the countries in Africa. A further 31 countries, including Russia, have signed but not ratified the *Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court*, established in 1998 as the first treaty-based permanent international criminal court. However, a number of states, including Israel, China, India and the United States, are critical of the Court and see no legal obligation to participate. Currently, the Prosecutor of the Court has opened investigations into eight violent situations in Africa, and ICC cases have begun in seven of them.

## For First Time, Court Defines Rape as War Crime

*By Marlise Simons, New York Times, Published: June 28, 1996*

THE HAGUE, Netherlands – A United Nations tribunal announced Thursday the indictment of eight Bosnian Serb military and police officers in connection with rapes of Muslim women in the Bosnian war, marking the first time sexual assault has been treated separately as a crime of war. The indictments were announced by the International Criminal Tribunal in The Hague after almost two years of investigations.

Court officials said that although rape charges had been included in other cases, this indictment gave organized rape and other sexual offenses their due place in international law as crimes against humanity.

“This is a landmark indictment because it focuses exclusively on sexual assaults, without including any other charges,” said Christian Chartier, a spokesman for the court. “There is no precedent for this. It is of major legal significance because it illustrates the court’s strategy to focus on gender-related crimes and give them their proper place in the prosecution of war crimes.”

Experts said that while previous postwar courts have heard evidence of rape, they have treated it as secondary, tolerated as part of soldiers’ abusive behavior.

The Military Tribunal in Nuremberg, which judged Nazi crimes after World War II, made no reference to rape in its charter. At a Tokyo war crimes court after World War II, some Japanese officials were convicted of failing to prevent rape.

But evidence of the magnitude of rape in Bosnia was so shocking that it persuaded the tribunal’s chief prosecutor, Justice Richard Goldstone, and others to confront the issue.

“Rape has never been the concern of the international community,” Justice Goldstone said in an interview in an early stage of the investigations. “We have to deal openly with these abuses.”

According to investigators of the European Union and Amnesty International, rape was often used in Bosnia as a strategy to terrorize people. They said that all three parties to the conflict, including Muslims and Croats, had committed sexual abuses, but that Bosnian Serbs had been the main perpetrators. The European investigators calculated that in 1992, 20,000 Muslim women and girls were raped by Serbs.

**NOTE: Rape as an instrument of war continues to be a main focus of human rights activists. At an international summit in London in June 2014, Angelina Jolie appealed for a change in attitude on sexual violence in conflict "We must send a message around the world that there is no disgrace in being a survivor of sexual violence, that the shame is on the aggressor," she said, to cheers from the audience. Billed as the largest gathering on the subject ever, diplomats, officials and NGO representatives from more than 100 countries gathered to press for the rights of victims — women, men and children alike. British Foreign Secretary William Hague compared sexual violence in war zones to slavery as an injustice that demands action. "As was said with slavery in the 18th century, now we know the facts, we cannot turn aside," he said.**

**(See page 32, Sexual Conflict in Combat Zones, Resolution 1820, by the U.N. Security Council.)**



## United Nation Human Rights Reports on the Abuses of the Vatican and the United States

**May 23, 2014, New York, Geneva** – Today, the United Nations Committee Against Torture found that the widespread sexual violence within the Roman Catholic Church amounted to torture and cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment prohibited by the United Nations Convention Against Torture. The committee issued concluding observations following its questioning of Vatican representatives, earlier in May, regarding the Vatican's record on preventing, punishing and redressing torture.

The committee expressed deep concerns regarding church policies and practices such as moving priests, rather than reporting them to civil authorities for investigation and prosecution, failing to properly monitor known perpetrators, refusing to cooperate with national authorities, and lack of accountability for bishops and cardinals who have participated in cover-ups and enabled the crimes, and failure to pay adequate compensation to victims.

**February 5, 2014, Vatican City (AP)** — The Vatican "systematically" adopted policies that allowed priests to rape and molest tens of thousands of children over decades, a U.N. Human Rights Committee said Wednesday, urging the Holy See to open its files on pedophiles and bishops who concealed their crimes.

The committee issued its recommendations after subjecting the Holy See to a daylong interrogation last month on its implementation of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, the key U.N. treaty on child protection, which the Holy See ratified in 1990.

In a devastating report hailed by abuse victims (see entry on *SNAP* on page 84), the U.N. committee severely criticized the Holy See for its attitudes toward homosexuality, contraception and abortion and said it should change its own canon law to ensure women and children's rights and their access to health care are guaranteed.

In its report, the committee blasted the "code of silence" that has long been used to keep victims quiet, saying the Holy See had "systematically placed preservation of the reputation of the Church and the alleged offender over the protection of child victims." It called on the Holy See to provide compensation to victims and hold accountable not just the abusers, but also those who covered up their crimes.

### **March 28, 2014, U.N. Committee Criticizes U.S. Record on Human Rights**

The U.N. Human Rights Committee has issued a wide-ranging report severely criticizing the human rights record of the United States. The report assessed U.S. compliance with a key human rights treaty and found it lacking in more than two dozen areas. Issues of concern included the administration's drone program, National Security Agency spying, the death penalty, misuse of solitary confinement, detention of homeless people and immigrants, life sentences imposed on juveniles, racial profiling and police brutality. The committee called for closing Guantánamo, releasing the Senate Intelligence Committee report on the George W. Bush administration's torture and rendition program, and prosecuting those involved in torturing prisoners.

All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

## II. Guiding Luminaries

### “First Lady of the World” Eleanor Roosevelt and Human Rights

October 11, 1884 – November 7, 1962

Born New York City; Her Uncle was President Theodore Roosevelt  
Buried near President Franklin D. Roosevelt at Hyde Park, NY home

**Eleanor Roosevelt** was a very important influence in the world for Women’s Rights, Civil Rights, and Human Rights. President Truman called her the “First Lady of the World” in tribute to her human rights achievements. She was one of the most admired persons of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



“Texting” — ER style

*Eleanor Roosevelt with the Spanish text of the Universal Declaration in 1949. The UDHR was framed by members of the Human Rights Commission, with Eleanor Roosevelt as Chair, who began to discuss an International Bill of Rights in 1946, and signed the Universal Declaration on December 10, 1948.*

### Eleanor Roosevelt (ER) and the UDHR

The life of Eleanor Roosevelt is a fascinating saga that reflects many of the challenges of the modern age. She has been celebrated for the courage she showed and the values she was motivated by. One of her most outstanding achievements came after she left the White House as first lady and was appointed by President Truman in 1946 as a delegate to the U.N. General Assembly where she was elected chair of the United Nation’s Human Rights Commission. She led the Commission for two years, culminating in the approval by the U.N. General Assembly of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* on December 10, 1948.

ER was especially moved by the plight of the millions of displaced people who were wandering around Europe homeless and starving after World War II. At that time in Britain survivors were coming from the mainland in large numbers. They had nowhere

to go because if the survivors were sent back to their countries of origin they would often face imprisonment or even execution. Children were especially vulnerable. The story of Eleanor's role in the development and signing of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* is an exciting one. The outcome is legendary. She did such a good job of diplomacy when setting up the initial committee to consider human rights worldwide that she was elected to Chair the Committee drafting the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Because the concept was not understood widely, ER felt it was imperative to precisely define what human rights and freedoms were. She worked tirelessly to achieve precision and clarity in this enduring document.

ER was able, as the chair of this Committee that drafted the *Declaration* to orchestrate major changes in language to make it more inclusive. One striking example: in the final version "human beings" was substituted for "men" in Article 1 to insure the inclusion of women in the definition of those who should have their rights assured. The document also condemns sexual discrimination explicitly.

After seemingly endless negotiations and near collapse, the declaration was adopted with 48 countries in favor and the Soviet Union and the Eastern Block abstaining. This allowed the document to become the official policy position of the United Nations and the basis for the body of human rights laws and conventions which have been crafted over the last 65 years and adopted as guiding principles by the vast majority of countries.

When the *Declaration* was adopted, Eleanor received a standing ovation from all the delegates for her outstanding diplomatic triumph. It was a proud moment for women and for those who were oppressed worldwide as well because ER was well known for her staunch advocacy for equal rights for all peoples.

Civil society globally espouses tremendous support for the ***Declaration's*** core ethics. Most people in this world today want to have peace and respect for each other's' rights.

## Memorable ER quotes

- ❖ What must be done can be done.
- ❖ You gain strength, courage and confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing which you think you cannot do.
- ❖ *Just two years before her death she wrote:* Perhaps the most important thing that has come out of my life is the discovery that if you prepare yourself at every point as well as you can, with whatever means you may have, however meager they may seem, you will be able to grasp opportunity for broader experience when it appears...Life was meant to be lived, and curiosity must be kept alive. One must never, for whatever reason, turn their back on life.

~Hyde Park, December 1960

All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.



Cartoonist Herbert Block (Herblock) contributed this drawing to the AAUN in celebration of Mrs. Roosevelt's 70th birthday.

### **Treasured ER Material**

***Women Who Dare: Eleanor Roosevelt*** by Anjelina Michelle Keating, © 2006. The Women Who Dare series is published by Pomegranate Communications (San Francisco) in association with the Library of Congress (Washington, DC).

### ***Eleanor — First Lady of the World***

DVD released in 2011 of the 1982 made-for-TV production. Color, 98 minutes. Starring Jean Stapleton. Top quality drama covers the years 1946-1948 of Eleanor's efforts to pass the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* in Paris, France.

***The American Experience: Eleanor Roosevelt***. Excellent PBS movie and terrific website on the life and times of ER. [www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eleanor](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/eleanor)

***The Moral Basis of Democracy by Eleanor Roosevelt***. Written in 1940, this book is a great introduction to the history of Democracy and carries the seeds of ER's future work on behalf of Universal Human Rights. May be in libraries; a few used copies available on-line.

## Women's Rights Are Human Rights By Hillary Rodham Clinton

Excerpted from a speech given by then First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton at the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, China, 1995

*For a full transcription and online video of her 1995 speech in Beijing, China, visit <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/hillaryclintonbeijingspeech.htm>*



It is time for us to say here in Beijing, and the world to hear, that it is no longer acceptable to discuss women's rights as separate from human rights...If there is one message that echoes forth from this conference, let it be that human rights are women's rights and women's rights are human rights once and for all.

These abuses have continued because, for too long, the history of women has been a history of silence. Even today, there are those who are trying to silence our words. The voices of this conference and of the women at Huairou\* must be heard loud and clear.

*\*Note: the parallel NGO Forum was held in Huairou, China.*

It is a violation of HUMAN rights when babies are denied food, or drowned or suffocated, or their spines broken, simply because they are born girls.

It is a violation of HUMAN rights when women and girls are sold into the slavery of prostitution.

It is a violation of HUMAN rights when women are doused with gasoline, set on fire and burned to death because their marriage dowries are deemed too small.

It is a violation of HUMAN rights when individual women are raped in their own communities and when thousands of women are subjected to rape as a tactic or prize of war.

It is a violation of HUMAN rights when a leading cause of death world-wide among women age 14 to 44 is the violence they are subjected to in their own homes.

It is a violation of HUMAN rights when girls are brutalized by the painful and degrading practice of genital mutilation.

It is a violation of HUMAN rights when women are denied the right to plan their own families, and that includes being forced to have an abortion or being sterilized against their will.



## Jimmy Carter — A Call To Action

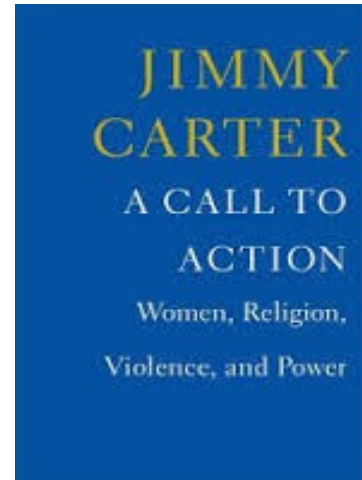
“The world’s discrimination and violence against women and girls is the most serious, pervasive, and ignored violation of basic human rights.” ~Jimmy Carter

[www.cartercenter.org](http://www.cartercenter.org)

Jimmy Carter’s recently published book **A CALL TO ACTION: Women, Religion, Violence, and Power** (2014) fully addresses the suffering of women under religious and political inequity.

From the book jacket:

Carter draws upon his own experiences and the testimony of courageous women from all regions and all major religions to demonstrate that women around the world, more than half of all human beings, are being denied equal rights. This is an informed and passionate charge about a devastating effect on economic prosperity and unconscionable human suffering. It affects us all.



President Carter was encouraged to write this book by a wide coalition of leaders of all faiths. His urgent report covers a system of discrimination that extends to every nation. Women are deprived of equal opportunity in wealthier nations and “owned” by men in others, forced to suffer servitude, child marriage, and genital cutting. The most vulnerable, along with their children, are trapped in war and violence. He and his wife Roslyn have visited 145 countries. Around the world they have seen inequity rising rapidly with each passing decade. This is true in both rich and poor countries.

He proposes 23 actions we can be involved with and support to fight discrimination of women and girls:

1. Encourage women and girls, including those not abused, to speak out more forcefully. It is imperative that those who do speak out are protected from retaliation.
2. Remind political and religious leaders of the abuses and what they can do to alleviate them.
3. Encourage these same leaders to become supporters of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other UN agencies that advance human rights and peace.
4. Encourage religious and political leaders to relegate warfare and violence to a last resort as a solution to terrorism and national security challenges.

5. Abandon the death penalty and seek to rehabilitate criminals instead of relying on excessive incarceration, especially for non-violent offenders.
6. Marshal the efforts of women officeholders and first ladies, and encourage involvement of prominent women in correcting abuses.
7. Induce individual nations to elevate the end of human trafficking to a top priority, as they did to end slavery in the nineteenth century.
8. Help remove commanding officers from control over cases of sexual abuse in the military so that professional prosecutors can take action.
9. Apply Title IX protection for women students and evolve laws and procedures to all nations to reduce the plague of sexual abuse on university campuses.
10. Include women's rights specifically in new UN Millennium Development Goals.
11. Expose and condemn infanticide of baby girls and selective abortion of female fetuses.
12. Explore alternatives to battered women's shelters, such as installing GPS locators on male abusers, and make police reports of spousal abuse mandatory.
13. Strengthen UN and other legal impediments to ending genital mutilation, child marriage, trafficking, and other abuses of girls and women.
14. Increase training of midwives and other health workers to provide care at birth.
15. Help scholars working to clarify religious beliefs on protecting women's rights and nonviolence, and give activists and practitioners access to such training resources.
16. Insist that the U.S. Senate ratify the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).
17. Insist that the United States adopt the International Violence Against Women Act.
18. Encourage more qualified women to seek public office, and support them.
19. Recruit influential men to assist in gaining equal rights for women.
20. Adopt the Swedish model by prosecuting pimps, brothel owners, and male customers, not the prostitutes.
21. Publicize and implement UN Security Resolution 1325, which encourages the participation of women in peace efforts.
22. Publicize and implement UN Security Resolution 1820, which condemns the use of sexual violence as a tool of war.
23. Condemn and outlaw honor killings.

*All of us – men and women, soldiers and peacekeepers,  
citizens and leaders – have a responsibility to help  
end violence against women*

~ UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

## High Commissioner for Human Rights Sergio Vieira de Mello on the occasion of International Women's Day, March 8, 2003:

Today we celebrate the strength and power of women worldwide. Today we celebrate their achievements and reflect on how all women everywhere enjoy all their human rights.

Women's rights are human rights. For this rhetoric to be more than just that – rhetoric – we must redouble our efforts to confront the negative stereotypes and prejudice women face. We must strive for universal ratification and implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which, with the ratification of Afghanistan, is now accepted by 171 countries.

We must continue to take strong measures against that global pandemic, violence against women. We must ensure that every girl and every woman enjoys the right to education, the right to equal participation, access to information, the media and modern communication technologies. This is what empowerment is about – ensuring that women can fulfill their potential to contribute and enjoy their right to public and private life.

I have learned from my experiences in societies ravaged by conflict that women are frequently the peacemakers. I have seen women encourage restraint, reason, reconciliation, stability and participation. Women have a right to full and equal participation. Without it, there will be no durable peace after conflict, and no sustainable development.

Let us give this symbolic date of March 8<sup>th</sup> some real substance and recommit ourselves to striving for the day when all women enjoy all their human rights. The inherent dignity and equality of women require it. Our future demands it.

**Sérgio Vieira de Mello** (March 15, 1948 – August 19, 2003) was a Brazilian United Nations (UN) diplomat who worked for the UN for more than 34 years, earning respect and praise around the world for his efforts in the humanitarian and political programs of the UN. He was killed in the Canal Hotel Bombing in Iraq along with 21 other members of his staff on August 19, 2003 while working as the Secretary-General's Special Representative in Iraq.

Before becoming the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in 2002, he was the UN Transitional Administrator in East Timor from December 1999 to May 2002, guiding that former Portuguese colony occupied by Indonesia to independence. He was also special representative in Kosovo for an initial period of two months and was the coordinator of humanitarian operations at UN headquarters.

See the film, **Sergio**, based on Irish-born, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Power's book "Chasing the Flame", depicting the life of the late Sergio Vieira de Mello. [www.sergiothemovie.com](http://www.sergiothemovie.com)

### III. Reproductive Justice

The concept of family varies widely around the globe. For this reason, it is important to apply individual rights equally, giving a woman the inherent right to control the reproductive aspect of her body. Linking all human sexual expression to the possibility of impregnation and forced parenthood, which is the obvious outcome of denying birth control and safe abortion to any individual, is a violation of that individual's basic human rights.

#### Convention on the Rights of the Child

The Convention on the Rights of the Child is the first legally binding international instrument to incorporate the full range of human rights—civil, cultural, economic, political and social rights. In 1989, world leaders decided that children needed a special convention just for them because people under 18 years old often need special care and protection that adults do not. The leaders also wanted to make sure that the world recognized that children have human rights too. We reference the “rights of the child” here because prospective parents are obliged to consider the full responsibility they bear in having children. These basic standards are not insignificant and are part of a family planning decision.

**Children have rights  
as human beings and  
also need special  
care and protection.**

UNICEF's mission is to advocate for the protection of children's rights, to help meet their basic needs and to expand their opportunities to reach their full potential. UNICEF is guided in doing this by the provisions and principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. [www.unicef.org/crc/](http://www.unicef.org/crc/)

#### Right to Comprehensive Sex Education in Public Schools

There is broad public and parental support for providing comprehensive sexuality education in public schools, and broad opposition to ideology-driven abstinence-only curriculums that have proven ineffective. However, the teacher training and funding of such programs is inadequate. The Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ have long been supporters of comprehensive sex education in public schools. Together they developed and offer outstanding lifespan sexuality education curricula entitled *Our Whole Lives*, with specially prepared material for students of varied age groups. Visit: <http://www.uua.org/religiouseducation/curricula/ourwhole/>

*“Sexuality education is a religious issue. We have a commitment to helping young people develop a moral conscience, including an ability to make healthy decisions. We have a religious commitment to truth telling, which means that people should have full and accurate information, not biased and censored.”*

~Rev. Debra Haffner, cofounder and director of the Religious Institute on Sexual Morality, Justice, and Healing, based in Westport, Conn., and consultant on the development of *Our Whole Lives*.

## Right to Contraception

In order to plan a family, a woman has a human right to full and accurate information about the full range of birth control. To deny this information and aid to girls and women who are able to bear children is a flagrant violation of women's human rights. This has been recognized since the days of the work of **Margaret Sanger**, the famous advocate of availability of birth control to all people, and is still relevant today.

*Published: April 5, 2013*

## Judge Orders Morning-After Pill Available for All Ages

*By Pam Belluck, New York Times*

A federal judge has ruled that the government must make the most common morning-after pill available over the counter for all ages, instead of requiring a prescription for girls 16 and younger.

The decision, on a fraught and politically controversial subject, comes after a decade-long fight over who should have access to the pill and under what circumstances. And it counteracts an unprecedented move by the Obama administration's Health and Human Services secretary, Kathleen Sebelius, who in 2011 overruled a recommendation by the Food and Drug Administration to make the pill available for all ages without a prescription.

In a decision in a lawsuit filed by advocates, the judge, Edward R. Korman of Federal District Court, ruled that the government's refusal to lift restrictions on access to the pill was "arbitrary, capricious, and unreasonable." Judge Korman ordered the F.D.A. to lift any age and sale restrictions on the pill, Plan B One-Step, and its generic versions, within 30 days.

The judge accused the federal government of "bad faith" in dealing with the requests to make the pill universally available. "More than 12 years have passed since the citizen petition was filed and 8 years since this lawsuit commenced," the judge wrote. "The F.D.A. has engaged in intolerable delays in processing the petition. Indeed, it could accurately be described as an administrative agency filibuster."

Scientists, including those at the F.D.A., have been recommending unrestricted access for years, as have major medical groups, including the American Medical Association, the American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and the American Academy of Pediatrics. In 2011, the F.D.A. commissioner, Dr. Margaret A. Hamburg, issued a statement saying that after rigorous study the agency concluded it was safe to sell Plan B One-Step over the counter. But she was overruled by Ms. Sebelius, the Health and Human Services secretary, the first time such a public countermanding had ever occurred.



## International Family Planning

The compliance with Universal Human Rights and with the need for less unwanted pregnancies demands that everything possible is done to insure the widespread distribution of information about effective birth control. This includes making needed devices and oral contraceptives readily available to people at all socio-economic levels.

### Call to Increase Funding for International Family Planning Programs

Around the world, 222 million women want to prevent pregnancy but need contraception. Meeting women's needs for family planning and maternal and child health care would prevent 53 million unintended pregnancies each year, resulting in 14.5 million fewer abortions and 250,000 fewer women dying in pregnancy or childbirth annually. In addition, improving access to condoms can significantly reduce the number of infections transmitted through sexual intercourse, including HIV.

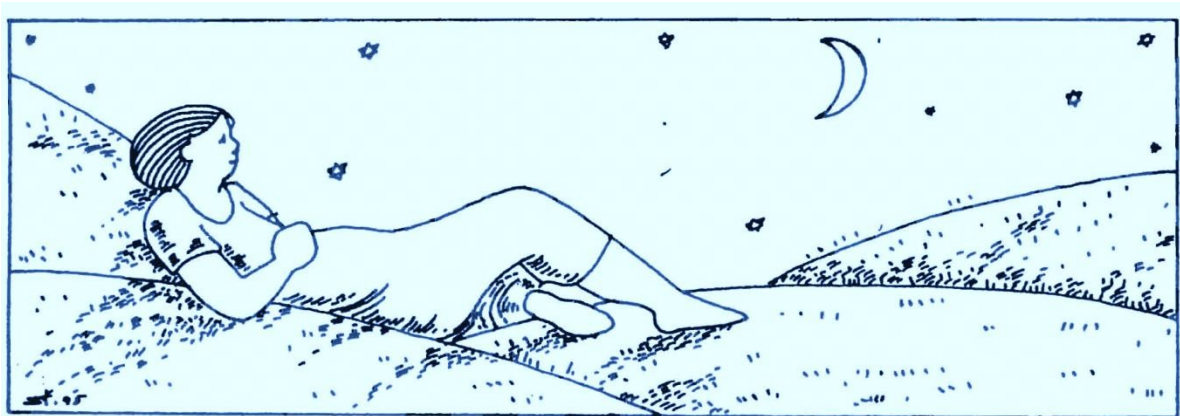
Cuts in federal spending have caused international family planning and reproductive health programs to lose hundreds of millions of dollars.

Ask the U.S. government to pledge a minimum of \$1 billion a year to family planning.

See <http://populationaction.org/>

### World Population Growth

**1800 — 1 billion people**  
**1930 — 2 billion people**  
**1960 — 3 billion people**  
**1975 — 4 billion people**  
**1987 — 5 billion people**  
**1997 — 6 billion people**  
**2011 — 7 billion people**  
**2050 — 11 billion people**



## Congregational Study / Action Issue

### What is Reproductive Justice?

Within the framework of 'reproductive justice,' the Unitarian Universalist Association works against the cultural, political, economic, and structural constraints that limit women's access to health care and full reproductive choice. Reproductive justice, a concept put forth by coalitions of women of color, promotes the right of all women to have children, or not to have children, and to raise their children in safe and healthy environments. It does not isolate or pit important social issues against each other; rather it works to promote these rights across many areas:

- ✓ reproductive choice
- ✓ eradication of violence against women
- ✓ comprehensive sex education
- ✓ discrimination based on race and sexual orientation
- ✓ economic justice
- ✓ environmental justice
- ✓ immigration justice

### Congregational Study/Action Issue

The first step to effective action is education. The Unitarian Universalist Association's new reproductive justice **Curriculum for Congregations** introduces these topics and their **theological principles** to congregations.

Find other resources for congregational life and **advocacy**, like a Reproductive Justice Alerts listserv, a Congregational Resource Packet with ten things your congregation can do, a liturgical calendar, a faith development guide, small group ministry session plans, sample worship and a clergy packet.

### Take Action on Reproductive Justice

Whether you tweet, organize, blog or lobby—or do all this and more—the ongoing attacks on reproductive justice call for progressive people of faith to speak up for choice, dignity, and religious liberty.

- Educate Your Congregation
- Lobby and Telephone Congress
- Write a Letter-to-the-Editor / Op-Ed
- Present Webinars on Reproductive Justice
- Unite Congregation-Based Community Organizations
- Bring Together Grassroots Organizations
- Practice Ethical Public Witness
- Form Media Advocacy Groups

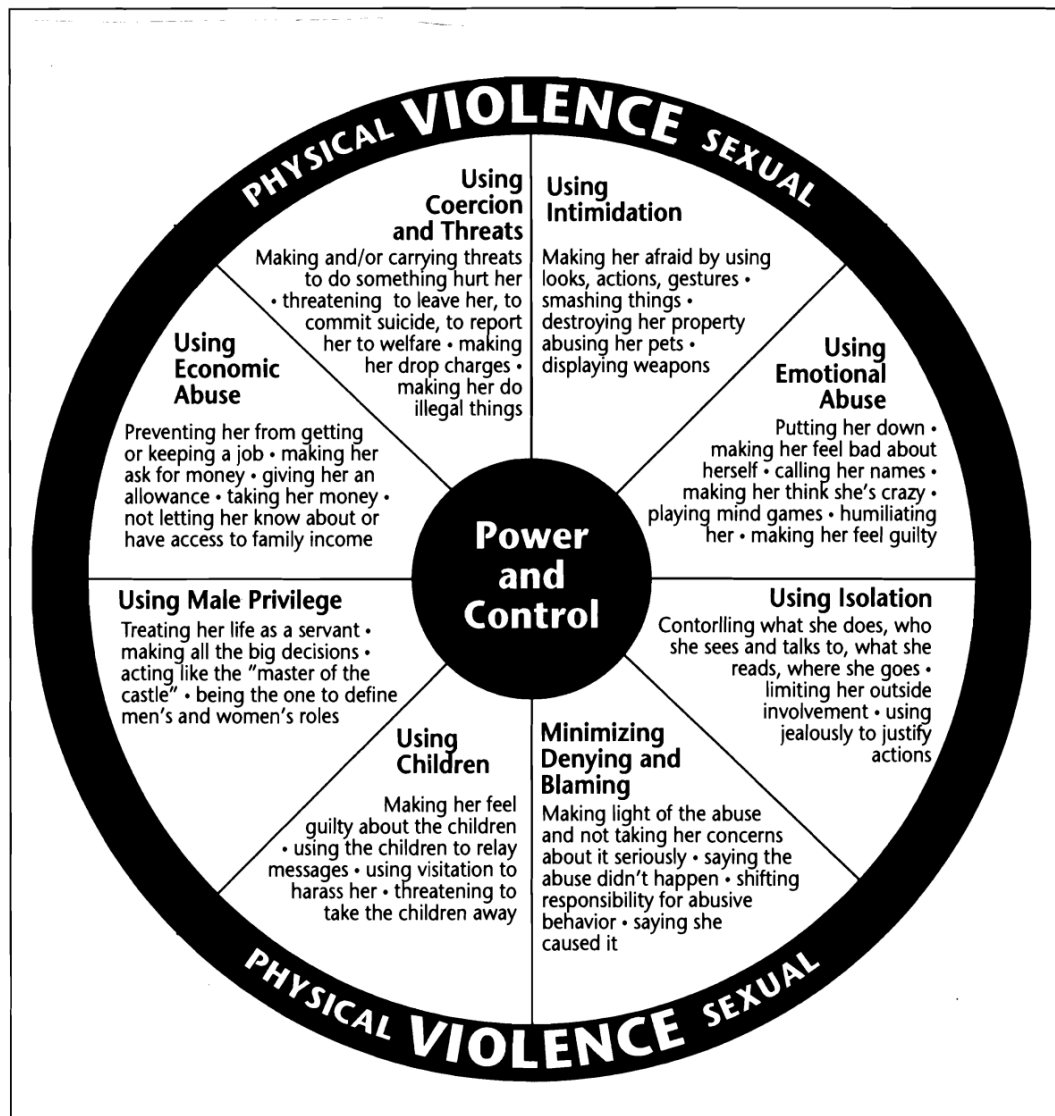
Look at: [www.uua.org/reproductive/index.shtml](http://www.uua.org/reproductive/index.shtml)

## IV. Violence Against Women

Because the problem is so widespread and immense, this issue is a major focus of Human Rights campaigns in the United States and around the world.

### Causes of Violence against Women:

- ▣ Lower status accorded to women in the family and in society
- ▣ Ignorance
- ▣ Lack of laws to prohibit domestic violence
- ▣ Inadequate enforcement of existing laws
- ▣ Absence of education that addresses its causes
- ▣ Toleration and promotion of violence in society
- ▣ Dehumanization and objectification of women



## Domestic Violence, Verbal Abuse and Trauma

The epidemic of domestic violence crosses borders, cultures and classes. Domestic violence is the cause of most attacks on women, even when prohibited by law.

Abuse is not only physical but can be verbal as well. Often a combination of these two happens to women in abusive situations and can cause **Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**. This condition is one in which trauma survivors cannot control the recurrence of traumatic or repressed memory. Because traumatic memories are stored differently in the brain, their recurrence is often difficult or impossible for the survivor to control.

These memories can be triggered by a wide range of experiences that are reminders of the abusive circumstances. Creating a living condition in which a survivor feels protected from trauma and from people or situations that will trigger traumatic memory enables the survivor to begin the healing process.

Examples of **verbal** and **emotional abuse** include:

**Belittling** - Disparaging comments; making what one said as unimportant or contemptibly small

**Fault-finding, Countering and Correcting** - Relentless criticizing and correcting; Responding in opposition and pointing out errors and mistakes

**Put-downs disguised as jokes** - Making critical, dismissive, or slighting remarks in a joking, often sarcastic, way

**Teasing** - Harassing someone 'playfully' and often with sexual connotations, or harassing maliciously (especially by ridicule); provoking someone with persistent annoyances. Note that if innocent teasing is reciprocal, it can be considered a playful bonding interaction and is not abusive.

**Holding out** - Refusing to provide emotional support, share information, or otherwise be intimate in a relationship.

**Shutting down** - Changing the subject of a discussion (particularly if it is done rapidly), stopping an emotionally-uncomfortable discussion entirely, and "forcing a discussion off-track"

**Blame-shifting** - Scapegoating or laying the responsibility of one's actions on someone else (e.g., "It's your fault," "If only you were more/less (whatever)," "You're just trying to pick a fight.")

**Intimidation** - Words or actions that threaten or imply harm or loss of something important; emotional blackmail

**Insulting and labeling** - Calling someone something pejorative; name-calling

**Selective memory** - Remembering only parts of an event or bringing up only negative aspects of a person; includes 'forgetting' and altering of facts to make himself/herself look good

**Commanding** - Issuing demands in a controlling or dominating way (as opposed to polite and respectful requests)

**Lashing out** - Angry attacks, yelling, screaming, raging, temper tantrums, then dismissing the behavior as unimportant.

## Sexual Conflict in Combat Zones

### UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS 1820 AND 1325

#### Security Council Demands Complete Halt to Acts of Sexual Violence against Civilians in Conflict Zones; and Encourages Women in Peace Efforts

*Resolution Caps Day-Long Ministerial-Level Debate on “Women, Peace and Security”*

On June 19, 2008 the UN Security Council addressed sexual violence against women in conflict and post-conflict areas. The 15-member Council unanimously adopted **Resolution 1820**, which noted that “rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide”. The resolution also noted that women and girls are particularly targeted by the use of sexual violence, including in some cases as “a tactic of war to humiliate, dominate, instill fear in, disperse and/or forcibly relocate civilian members of a community or ethnic group.” (See *Criminal Court Defines Rape as War Crime*, page 17)

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and other world leaders attended the session to propose solutions to provide necessary protection and assistance for victims of sexual violence. In his opening remarks to the meeting, which came eight years after the Council had adopted its landmark **Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security**, the Secretary-General said that an increasing and alarming number of women and girls were falling victim to sexual violence in conflict and that the problem had reached unspeakable and pandemic proportions in some societies attempting to recover from it. “But we can and must push back.” He announced plans to appoint a **Messenger of Peace** tasked entirely with advocacy for ending violence against women.

### Excerpt from Section One of the Vienna Declaration

*Adopted at the World Conference on Human Rights June 25, 1993*

The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal participation of women in political, civic, economic, social and cultural life at national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of sexual discrimination are priority objectives of the international community.

Gender-based violence and all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation, including those resulting from cultural prejudice and international trafficking are incompatible with the dignity and worth of human beings and must be eliminated. This can be achieved through legal measures as well as through national action and international cooperation in areas such as economic and social development, education, safe maternity and health care, as well as social security provisions.

Women’s human rights should form an integral part of the United Nations human rights activities, including the promotion of all human rights instruments relating to women. The World Conference on Human Rights urges governments, institutions, intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations to intensify their efforts to protect and promote the human rights of women and the girl-child.



## Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women

*Adopted by the United Nations, November 1993. The United States is automatically in agreement with this declaration by virtue of U.N. membership.*

In December 1993, as a consequence of the World Conference on Human Rights in Vienna in June 1993, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a landmark resolution on gender violence called the *Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women*. This declaration defines for the first time what constitutes an act of violence against women and calls on governments and the international community to take specific measures to prevent such acts. It defined violence as, “any act of gender based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including the threat of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivations of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.” Violence against women is one of the social mechanisms by which women are forced into subordinate positions to men.

### The *Declaration* lists abuses that fall into the category of violence against women:

1. Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family and in the community, including battering, sexual abuse of female children, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women
2. Non-spousal violence
3. Violence related to exploitation
4. Sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere
5. Trafficking in women
6. Forced prostitution
7. Violence perpetrated or condoned by the state

## The Violence against Women Act

In the United States, the *Violence against Women Act*, passed in 1994 resulted in the creation of the Office on Violence against Women at the U.S. Department of Justice dedicated to fighting domestic violence and other crimes against women. Through outreach, collaboration and public education initiatives, the office works to transform public attitudes toward these crimes and dispel the notion that acts of violence against women are private disputes not fit for public scrutiny or legal judgment.

The **OVW** currently administers 21 grant programs designed to continue to develop the nation's capacity to reduce domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking by strengthening services to victims and holding offenders accountable for their actions. <http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/>

## A Word About Gender

Gender Typing has become a worldwide issue in personal, political, academic, religious, and legal spheres. Gender is defined as a cultural construct that denotes the different roles, responsibilities and activities that societies prescribe for females and males. Our culture recognizes two basic roles: masculine and feminine. People who step outside their socially assigned gender roles are sometimes referred to as transgender. Gender characteristics can change over time and are different between cultures. Gender is often used synonymously with sex, but this is inaccurate because sex refers to physical/biological characteristics and gender refers to social and emotional attributes.

### The Gender Spectrum

Rather than just two fixed options, gender occurs across a continuum of possibilities. Gender is a rich texture of biology, gender expression, and gender identity that intersect in a multidimensional array of potentials. **Gender Diversity** is a term that recognizes that many peoples' preferences and self-expression fall outside commonly understood gender norms. **Gender Identity** is one's innermost concept of self, and can be the same or different than the one assigned at birth. Some individuals choose to socially, hormonally and/or surgically change their sex to match their gender identity. **Gender Expression** refers to the way people communicate through behavior, mannerisms, appearance, clothing, haircut, voice, and other forms of presentation.

## Nonviolent Communication

Nonviolent Communication begins by assuming that we are all compassionate by nature and that violent strategies—whether verbal or physical—are learned behaviors taught and supported by the prevailing culture. NVC also assumes that we all share the same, basic human needs, and that each of our actions are a strategy to meet one or more of these needs. Marshall B. Rosenberg, Ph.D. is the founder of the Center for Nonviolent Communication, offering workshops and training in 30 countries. Dr. Rosenberg is the author of *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*.

Rosenberg's training emerged from work he was doing with civil rights activists in the early 1960s. During this period he also mediated between rioting students and college administrators and worked to peacefully desegregate public schools. Rosenberg's research and investigative work with psychologists Carl Rogers, Erich Fromm, George Albee, and others is central to the development of NVC. A practitioner is invited to focus on four components of relationship – observations, feelings, needs and requests.



To date he has initiated peace programs in war-torn areas throughout the world including Rwanda, Burundi, Nigeria, Malaysia, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, the Middle East, Serbia, Croatia, and Ireland. The ultimate aim is to develop societal relationships based on a restorative, "partnership" paradigm and mutual respect, rather than a retributive, fear-based, "domination" paradigm.

## V. Organizing for Women's Rights

### What is One Billion Rising? Founder Eve Ensler explains

*Playwright and activist Eve Ensler (author of Vagina Monologues and founder of V-Day, February 14, to end Violence against Women) explains One Billion Rising, a global day of action – and dancing – in protest against violence against women which takes place every year worldwide on Valentine's Day, February 14<sup>th</sup>.*



*[The authors attended the 2013 and 2014 events in Monterey, California. The 2013 event had a sacred tone. Blessings were offered by three women spiritual leaders—a spirit keeper woman representing local Native American indigenous people, a liberal Science of Mind minister, and a young Buddhist nun. A group of over three hundred women, men, young adults and children then walked in a candle light procession through the main streets of Monterey, carrying signs, singing and drumming. The celebratory feeling rose when we returned to the Center for an evening of stunning multicultural dance performances by high school students and varied cultural organizations. The 2014 event was held in Pacific Grove, was smaller but equally moving with wonderful dancing, educational presentations and great comradery. The 2015 gathering for the region was held in Santa Cruz, Ca and was also a rousing event including a march through the downtown, group dancing, singing and community organizations connecting through information booths.]*

- One in three women on the planet will be raped or beaten in her lifetime.
- That is more than one billion women.
- In 2013, one billion women and men shook the earth through dance to end violence against women and girls.
- On 14 February 2014 women and men everywhere harnessed their power and imagination to rise for justice.
- Imagine, one billion women releasing their stories, dancing and speaking out at the places where they need justice, where they need an end to violence against women and girls.

February 14, 2014 V-Day became 16 years old. It was never our intention to be around this long. Our mission was to end violence against women and girls, and so we planned to be out of business years ago. We have had enormous victories in these years. We have broken taboos, spoken the word "vagina" in 50 languages in 140 countries, called up stories and truths about violence against women, breaking the silence, supported amazing activists across the planet who have created and changed laws. But we have not fulfilled our mission to end violence against women and girls. In fact the UN says that one out of three women on the planet will be beaten or raped in her lifetime. That is one billion women plus. That is simply insane and unacceptable.

So this V-Day we knew we had to go further; we knew we had to escalate our efforts to break through the patriarchal wall of oppression and denial, to transform the mindset that has normalized this violence, to bring women survivors into their bodies, their strength, their determination, their energy and power and to dance up the will of the world to finally make violence against women unacceptable.

So in 2012 we announced One Billion Rising, a call for the one billion women and all the men who love them to walk out of their jobs, schools, offices, homes on Feb 14, 2013 and strike, rise and dance! Nothing we have ever done has spread so fast and happened so easily. Our motto was "not branding but expanding": a global action to be determined and carried out locally. Every city, town, village, person would determine what they were rising for - to end FGM, to remember their daughter's rape, to stop sex slavery, to educate young boys and girls about non-violence sexual relations.

**Dance with your body,  
for your body, for the  
bodies of women and  
the earth. ~ Eve Ensler**

All these horrific stories of sexual violence have built the outrage and ignited a fire burning through the world. One Billion Rising is happening big time, full scale, one Billion size. It is happening where women will risk their lives to dance and where women have never danced before. The diversity is beyond anything we could have imagined.

But what is most remarkable is what One Billion Rising has already accomplished before we even begin to dance today. It has brought together coalitions of groups and individuals that have never worked together before, galvanized new people and groups and associations and masses of men who were not engaged before but now see violence as their issue – and all of this putting violence against women to the center of the global discussion.

It has broken taboos and silences everywhere, inspired a radical outpouring of individuals and groups to reveal the world wide system of patriarchy which sustains the violence. One Billion Rising has also shown that violence against women is not a national, tribal, ethnic, religious issue but a global phenomenon, and the rising will give survivors the confidence of knowing that violence is not their fault or their country's fault or their families fault. Today the dancing begins and with this dancing we express our outrage and joy and our firm global call for a world where women are free and safe and cherished and equal.

## 2017 Campaign – Rising in Solidarity

Moving into issues on every level, this year's theme encouraged participants to expose the link among various contemporary situations which cause unfair treatment of women. The website [www.OneBillionRising.org](http://www.OneBillionRising.org) contains inspiring videos and information about the creative campaigns around the globe that will have far reaching effects into the future. They call for action from all of us, locally and globally.

## Kim Crenshaw: Why I Am Rising

February 14, 2013

I am rising today to end violence against women and girls around the globe for all those who cannot rise with us...

I'm rising for the women and girls who cannot rise because they've been told that their bodies, their lives, their futures, their hurts, their hopes, and their sorrows are less important than the men and boys in their communities;

I'm rising for those who have been told that they must wait until the struggle against poverty, against racism, against able-ism, against homophobia, against transphobia, against world capitalism, is all finished before the everyday lives of women and girls become important.

I'm rising for those who are left behind when preservationists plead with militias to save the gorillas and to spare the forests, but forget to mention the women and girls;

I'm rising to break the chains of the 500,000 imprisoned women worldwide for whom incarceration is a direct consequence of the violence they have suffered;

I'm rising for the 90% percent of the girls caught up in juvenile detention who have suffered physical, emotional, or sexual abuse before they reach 18;

I'm rising for the homeless women and girls, the trafficked women and girls, the disabled women and girls, whose pathways to suffering were forged through violence and emotional abuse;

I'm rising for all the women who waited for family, friends, ministers, communities to stand with them, to protect them, to cherish them, and who are still waiting. I'm rising because at some point I too, waited...

**I am rising because Rosa Parks rose.** Long before she sat down to protest segregation, she stood up to fight against the sexual abuse of Black women in Alabama in 1944. Rosa Parks understood something that we still struggle to understand now—that the intersections of all of these “isms” means that to be truly liberated, the determination to break one chain must be extended to smash them all. I'm rising because if Rosa Parks and others like her around the world can have the courage to rise up to fight lonely and dangerous battles, then we, a billion strong, can certainly do no less, here and now.

I am rising because I know that the voices of all of us can amplify the demands of individuals to be free. I am rising because when we realize that the personal is not only political, but is national, international, and global, the World we live in will change.

***Kimberlé Crenshaw** has worked extensively on a variety of issues pertaining to gender and race including violence against women, structural racial inequality, and affirmative action. She is currently a professor at UCLA School of Law and Columbia Law School. She is a member of the V-Board, a group that provides vision, leadership, and wisdom to help guide and support V-Day in its work.*





All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

LET'S  
GO!



[beijing20.unwomen.org](http://beijing20.unwomen.org) #Beijing20

## UN Women has just launched Beijing+20, an epic campaign, and we want you to be a part of it.

In September 1995: 189 governments, 17,000 participants and 30,000 activists came together to adopt the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It was the most progressive blueprint ever for advancing women's rights and gender equality. It agreed on concrete steps to create a world where each woman and girl could exercise her freedoms and choices, and realize all her rights, such as to live free from violence, to go to school, to participate in decisions and to earn equal pay for equal work.

The year 2017 will mark the 22<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of this historic agreement, but gender equality is a distant dream still. That's why UN Women is launching "Empowering Women – Empowering Humanity: Picture It!" – a global campaign that's asking each of us to imagine a world where gender equality and women's empowerment is a reality, and to play our part to make it happen.

We are counting on you to make [#Beijing20](https://twitter.com/Beijing20) count for women and girls everywhere.

**Visit** <http://beijing20.unwomen.org> and find out how you can Picture It!

Here's a social media package that you can use, with sample messages and assets:

<http://owl.li/wWDyc>.

Join organizations and activists from around the world, coming together to discuss how they picture gender equality, and what is needed to realize their vision.

All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.



<http://www.un.org/en/women/endviolence/>

## Orange Day every 25th of the month

The Secretary-General's UNiTE to End Violence Against Women campaign proclaims every 25th of the month as Orange Day! More information on [Orange your World](#).  
[Orange Your World in 16 Days](#)

I am wearing orange because violence against women and girls is an outrage that I will never accept. I will never be able to remain silent when one in three women and girls will be raped, beaten or otherwise abused in their lifetime. I was raised by a mother who planted the seed early in me to speak out against the fact that women are so often treated differently than men.

~ Nicole Kidman, UN Women Goodwill Ambassador

## UNiTE Survivor Stories

Voices of Survivors' tells the stories of survivors in their own words of violence against women. They speak of the impact violence had upon them, and how they have found the resources to move forward in their lives. Their stories remind us why taking a stand to prevent violence against women and girls is critical.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vv0NppcYWnc&feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vv0NppcYWnc&feature=player_embedded)

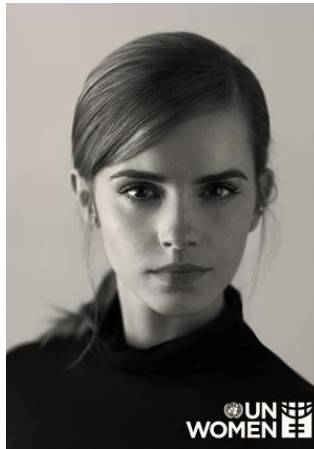
## International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women

Message by United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon on the occasion on 25 November 2013. [International Day to End Violence against Women](#)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88EWotRsoHk&feature=player\\_embedded](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=88EWotRsoHk&feature=player_embedded)

## Emma Watson as Goodwill Ambassador

**Date:** 08 July 2014



UN Women, the United Nations organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, today announced the appointment of British Actress, Emma Watson, as Goodwill Ambassador.

Best known for her role as Hermione Granger in the '*Harry Potter*' film series, the accomplished actress, humanitarian, and recent graduate of Ivy League institution Brown University, will dedicate her efforts as UN Women Goodwill Ambassador towards the empowerment of young women and will serve as an advocate for UN Women's *HeForShe* campaign\* in promoting gender equality.

"We are thrilled and honoured to work with Emma, whom we believe embodies the values of UN Women," stated Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director, UN Women. "The engagement of young people is critical for the advancement of gender equality in the 21st century, and I am convinced that Emma's intellect and passion will enable UN Women's messages to reach the hearts and minds of young people globally."

Ms. Watson has been involved in the promotion of girls' education for several years, and previously visited Bangladesh and Zambia as part of her humanitarian efforts.

"Being asked to serve as UN Women's Goodwill Ambassador is truly humbling. The chance to make a real difference is not an opportunity that everyone is given and is one I have no intention of taking lightly. Women's rights are something so inextricably linked with who I am, so deeply personal and rooted in my life that I can't imagine an opportunity more exciting. I still have so much to learn, but as I progress I hope to bring more of my individual knowledge, experience and awareness to this role," said Ms. Watson.

\* *HeForShe* is a solidarity movement which calls upon men and boys to stand up against the persisting inequalities faced by women and girls globally. [www.heforshe.org](http://www.heforshe.org)



*Statement by then UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet (currently president of Chile) at the conclusion of the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, Posted March 2013*

## **UN Women Welcomes Agreed Conclusions of the Commission on Status of Women**

At the conclusion of the 57th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, UN Women welcomes the outcome of the meeting. The Agreed Conclusions are a testimony to the commitment of Member States to do the right thing, to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls. In the last two weeks during the meeting in New York, and in the lead-up to this session, we witnessed global engagement and mobilization, high-profile advocacy by civil society, and determined leadership by many Member States. Expectations of the world's women and girls were extremely high for this session of the Commission.

Violence against women is a universal problem that requires, and has now received, a universal response. Violence occurs in multiple forms in all countries and settings; it harms women and their families and communities, impedes development, and costs countries billions of dollars annually in healthcare costs and lost productivity. In 2003, when the Commission took up violence against women and human rights, Member States were unable to reach agreement. Thus I am particularly heartened that agreement was reached this year to end violence against women and girls. This agreement comes in unison with rising voices worldwide saying enough is enough.

The document adopted by the Commission condemns in the strongest terms the pervasive violence against women and girls, and calls for increased attention and accelerated action for prevention and response. UN Women welcomes the important focus on prevention, including through education and awareness-raising and addressing gender inequalities in the political, economic and social spheres.

**See Page 63 for the full text of the Agreed Conclusions**

*The best way to end violence against women is to stop it from happening in the first place.*

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The document highlights the importance of putting in place multi-sectoral services for survivors of violence, including for health, psychological support and counseling, social support in the short and long term. It draws attention to the need for services to protect the right to sexual and reproductive health. Punishment of perpetrators is also highlighted as a critical measure to end impunity, as is the need to improve the evidence base and availability of data to inform an effective response.

By adopting this document, governments have made clear that discrimination and violence against women and girls has no place in the 21st century. They have reaffirmed their commitment and responsibility to undertake concrete action to end violence against women and girls and promote and protect women's human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The agreement is one step more for realizing the rights and dignity of women and girls. But we cannot stop here. We need to do so much more. Words now need to be matched with deeds, with action. Now is the time for implementation and accountability. We must continue moving forward with courage, conviction and commitment.

UN Women, together with our partners in the UN system, will continue to advance the rights of women and girls through strong and coordinated support. We will work with Member States to turn the Agreed Conclusions of the Commission on the Status of Women into concrete results for women and girls.

We will move forward and build on the basis of the international agreements on women's rights reached over many years, as articulated in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Beijing Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and other agreements and treaties.

**There is no turning back.** We will keep moving forward to the day when women and girls can live free of fear, violence and discrimination. The 21st century is the century of inclusion and women's full and equal rights and participation.



All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

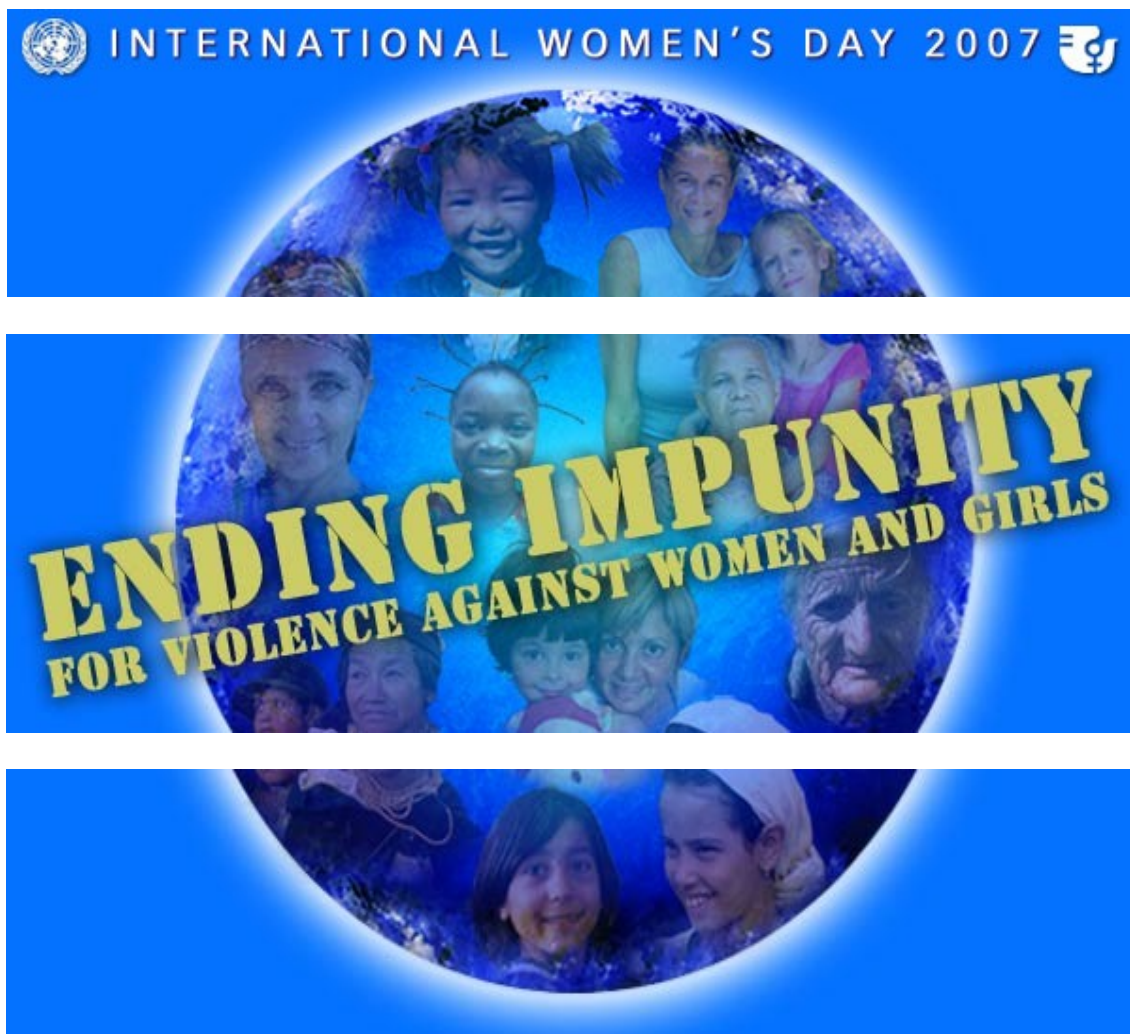
## International Women's Day, March 8<sup>th</sup>

### A GLOBAL DAY OF CELEBRATION

Celebrated on March 8<sup>th</sup>, International Women's Day (IWD) is the day globally when women, and all those who respect them as full human beings, honor the collective power of women – past, present and future. Women around the world reaffirm their mutual support, inspiring each other to achieve her full potential.

In 1975, which had also been designated as International Women's Year, the United Nations gave official sanction to and began sponsoring International Women's Day. On this day throughout the world, the political and social struggles of women worldwide are brought out and examined in a hopeful manner.

See [www.internationalwomensday.com](http://www.internationalwomensday.com) for information on the hundreds of events worldwide each year celebrating International Women's Day.



## Human Rights Day, December 10<sup>th</sup>

Human Rights Day presents an opportunity, every year, to celebrate human rights, highlight a specific issue, and advocate for the full enjoyment of all human rights by everyone everywhere.

In 2012 the spotlight was on the rights of all people — women, youth, minorities, persons with disabilities, indigenous people, the poor and marginalized — to make their voices heard in public life and be included in political decision-making.

These human rights — the rights to freedom of opinion and expression, to peaceful assembly and association, and to take part in government (articles 19, 20 and 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) have been at the center of the historic civil rights movement that has deeply affected the world over the past fifty years, in which millions have taken to the streets to demand change.

## Put an End to Trafficking

### What Are Some Signs of Human Trafficking?

It is important to understand that because human trafficking can happen in any industry, and to persons of any gender, age, and nationality, that stereotypes seen in media are not always representative of real life situations. However, some common red flags to look out for include:

- person shows signs of abuse, malnourishment, exhaustion, or fearfulness
- person is not being paid, being paid very little, or is working excessive hours or in dangerous working conditions
- person is not allowed to leave home or premises, or is closely supervised and restricted in movement
- person does not have access to personal documents such as ID, passport, visa, or social security card
- person is under 18 and is working in the commercial sex industry

Again, this list is not comprehensive and each individual experience is different. (See anti-trafficking resources, page 84.) NOTE: while many exploitative working conditions do not rise to the level of human trafficking, it is important to report these situations because they are closely related and resources may still be available to assist these workers.

- |                            |                                |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ▪ Domestic service         | ▪ Agriculture                  |
| ▪ Prostitution             | ▪ Restaurant work              |
| ▪ Servile marriage         | ▪ Construction                 |
| ▪ Garment factories        | ▪ Other informal labor sectors |
| ▪ Hotel/motel housekeeping | ▪ Other criminal activity      |

## VI. Landmark Milestones

### Millennium Development Goals Report 2013

**The Millennium Development Goals have the greatest impact on women and children.**

As of April 5, 2013 only 1,000 days remain until the end of the 2015 target date for achieving the eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The eight MDGs – which range from halving extreme poverty to promoting gender equality to providing universal primary education by the target date of 2015 – form an internationally agreed blueprint which countries and leading development institutions have signed onto. Since their adoption in 2000, the MDGs have made a huge difference, helping to set global and national priorities and fuel action on the ground. They have raised awareness and shaped a broad vision for development work across the world.

The MDGs are not just abstract or aspirational targets. Achieving the Goals is about ensuring certain basic human rights for all, and making a real difference in people's lives. UN Women is actively working on the achievement of the MDGs, for which women and girls play a pivotal role, as well as for MDG3, which specifically focuses on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

Evidence shows that gender equality and women's empowerment is a cornerstone to accelerating and sustaining MDG progress and furthering all the Goals. According to the World Bank, ensuring equal access for women and girls to education, nutrition, basic services, health care, employment, economic opportunities and decision-making at all levels has proven to be one of the most powerful drivers of progress across all the Goals.



The World Bank *Global Monitoring Report 2013: Rural-Urban Dynamics and the Millennium Development Goals* provide an in-depth analysis on urbanization as a force for poverty reduction and progress towards the MDGs in the developing world. 96 percent of the developing world's additional 1.4 billion people, by 2030, are expected to live in urban areas. With less than 1,000 days to go before the MDGs expire, the report highlights the need to accelerate efforts to improve the lives of the poor. The report calls for complementary rural-urban development policies and actions by governments to facilitate a healthy move toward cities without short-changing rural areas.

With 2017 fast approaching, countries are faced with the twin tasks of making as much progress as possible on the MDGs, while also articulating post-2017 development priorities that would build upon the results of their experience with the MDGs. The next round of MDG reports (from 2013 onwards) should therefore help motivate a final push for the MDGs, while also contributing to the framing of the post-2017 development agenda.

In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN WOMEN, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. Find out more about how progress for women and girls is faring for each of these goals at [www.unwomen.org](http://www.unwomen.org) → look for Momentum Towards Meeting the MDGs



### Goal 1: Eradicate Extreme Hunger and Poverty

**Extreme poverty is beginning to fall in sub-Saharan Africa. Child hunger is declining in all regions, but meeting the target will require accelerated progress.**



### Goal 2: Achieve Universal Primary Education

**Sub-Saharan Africa is making progress towards universal enrollment, but has a long way to go. Girls and children from poorer or rural families are least likely to attend school.**



### Goal 3: Promote Gender Equality and Empower Women

**Doors are opening slowly for women in the labor market. Women's labor is more likely than men's to be unpaid. Women gaining ground politically, though men still wield control.**



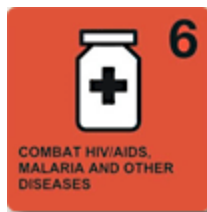
### Goal 4: Reduce Child Mortality

**Child survival rates show slow improvement, and are worst in sub-Saharan Africa. Vaccinations spur decline in measles and expansion of basic health services.**



### **Goal 5: Improve Maternal Health**

Half a million women continue to die each year during pregnancy or childbirth, almost all of them in sub-Saharan Africa and Asia.



### **Goal 6: Combat HIV/AIDS, Malaria and other diseases**

Though access to AIDS treatment has expanded, the need continues to grow. In hardest hit areas, more than half of those living with HIV are women. Care of orphans is an enormous social problem, which will only get worse as more parents die of AIDS. Malaria-control efforts are paying off, but additional effort is needed. The incidence of tuberculosis is leveling off globally, but the number of new cases is still rising.



### **Goal 7: Ensure Environmental Sustainability**

Growing greenhouse gas emissions continue to outpace advances in sustainable energy technologies. Deforestation continues, especially in biologically diverse regions. With half the developing world without basic sanitation, meeting the MDG target will require extraordinary efforts. The rapid expansion of cities is making slum improvements even more daunting.



### **Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development**

Development aid falls, despite renewed commitments by donor countries. Preferential market access has stalled for most developing countries. In all regions, economies have failed to provide full employment for their young people. Internet use is growing, but remains low throughout the developing world.



## Global Women's Movement

### PREVAILING CHALLENGES

- ♀ A world marred by war and militarism and politically dominated by security agendas which undermine the interests and well-being of women and children
- ♀ Shifting balance of power in a world dominated by economic globalization
- ♀ Resurgence of social, cultural and religious extremism with strong focus on restricting women's freedom
- ♀ Persistent discrimination and violence against women
- ♀ Limited awareness of the value of women's contribution to cultural development, healthy communities and social change
- ♀ Urgent need to mitigate negative impact of financial recessions and economic crises on women and children

These and other conditions adversely affect the lives of women worldwide simply because they are women. In response, since the early 1970s women from diverse social strata and every nation saw the need to come together and support changes that would improve the conditions affecting women worldwide.

The effort of women at all levels of society to improve their lives and to form alliances with women from other countries has been called the "Global Women's Movement." This movement is based on a belief in the equal rights of women and men, a concept enshrined in the *United Nations Charter*, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, and now the *Agreed Conclusions on the Elimination and Prevention of All Forms of Violence against Women and Girls*.

### Vienna Conference

At the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna, Austria in June 1993, 171 countries reiterated the universality, indivisibility and interdependence of human rights, and reaffirmed their commitment to the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. They adopted the **Vienna Declaration and Program of Action**, which provides for a "framework of planning, dialogue and cooperation" to enable a holistic approach to promoting human rights and citizen actions at the local, national and international levels.

### Global Women's Conferences

The global women's movement has also been strengthened by several major United Nations conferences since 1975, four of which focused on women. The last women's conference held in Beijing, China was called the *Fourth World Conference on Women* and produced the *Platform for Action*. **The Road to Beijing: A U.N. Chronology**, see page 80, contains a concise summary of the various actions and conferences held internationally on behalf of women under the auspices of the United Nations.

## Women Make Gains at Human Rights Conference in Vienna, 1993

By Rosemary Matson

*Excerpted from a presentation given to the United Nations Association  
In Monterey, California on International Women's Day, March 1994*

Women took a most important step forward in Vienna last June (1993) at the Second World Conference on Human Rights. The Global Campaign for Women's Human Rights spearheaded by Charlotte Bunch had worked hard for over two years to put women's concerns on the International Human Rights Agenda at that Conference. They had been networking, strategizing and collecting signatures on a global petition that would be carried to the Vienna Conference. When the petition was finally presented to the Conference, there were more than a million signatures by women from 124 countries. The petition asked that women be included in all aspects of the Conference and specifically demanded that violence against women be recognized as a human rights violation.

A coalition of over 800 world-wide women's organizations was in place by June, and fourteen thousand women attended the Human Rights Conference. Women found they were united by the universal problems of rape, incest, and battery as well as economic and sexual exploitation. The women were determined to have Women's Rights accepted as Human Rights.

They were well organized. It is a good thing because there were countries, especially from the third world, led by China that pushed to water down the original United Nations Declaration of Human Rights which was created in 1948. These countries wanted the interpretation of Human Rights left up to the individual countries because different societies could then interpret according to their particular religions, traditions and culture. And, they wanted *no* interference in the domestic affairs of sovereign nations.

The women's response at the conference was a unified and resounding NO! Women from many different cultures argued in reply that religion, tradition, and culture are used constantly to justify the subordination of women and to rob them of Human Rights protection. They said: The right *not* to be tortured, killed, mutilated, or sexually coerced, cannot be dependent on culture or religion, it must be universal. The results of the women's organized efforts were that the official Vienna Declaration to come out of the Conference includes a special section called, "The Equal Status and Human Rights of Woman." It states, unequivocally, that "public and private violence against women is recognized as an abuse of human rights."

**Rosemary Matson (1917 – 2014)** was a global feminist, peace activist, pioneer in citizen diplomacy, and Humanist minister. She was active in a network speaking out for Women's Rights as Human Rights for many decades. She lived in Carmel Valley, and Berkeley, California.

## Fourth World Conference on Women

### Beijing, China — September 1995



In 1995, nearly 50,000 women traveled to Beijing China to take part in two world conferences. These historic meetings were the last in a series of four women's conferences -- held over a period of 20 years beginning in 1975 in Mexico City -- to assess the condition of women worldwide and devise a plan for providing improvement where it was needed. (See *The Road to Beijing*, page 80.)

One of the conferences, held in the resort town of Huairou near Beijing, was an eclectic event staged by non-governmental organizations, usually called non-profits in the United States, to facilitate information exchange and networking around issues of concern to and about women. The other was an official United Nations gathering with a clear focus, namely gaining agreement from governments around the world to support a *Platform for Action* that would guarantee women full human rights worldwide.

The level of interchange in Huairou and Beijing was informed and intense. Women told women that the overall conditions affecting their lives had actually worsened in the last 20 years (compared to the 1975 conference). It is well documented that in every area of human existence, the quality of life for women and girls is steadily degenerating despite many obvious gains by select women, most of who are economically privileged. Even these women were not without complaint, especially when it came to domestic violence, equal opportunity with men practicing the same professions, and access to the media.

## Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action

The *Platform for Action* resulting from the official United Nations conference and signed by 189 countries, presents 12 “Critical Areas of Concern” which are intrinsically interrelated. A holistic scheme for social transformation with a focus on women, the *Platform for Action* advocates eradicating poverty and providing equal education for women and girls as well as guaranteeing the right to health care and reproductive choice. In addition, this document articulates areas that have been less often associated with women’s well-being, such as: women gaining institutional power, assuring protection to women civilians in armed conflicts, and eliminating economic disparity that specifically disadvantages women. (See page 61 for the list of 12 Concerns.)

“Women’s Rights are Human Rights and Human Rights are Women’s Rights,” a declaration made famous by Hillary Clinton in her speeches at both the official and the NGO conferences has become a slogan with meaning during recent years. Women are realizing they have to become a visible part of the mainstream social justice movement by claiming their full humanity, a notion that even today is debatable in many parts of the globe and within segments of every nation on earth. Dorothy Day’s sentiment sums up the commitment of most women who participated in the Beijing conferences: “No one has the right to sit down and feel hopeless, least of all the religious community which spends more time concentrating on hope and its origins than any other identifiable special interest group.”

### Human Rights and the Platform for Action

Human rights language permeates both the *Beijing Declaration* and the *Platform for Action*. Previous U.N. women’s conferences were seen as primarily about women and development or women’s rights rather than being about human rights. This expansion of what is generally considered to be “human rights,” and its usage to frame a wider set of women’s concerns, reflects efforts made over the past two decades.

The following statement is adapted from a post-conference assessment by Charlotte Bunch, Malika Dutt and Susana Fried.

In this sense, Beijing saw the mainstreaming of women’s human rights. The entire platform is a document about the human rights of women, including women’s right to education, food, health and freedom from violence, as well as the right to exercise citizenship in all its manifestations. Previously, women had to make the case that their concerns are a legitimate part of the international human rights agenda. In Beijing, this legitimacy was assumed.

The Center for Women’s Global Leadership at Rutgers develops and facilitates women’s leadership for women’s human rights and social justice worldwide. The Center for Women’s Global Leadership, along with the Global Fund for Women and Ipas, organized a Feminist Dialogue on Militarism and Military Intervention on November 29, 2010. The discussion highlights different feminist perspectives on militarism and notes some important questions that need to be examined regarding how militarism impacts women’s rights and promotes various forms of violence and discrimination against women. For more information about the Campaign and to see the video, please visit [YouTube](#).

All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

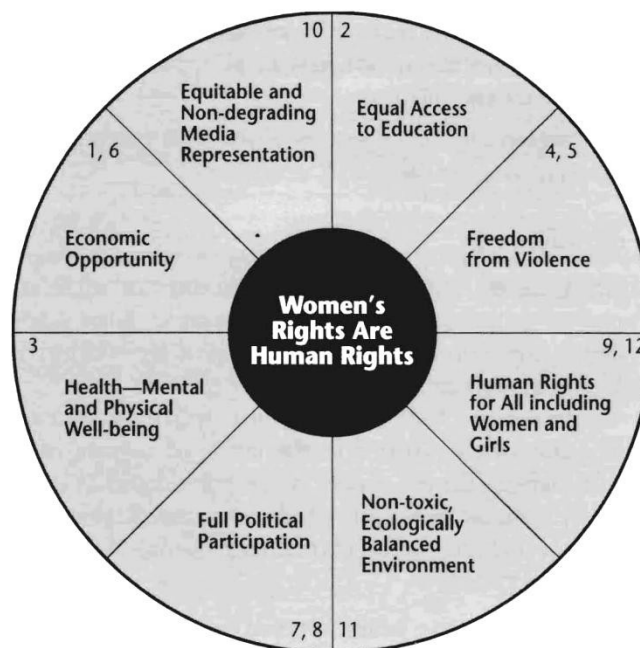
*The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action* comprise the final document to emerge from the U.N. Fourth World Conference on Women. It began in 1993 as a three-page outline which served as the basis for a policy document of strategic and realistic objectives. Aimed at removing obstacles to women's full and equal participation in all spheres of life, this document was created as a tool to which governments could commit themselves.

This document has probably been the subject of the most inclusive and participatory process of any of the U.N. global conferences of the 1990s. It was adopted by consensus after round-the-clock negotiations among delegates from 189 participating nations at the Beijing conference.

Since the beginning of this process, the *Platform for Action's* text drew on information and recommendations in national reports, expert group meeting reports, regional plans of action and the most recent U.N. statistical data. It was discussed and debated in countless arenas from village meeting halls to U.N. conference rooms. Five regional preparatory meetings, numerous expert group meetings, three full sessions and two inter-sessional meetings of the *Commission on the Status of Women* (which served as the preparatory committee for the Beijing Conference) were held.

The *Declaration* is an inspirational statement that proclaims a commitment to equality and the fair treatment for women and attests to a determination to achieve these goals. The *Platform* is a practical tool designed to support already existing activities as well as suggest new avenues of change.

### PLATFORM FOR ACTION: INTEGRATED HOLISTIC VISION



\*Numbers refer to Critical Areas of Concern



## Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women — CEDAW

The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an **international bill of rights for women**. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

At a special ceremony that took place at the Copenhagen Conference in July 1980, 64 States signed the Convention and two States submitted their instruments of ratification. The Convention entered into force faster than any previous human rights convention had done - thus bringing to a climax United Nations efforts to codify comprehensive, international legal standards for women. Today, 185 countries are party to the Convention, and even though United States President Carter signed it at the time, it has never been ratified by the U.S. Senate. However, Resolutions supporting the ratification of CEDAW have passed in 47 cities, as well as in 17 states and 19 counties.

### CEDAW calls on governments to enforce these key provisions:

- ❖ Acknowledge women's contributions to society
- ❖ Recognize the common responsibility of men and women in the upbringing of children
- ❖ Suppress forced prostitution and the trafficking of women
- ❖ Grant women equal access to credit and loans
- ❖ Modify traditions when necessary; for example, marital status should not abridge a woman's rights to child custody or to her own nationality
- ❖ Ensure women equal rights to conclude contracts and administer property
- ❖ Guarantee the freedom to choose one's residence and domicile
- ❖ Ensure the right to promotion, job security and all job benefits including maternity leave
- ❖ Guarantee equal rights in education
- ❖ Ensure women's eligibility for election to public bodies
- ❖ Provide access to health care information and services
- ❖ Guarantee the right to decide on the number and spacing of one's children



## VII. Core Documents

# Universal Declaration of Human Rights



On December 10, 1948 the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights [Resolution 217 A (III)]

Following this historic act the Assembly called upon all Member countries to publicize the text of the Declaration and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories."

### PREAMBLE

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

**Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS** as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

### **Article 1**

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

### **Article 2**

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

### **Article 3**

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

### **Article 4**

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

### **Article 5**

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

### **Article 6**

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

### **Article 7**

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

### **Article 8**

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

### **Article 9**

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

### **Article 10**

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

### **Article 11**

(1) Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.

(2) No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

### **Article 12**

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, nor to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

### **Article 13**

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each state.

All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

(2) Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

### **Article 14**

(1) Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.

(2) This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

### **Article 15**

(1) Everyone has the right to a nationality.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

### **Article 16**

(1) Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.

(2) Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.

(3) The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

### **Article 17**

(1) Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.

(2) No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

### **Article 18**

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

## **Article 19**

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

## **Article 20**

(1) Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.

(2) No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

## **Article 21**

(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

(2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country.

(3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

## **Article 22**

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

## **Article 23**

(1) Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.

(2) Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.

(3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

(4) Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

## **Article 24**

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

## **Article 25**

(1) Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing, medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

(2) Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

## **Article 26**

(1) Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.

(2) Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

(3) Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

## **Article 27**

(1) Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

(2) Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.



All human beings are free and equal in dignity and rights.

## Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

## Article 29

(1) Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.

(2) In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.

(3) These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

## Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.



In 1950, on the second anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, students at the UN International Nursery School in New York viewed a poster of the historic document. After adopting it on December 10, 1948, the UN General Assembly had called upon all Member States to publicize the text of the Declaration and "to cause it to be disseminated, displayed, read and expounded principally in schools and other educational institutions, without distinction based on the political status of countries or territories." (UN Photo)

## **FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN**

### **Twelve Critical Areas of Concern**

### ***Platform for Action***

#### **1. Poverty**

Create social security systems wherever they do not exist. Develop gender sensitive national and international policies, including those related to structural adjustment. Provide poor women with economic opportunities and equal access to affordable housing, land, natural resources, credit and other services. Devise statistical means to recognize and make visible the work, including unpaid and domestic of women and their contribution to national economics.

#### **2. Education**

Close the gender gap in primary and secondary school education by the year 2005. Eradicate illiteracy of women worldwide by the year 2000 or another target date to be agreed at the conference. Improve women's access to and provide funding for vocational training, science and technology. Develop curricula, textbooks and teaching aids free of gender stereotypes.

#### **3. Health**

Strengthen and reorient health services in order to reduce maternal mortality by at least 50 percent of the 1990 levels by the year 2000. Strengthen preventive programs that address threats to women's health. Make efforts to combat HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases, and recognize the impact of those diseases on women. Promote research on and increase funding for women's health issues and services.

#### **4. Violence**

Take integrated legal and social measures to prevent violence and protect women. Adopt measures to eliminate trafficking in women and eradicate violence against women who are vulnerable, such as those with disabilities and migrant workers. Study the causes of violence against women and effective measures of prevention.

#### **5. Armed Conflicts**

Increase and strengthen women's participation in conflict resolution. Promote women's contribution to fostering a culture of peace. Reduce the incidence of human rights abuses in conflicts situations, protect refugee and displaced women and provide assistance to women of the camps.

## **6. Economic Disparity**

Enact laws to guarantee the rights of women and men to equal pay for equal work and adjust work patterns to promote the sharing of family responsibilities. Provide women with equal access to resources, employment markers and trade, as well as to information and technology. Eliminate sexual harassment and other forms of discrimination in the workplace.

## **7. Power Sharing**

Ensure women's full and equal participation in power structures and decision making. Develop education and training to increase women's capacity to participate in decision making and leadership. Aim at gender balance in government bodies and the composition of delegations to the U.N.

## **8. Institutions**

Ensure that responsibility for the advancement of women is invested at the highest level of government. Integrate gender perspectives in all legislation, public policies, programs and projects. Collect and disseminate statistics showing gender impact of policies and programs.

## **9. Human Rights**

Encourage ratification of international human rights treaties and promote their implementation. Provide gender sensitive human rights training to public officials. Improve access to legal services and literacy through information campaigns and national training programs.

## **10. Mass Media**

Take steps to ensure women's access to information and the media on an equal basis. Encourage elimination of gender stereotyping in the media through studies, campaigns and various forms of self-regulation by media organizations.

## **11. Environment**

Involve women in environmental decision making and integrate gender concerns in policies for sustainable development. Assess the impact of development and environmental policies on women.

## **12. Girl Children**

Eliminate all forms of discrimination, as well as negative cultural attitudes and practices, against girls. Ensure that girls develop a positive self-image and have equal access to education and health care. Protect girls from economic exploitation and eliminate violence against them.

## **Agreed Conclusions on the Elimination and Prevention of All Forms of Violence against Women and Girls**

The Commission on the Status of Women during its fifty-seventh session which took place at United Nations Headquarters in New York adopted these Agreed Conclusions, negotiated by all States, on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls on March 15, 2013. Representatives of member states, UN entities, and accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world attended the session.

### **The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls**

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the declarations adopted by the Commission on the occasion of the tenth and fifteenth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women.
2. The Commission also reaffirms the international commitments made at relevant United Nations summits and conferences in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women, including in the Programme of Action at the International Conference on Population and Development and the key actions for its further implementation.
3. The Commission reaffirms that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocols thereto, as well as other relevant conventions and treaties, provide an international legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for the elimination and prevention of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, as a cross-cutting issue addressed in different international instruments.
4. The Commission recalls the rules of international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977.
5. The Commission recalls the inclusion of gender-related crimes and crimes of sexual violence in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, as well as the recognition by the ad hoc international criminal tribunals that rape and other forms of sexual violence can constitute a war crime, a crime against humanity or a constitutive act with respect to genocide or torture.

6. The Commission acknowledges also the important role in the prevention and elimination of discrimination and violence against women and girls played by regional conventions, instruments and initiatives and their follow-up mechanisms, in respective regions and countries.

7. The Commission reaffirms the commitment to the full and effective implementation of and follow-up to all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, in particular the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, and the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies on the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls. It also reaffirms its previous agreed conclusions on violence against women (1998) and on elimination of discrimination and violence against the girl child (2007).

8. The Commission recalls Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000, 1820 (2008) of 19 June 2008, 1888 (2009) of 30 September 2009, 1889 (2009) of 5 October 2009 and 1960 (2010) of 16 December 2010 on women and peace and security and all relevant Security Council resolutions on children and armed conflict, including resolutions 1882 (2009) of 4 August 2009 and 1998 (2011) of 12 July 2011 on armed conflict and post-conflict situations.

9. The Commission also recalls Human Rights Council resolutions 17/11 of 17 June 2011 on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: ensuring due diligence in protection, 20/6 of 5 July 2012 on the elimination of discrimination against women and 20/12 of 5 July 2012 on accelerating efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women: remedies for women who have been subjected to violence.

10. The Commission affirms that violence against women and girls is rooted in historical and structural inequality in power relations between women and men, and persists in every country in the world as a pervasive violation of the enjoyment of human rights. Gender-based violence is a form of discrimination that seriously violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women and girls of all human rights and fundamental freedoms. Violence against women and girls is characterized by the use and abuse of power and control in public and private spheres, and is intrinsically linked with gender stereotypes that underlie and perpetuate such violence, as well as other factors that can increase women's and girls' vulnerability to such violence.

11. The Commission stresses that "violence against women" means any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women and girls, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. The Commission also notes the economic and social harm caused by such violence.

12. The Commission strongly condemns all forms of violence against women and girls. It recognizes their different forms and manifestations, in different contexts, settings, circumstances and relationships, and that domestic violence remains the most prevalent form that affects women of all social strata across the world. It also notes that women

and girls who face multiple forms of discrimination are exposed to increased risk of violence.

13. The Commission urges States to strongly condemn violence against women and girls committed in armed conflict and post-conflict situations, and recognizes that sexual and gender-based violence affects victims and survivors, families, communities and societies, and calls for effective measures of accountability and redress as well as effective remedies.

14. The Commission urges States to strongly condemn all forms of violence against women and girls and to refrain from invoking any custom, tradition or religious consideration to avoid their obligations with respect to its elimination as set out in the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women.

15. The Commission recognizes that all human rights are universal, indivisible and interdependent and interrelated and that the international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner, on the same footing and with the same emphasis, and stresses that, while the significance of national and regional particularities and various historical, cultural and religious backgrounds must be borne in mind, it is the duty of States regardless of their political, economic and cultural systems to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

16. The Commission stresses that all States have the obligation, at all levels, to use all appropriate means of a legislative, political, economic, social and administrative nature in order to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls, and must exercise due diligence to prevent, investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against women and girls and end impunity, and to provide protection as well as access to appropriate remedies for victims and survivors.

17. The Commission stresses that the right to education is a human right, and that eliminating illiteracy, ensuring equal access to education, in particular in rural and remote areas, and closing the gender gap at all levels of education empowers women and girls and thereby contributes to the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls.

18. The Commission reaffirms that women and men have the right to enjoy, on an equal basis, all their human rights and fundamental freedoms. It urges States to prevent all violations of all human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls and to devote particular attention to abolishing practices and legislation that discriminate against women and girls, or perpetuate and condone violence against them.

19. The Commission stresses that the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women, including women's economic empowerment and full and equal access to resources, and their full integration into the formal economy, in particular in economic decision-making, as well as their full and equal participation in



public and political life, is essential for addressing the structural and underlying causes of violence against women and girls.

20. The Commission also recognizes the persistence of obstacles that remain for the prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, and that the prevention of and response to such violence require States to act, at all levels, at each and every opportunity in a comprehensive and holistic manner that recognizes the linkages between violence against women and girls and other issues, such as education, health, HIV and AIDS, poverty eradication, food security, peace and security, humanitarian assistance and crime prevention.

21. The Commission recognizes that women's poverty and lack of empowerment, as well as their marginalization resulting from their exclusion from social and economic policies and from the benefits of education and sustainable development, can place them at increased risk of violence, and that violence against women impedes the social and economic development of communities and States, as well as the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

22. The Commission recognizes that violence against women has both short- and long-term adverse consequences on their health, including their sexual and reproductive health, and the enjoyment of their human rights, and that respecting and promoting sexual and reproductive health, and protecting and fulfilling reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, is a necessary condition to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women in order to enable them to enjoy all their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and to prevent and mitigate violence against women.

23. The Commission expresses deep concern about violence against women and girls in public spaces, including sexual harassment, especially when it is being used to intimidate women and girls who are exercising any of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

24. The Commission expresses concern about violent gender-related killings of women and girls, while recognizing efforts made to address this form of violence in different regions, including in countries where the concept of femicide or feminicide has been incorporated in national legislation.

25. The Commission recognizes that the illicit use of and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons aggravates violence, inter alia, against women and girls.

26. The Commission recognizes the vulnerability of older women and the particular risk of violence they face, and stresses the urgent need to address violence and discrimination against them, especially in the light of the growing proportion of older people in the world's population.

27. The Commission reaffirms that indigenous women often suffer multiple forms of discrimination and poverty which increase their vulnerability to all forms of violence; and stresses the need to seriously address violence against indigenous women and girls.

28. The Commission recognizes the important role of the community, in particular men and boys, as well as civil society, in particular women's and youth organizations, in the efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

29. The Commission acknowledges the strategic and coordinating role of national machineries for the advancement of women, which should be placed at the highest possible level in government, for the elimination of discrimination and violence against women and girls, and the need to endow these machineries with the necessary human and sufficient financial resources to enable them to function effectively. The Commission also acknowledges the contributions of national human rights institutions where they exist.

30. The Commission recognizes the important role of the United Nations system, in particular of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), in addressing discrimination and violence against women and girls at the global, regional and national levels and in assisting States, upon their request, in their efforts to eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against women and girls.

31. The Commission stresses the importance of data collection on the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls, and in that regard takes note of the work of the Statistical Commission towards a set of indicators on violence against women.

32. The Commission welcomes the progress made in addressing violence against women and girls such as the adoption of relevant laws and policies, the implementation of preventive measures, the establishment of protection and appropriate support services for victims and survivors and improvement in data collection, analysis and research. In this regard, the Commission welcomes the contributions and participation of governments, at all levels, and all relevant stakeholders in efforts to address violence against women and girls in a holistic manner.

33. The Commission recognizes that despite progress made, significant gaps and challenges remain in fulfilling commitments and bridging the implementation gap in addressing the scourge of violence against women and girls. The Commission is in particular concerned about: insufficient gender-sensitive policies; inadequate implementation of legal and policy frameworks; inadequate collection of data, analysis and research; lack of financial and human resources and insufficient allocation of such resources; and existing efforts not always being comprehensive, coordinated, consistent, sustained, transparent and adequately monitored and evaluated.

34. The Commission urges governments, at all levels, and as appropriate, with the relevant entities of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates and bearing in mind national priorities, and invites national human rights institutions where they exist, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, the private sector, employer organizations, trade unions, media and other relevant actors, as applicable, to take the following actions:

### **A. Strengthening implementation of legal and policy frameworks and accountability**

(a) Consider ratifying or acceding to, as a particular matter of priority, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and their respective Optional Protocols, limit the extent of any reservations, formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible in order to ensure that no reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Conventions, review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them and withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the relevant treaty; and implement them fully by, inter alia, putting in place effective national legislation and policies, and encourages State parties in their reporting to relevant treaty bodies to include requested information on measures to address violence against women and girls;

(b) Encourage the use of all relevant sources of international law, international guidelines and best practices regarding protection of victims and survivors to combat violence against women and girls;

(c) Adopt, as appropriate, review, and ensure the accelerated and effective implementation of laws and comprehensive measures that criminalize violence against women and girls and that provide for multidisciplinary and gender-sensitive preventive and protective measures, such as emergency barring orders and protection orders, the investigation, submission for prosecution and appropriate punishment of perpetrators to end impunity, support services that empower victims and survivors, as well as access to appropriate civil remedies and redress;

(d) Address and eliminate, as a matter of priority, domestic violence through adopting, strengthening and implementing legislation that prohibits such violence, prescribes punitive measures and establishes adequate legal protection against such violence;

(e) Strengthen national legislation, where appropriate, to punish violent gender-related killings of women and girls, and integrate specific mechanisms or policies to prevent, investigate and eradicate such deplorable forms of gender-based violence;

(f) Ensure women's and girls' unimpeded access to justice and to effective legal assistance so that they can make informed decisions regarding, inter alia, legal proceedings and issues relating to family law and criminal law, and also ensure that

they have access to just and effective remedies for the harm that they have suffered, including through the adoption of national legislation where necessary;

(g) Take the necessary legislative and/or other measures to prohibit compulsory and forced alternative dispute resolution processes, including forced mediation and conciliation, in relation to all forms of violence against women and girls;

(h) Review and where appropriate, revise, amend or abolish all laws, regulations, policies, practices and customs that discriminate against women or have a discriminatory impact on women, and ensure that the provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, commitments and principles, including the principle of non-discrimination;

(i) Mainstream a gender perspective into all legislation, policies and programmes, and allocate adequate financial and human resources, including through the expanded use of gender-responsive planning and budgeting, taking into account the needs and circumstances of women and girls, including victims and survivors of violence, for the development, adoption and full implementation of relevant laws, policies and programmes to address discrimination and violence against women and girls and for support to women's organizations;

(j) Increase the investment in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, taking into account the diversity of needs and circumstances of women and girls including victims and survivors of violence, including through mainstreaming a gender perspective in resource allocation and ensuring the necessary human, financial and material resources for specific targeted activities to ensure gender equality at the local, national, regional and international levels, as well through enhanced and increased international cooperation;

(k) Develop and implement effective multisectoral national policies, strategies and programs, with the full and effective participation of women and girls, which include measures for prevention, protection and support services and responses; data collection, research, monitoring and evaluation; the establishment of coordination mechanisms; allocation of adequate financial and human resources; independent national monitoring and accountability mechanisms; and clear timelines and national benchmarks for results to be achieved;

(l) Ensure that in armed conflict and post-conflict situations the prevention of and response to all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual and gender-based violence, are prioritized and effectively addressed, including as appropriate through the investigation, prosecution and punishment of perpetrators to end impunity, removal of barriers to women's access to justice, the establishment of complaint and reporting mechanisms, the provision of support to victims and survivors, affordable and accessible health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health, and reintegration measures; and take steps to increase women's participation in conflict resolution and peace-building processes and post-conflict decision-making;

(m) Ensure accountability for the killing, maiming and targeting of women and girls and crimes of sexual violence, as prohibited under international law, stressing the need for the exclusion of such crimes from amnesty provisions in the context of conflict resolution processes, and address such acts in all stages of the armed-conflict and post-conflict resolution process, including through transitional justice mechanisms, while taking steps to ensure the full and effective participation of women in such processes;

(n) End impunity by ensuring accountability and punishing perpetrators of the most serious crimes against women and girls under national and international law, and stressing the need for the alleged perpetrators of those crimes to be held accountable under national justice or, where applicable, international justice;

(o) Take effective steps to ensure the equal participation of women and men in all spheres of political life, political reform and at all levels of decision-making, in all situations, and to contribute to the prevention and the elimination of discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(p) Underline commitments to strengthen national efforts, including with the support of international cooperation, aimed at addressing the rights and needs of women and girls affected by natural disasters, armed conflicts, other complex humanitarian emergencies, trafficking in persons and terrorism, within the context of actions geared to addressing and eliminating violence against women and girls and the realization of the internationally agreed goals and commitments related to gender equality and the empowerment of women, including the Millennium Development Goals; and also underline the need to take concerted actions in conformity with international law to remove the obstacles to the full realization of the rights of women and girls living under foreign occupation, so as to ensure the achievement of the above-mentioned goals and commitments;

(q) Ensure that the specific needs of women and girls are incorporated into the planning, delivery and monitoring of, and infrastructure for, disaster risk reduction programmes and protocols and humanitarian assistance to address natural disasters, including those induced by climate change such as extreme weather events and slow onset impacts, with their full participation, and that in disaster preparedness efforts and in post-disaster settings, the prevention of and response to all forms of violence against women and girls, including sexual violence, are prioritized and adequately addressed;

(r) Address violence against women and girls resulting from transnational organized crime, including trafficking in persons and drug trafficking, and adopt specific policies to prevent and eradicate violence against women in crime prevention strategies;

(s) Strengthen bilateral, regional and international cooperation, by consolidating existing mechanisms and developing new initiatives consistent with the United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and its supplementary Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children,

and by implementing the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons;

(t) Take appropriate measures to address the root factors, including external factors, that contribute to trafficking in women and girls; prevent, combat and eliminate trafficking in women and girls by criminalizing all forms of trafficking in persons, in particular for the purpose of sexual and economic exploitation, as well as by strengthening existing civil and criminal legislation with a view to providing better protection of the rights of women and girls and by bringing to justice and punishing the offenders and intermediaries involved, including public officials, by protecting the rights of trafficked persons and preventing revictimization; take appropriate measures to ensure that identified victims of trafficking in persons are not penalized for having been trafficked; provide identified victims of trafficking appropriate protection and care, such as rehabilitation and reintegration in society, witness protection, job training, legal assistance, confidential health care and repatriation with the informed consent of the trafficked person, regardless of their participation in any legal proceeding; and accelerate public awareness, education and training to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation;

(u) Strengthen international cooperation, including through the fulfillment of international official development assistance commitments that supports multi-sectoral policies, strategies, programmes and best practices, in accordance with national priorities aimed at achieving sustainable development and the realization of the empowerment of women, particularly towards ending violence against women and girls and promoting gender equality;

(v) Encourage private sector investment in programmes, campaigns and strategies to respond to, prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, including sexual harassment at the workplace, and to empower victims and survivors of violence;

(w) Adopt and fund policy reforms and programmes, and support education, in order to sensitize, train and strengthen the capacity of public officials and professionals, including the judiciary, police and military, as well as those working in the areas of education, health, social welfare, justice, defense and immigration; and hold public officials accountable for not complying with laws and regulations relating to violence against women and girls, in order to prevent and respond to such violence in a gender-sensitive manner, end impunity and avoid the abuse of power leading to violence against women and the revictimization of victims and survivors;

(x) Prevent, investigate and punish acts of violence against women and girls that are perpetrated by people in positions of authority, such as teachers, religious leaders, political leaders and law enforcement officials, in order to end impunity for these crimes;

(y) Create and enhance a supportive environment for increased consultation and participation among all relevant stakeholders in efforts to address violence against



women and girls, especially organizations working at the community level, in order to promote the empowerment of women and girls, as well as victims and survivors, so they can become agents of change and their knowledge and experience can contribute to the elaboration of policies and programmes;

(z) Support and protect those who are committed to eliminating violence against women, including women human rights defenders in this regard, who face particular risks of violence;

(aa) Take appropriate measures to ensure the human rights and protection of women and girls deprived of their liberty and/or under State custody or State care from all forms of violence, in particular sexual abuse;

(bb) Adopt a life-cycle approach in efforts to end discrimination and violence against women and girls, and ensure that specific issues affecting older women are given greater visibility and attention, are addressed through the fulfillment of obligations under relevant international conventions and agreements and are included in national policies and programmes to prevent and eliminate violence against women;

## **B. Addressing structural and underlying causes and risk factors so as to prevent violence against women and girls**

(cc) Accelerate efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls and ensure their equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to education and to the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health; ensure that all children, particularly girls, have equal access to, and complete, free and compulsory primary education of good quality, and renew their efforts to improve and expand girls' education at all levels, including the secondary and higher levels, in all academic areas; and increase the ability of girls to attend school and extracurricular activities by investing in public infrastructure projects and accessible quality public services and providing a safe environment;

(dd) Promote women's full participation in the formal economy, in particular in economic decision-making, and their equal access to full employment and decent work; empower women in the informal sector; and ensure that women and men enjoy equal treatment in the workplace, as well as equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, and equal access to power and decision-making, and promote sharing of paid and unpaid work;

(ee) Accelerate efforts to develop, review and strengthen policies, and allocate adequate financial and human resources, in order to address the structural and underlying causes of violence against women and girls, including gender discrimination, inequality, unequal power relations between women and men, gender stereotypes, poverty as well as their lack of empowerment, in particular in the context of the economic and financial crisis; and accelerate efforts to eradicate poverty and persistent legal, social and economic inequalities, including by strengthening the economic

participation, empowerment and inclusion of women and girls, in order to decrease their risk of violence;

(ff) Refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries;

(gg) Take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational and other measures to protect and promote the rights of women and girls with disabilities as they are more vulnerable to all forms of exploitation, violence and abuse, including in the workplace, educational institutions, the home and other settings;

(hh) Undertake legislative, administrative, financial and other measures to give women full and equal access to economic resources, including the right to inheritance and to ownership of land and other property, credit, natural resources and appropriate technologies, inter alia, by means of international cooperation; prioritize and intensify initiatives towards the economic empowerment of women at the grass-roots level, including through entrepreneurship education and business incubators, as a way of uplifting their status, thereby reducing their vulnerability to violence;

(ii) Refrain from using social justifications for denying women their freedom of movement, the right to own property and the right to equal protection under the law;

(jj) Design and implement national policies that aim at transforming those social norms that condone violence against women and girls, and work to counteract attitudes by which women and girls are regarded as subordinate to men and boys or as having stereotyped roles that perpetuate practices involving violence or coercion;

(kk) Develop and implement educational programmes and teaching materials, including comprehensive evidence-based education for human sexuality, based on full and accurate information, for all adolescents and youth, in a manner consistent with their evolving capacities, with the appropriate direction and guidance from parents and legal guardians, with the involvement of children, adolescents, youth and communities, and in coordination with women's, youth and specialized non-governmental organizations, in order to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women of all ages, to eliminate prejudices and to promote and build informed decision-making, communication and risk reduction skills for the development of respectful relationships and based on gender equality and human rights, as well as teacher education and training programmes for both formal and non-formal education;

(ll) Carry out awareness-raising and education campaigns, in cooperation with civil society organizations, especially women's organizations, through different means of communication, targeting the general public, young people, men and boys, to address the structural and underlying causes of violence and abuse against women and girls; to overcome gender stereotypes and promote zero tolerance for such violence; to remove

the stigma of being a victim and survivor of violence; and to create an enabling environment where women and girls can easily report incidences of violence and make use of the services available and of protection and assistance programmes;

(mm) Mobilize communities and institutions to address and change attitudes, behaviours and practices that perpetuate and condone gender stereotypes and all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, by engaging with women's and youth organizations, national machineries for the advancement of women, national human rights institutions where they exist, schools, educational and media institutions and others directly working with women and girls, men and boys and with individuals at all levels of society and in all settings, religious and community leaders and elders, teachers and parents;

(nn) Promote and protect the human rights of all women, including their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence; and adopt and accelerate the implementation of laws, policies and programmes which protect and enable the enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including their reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and their review outcomes;

(oo) Develop and implement gender-sensitive policies, strategies, programmes and measures which promote greater understanding and recognition that caregiving is a critical societal function, and encourage the equal sharing of responsibilities and chores between men and women in caregiving, including for persons with disabilities, older persons and people living with HIV, as well as for child-rearing, parenting and domestic work; and also work to change attitudes that reinforce the division of labour based on gender, in order to promote shared family responsibility for work in the home and reduce the domestic work burden for women and girls;

(pp) Engage, educate, encourage and support men and boys to take responsibility for their behaviour, to ensure that men and adolescent boys take responsibility for their sexual and reproductive behaviour, and to refrain from all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls; develop, invest in and implement policies, strategies and programmes, including comprehensive education programmes to increase their understanding of the harmful effects of violence and how it undermines gender equality and human dignity, promote respectful relationships, provide positive role models for gender equality and encourage men and boys to take an active part and become strategic partners and allies in the prevention and elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls;

(qq) Review, enact and strictly enforce laws and regulations concerning the minimum legal age of consent and the minimum age for marriage, raising the minimum age for marriage where necessary, and generate social support for the enforcement of these laws in order to end the practice of child, early and forced marriage;

(rr) Ensure the provision of viable alternatives and institutional support, including for girls who are already married and/or pregnant, especially educational opportunities with an emphasis on keeping girls in school through post-primary education and promoting the empowerment of girls through improving educational quality and ensuring safe and hygienic conditions in schools, physical access to education, including by establishing safe residential facilities and childcare, and increasing financial incentives to women and their families where necessary;

(ss) Ensure the access of adolescents to services and programmes on preventing early pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and HIV, ensuring personal safety, and preventing the use and abuse of alcohol and other harmful substances;

(tt) Develop policies and programmes, giving priority to formal and informal education programmes that support girls and enable them to acquire knowledge, develop self-esteem and take responsibility for their own lives, including access to a sustainable livelihood; and place special focus on programmes to educate women and men, especially parents and caregivers, on the importance of the physical and mental health and well-being of girls, including the elimination of child, early and forced marriage, violence against women and girls, female genital mutilation, child sexual exploitation, including commercial sexual exploitation, sexual abuse, rape, incest and abduction, and the elimination of discrimination against girls such as in food allocation;

(uu) Develop and support existing policies and programmes targeting children and young people, especially women, who have experienced or witnessed domestic violence or sexual abuse, including protection for children in the justice system, so as to reduce the risk of their possible revictimization or perpetration of violence and restore their health; and implement such programmes in a gender-responsive manner with the meaningful participation of young people, civil society and women's and youth organizations, and educational and health institutions;

(vv) Recognize the important role the media can play in the elimination of gender stereotypes, including those perpetuated by commercial advertisements, and in promoting non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive reporting, including by preserving the confidentiality of the identity of victims and survivors where appropriate; and, to the extent consistent with freedom of expression, encourage the media to improve public awareness on violence against women and girls, to train those who work in the media and to develop and strengthen self-regulatory mechanisms to promote balanced and non-stereotypical portrayals of women, with a view to eliminating discrimination against and the exploitation of women and girls and to refraining from presenting them as inferior beings and to exploiting them as sexual objects and commodities, and instead present women and girls as creative human beings, key actors and contributors to and beneficiaries of the process of development;

(ww) Support the development and use of information and communications technology and social media as a resource for the empowerment of women and girls, including

access to information on the prevention of and response to violence against women and girls; and develop mechanisms to combat the use of information and communications technology and social media to perpetrate violence against women and girls, including the criminal misuse of information and communications technology for sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, child pornography and trafficking in women and girls, and emerging forms of violence, such as cyber-stalking, cyber-bullying and privacy violations that compromise the safety of women and girls;

(xx) Improve the safety of girls at, and on the way to and from, school, including by establishing a safe and violence-free environment by improving infrastructure such as transportation and providing separate and adequate sanitation facilities, improved lighting, playgrounds and safe environments; adopting national policies to prohibit, prevent and address violence against children, especially girls, including sexual harassment and bullying and other forms of violence, through measures such as conducting violence prevention activities in schools and communities, and establishing and enforcing penalties for violence against girls;

(yy) Take measures to ensure that all workplaces are free from discrimination and exploitation, violence, and sexual harassment and bullying, and that they address discrimination and violence against women and girls, as appropriate, through measures such as regulatory and oversight frameworks and reforms, collective agreements, codes of conduct, including appropriate disciplinary measures, protocols and procedures, referral of cases of violence to health services for treatment and police for investigation; as well as through awareness-raising and capacity-building, in collaboration with employers, unions and workers, including workplace services and flexibility for victims and survivors;

(zz) Increase measures to protect women and girls from violence and harassment, including sexual harassment and bullying, in both public and private spaces, to address security and safety, through awareness-raising, involvement of local communities, crime prevention laws, policies, programmes such as the Safe Cities Initiative of the United Nations, improved urban planning, infrastructures, public transport and street lighting, and also through social and interactive media;

(aaa) Condemn and take action to prevent violence against women and girls in health-care settings, including sexual harassment, humiliation and forced medical procedures, or those conducted without informed consent, and which may be irreversible, such as forced hysterectomy, forced caesarean section, forced sterilization, forced abortion, and forced use of contraceptives, especially for particularly vulnerable and disadvantaged women and girls, such as those living with HIV, women and girls with disabilities, indigenous and Afro-descendent women and girls, pregnant adolescents and young mothers, older women, and women and girls from national or ethnic minorities;

(bbb) Further adopt and implement measures to ensure the social and legal inclusion and protection of women migrants, including women migrant workers in origin, transit and destination countries, and promote and protect the full realization of their human

rights, and their protection against violence and exploitation; implement gender-sensitive policies and programmes for women migrant workers and provide safe and legal channels that recognize their skills and education, provide fair labour conditions, and as appropriate facilitate their productive employment and decent work as well as integration into the labour force;

(ccc) Also take measures to ensure the protection of self-employed workers in cross-border work and women seasonal workers from violence and discrimination;

### **C. Strengthening multisectoral services, programmes and responses to violence against women and girls**

(ddd) Establish comprehensive, coordinated, interdisciplinary, accessible and sustained multisectoral services, programmes and responses at all levels, and with the support of all available technologies, for all victims and survivors of all forms of violence against women and girls based on their needs, that are adequately resourced and include effective and coordinated action by, as appropriate, police and the justice sector, legal aid services, health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health, and medical, psychological and other counseling services, including specialist services as appropriate, State and independent women's shelters and counseling centres, 24-hour hotlines, social aid services, one-stop crisis centres, immigration services, child services, public housing services to provide low threshold, easy to reach and safe assistance for women and children, as well as assistance, protection and support through access to long-term accommodation, educational, employment and economic opportunities, and take steps to ensure the safety and security of health-care workers and service providers who assist and support victims and survivors of violence, and in cases of girl child victims ensure that such services and responses take into account the best interests of the child;

(eee) Further take measures to coordinate services through the establishment of processes for referral between services of victims and survivors while ensuring their confidentiality and safety, establish national benchmarks and timelines, and monitor their progress and implementation; as well as ensure access to coordinated multisectoral services, programmes and responses for all women and girls at risk of or subjected to violence;

(fff) Ensure the availability and accessibility for victims and survivors and their children of services, programmes and opportunities, for their full recovery and reintegration into society, as well as full access to justice, including for those subjected to domestic violence and other forms of violence, by putting in place measures, and where these exist, expanding such measures; and ensure the provision of adequate and timely information on available support services and legal measures, when possible in a language that they understand and in which they can communicate;

(ggg) Create, develop and implement a set of policies, and support the establishment of rehabilitative services, in order to encourage and bring changes in the attitudes and



behaviours of perpetrators of violence against women and girls and to reduce the likelihood of reoffending, including in cases of domestic violence, rape and harassment, as well as monitor and assess their impact and effect;

(hhh) Improve access to timely, affordable and quality health systems for women and girls, including through gender-sensitive national strategies and public-health policies and programmes that are comprehensive, affordable and better targeted to addressing their needs and that encourage women's active participation in their design and implementation; and also enhance women's access to affordable, safe, effective and good quality treatment and medicines, with a special emphasis on the poor, vulnerable and marginalized segments of the population;

(iii) Address all health consequences, including the physical, mental and sexual and reproductive health consequences, of violence against women and girls by providing accessible health-care services that are responsive to trauma and include affordable, safe, effective and good-quality medicines, first line support, treatment of injuries and psychosocial and mental health support, emergency contraception, safe abortion where such services are permitted by national law, post-exposure prophylaxis for HIV infection, diagnosis and treatment for sexually transmitted infections, training for medical professionals to effectively identify and treat women subjected to violence, as well as forensic examinations by appropriately trained professionals;

(jjj) Accelerate efforts to address the intersection of HIV and AIDS and violence against all women and girls, in particular the common risk factors, including through strategies to address domestic and sexual violence, and to strengthen coordination and integration of policies, programmes and services to address the intersection between HIV and violence against women and girls, and ensure that responses to HIV and AIDS are leveraged to prevent violence against them, while meeting their specific needs for sexual and reproductive health-care services, as well as HIV and AIDS diagnosis, affordable and accessible treatment and prevention, including procurement and supply of safe and effective prevention commodities, including male and female condoms;

(kkk) Eliminate discrimination and violence against women and girls living with HIV as well as the caregivers of persons living with HIV, and take into account their vulnerability to stigma, discrimination, poverty and marginalization from their families and communities when implementing programmes and measures which encourage the equal sharing of caring responsibilities;

(III) Expand the availability of health-care services, and in particular, strengthen maternal and reproductive health centres, as key entry points that provide support, referrals to services and protection to families, women and girls at risk of violence, especially sexual violence, and which provide support to adolescents in order to avoid early and unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections, through education, information and access to sexual and reproductive health-care services;

## D. Improving the evidence-base

(mmm) Carry out continued multidisciplinary research and analysis on the structural and underlying causes of, and cost and risk factors for, violence against women and girls and its types and prevalence, in order to inform the development and revision of laws and their implementation, policies and strategies, and make such information public to support awareness-raising efforts;

(nnn) Collect, collate, analyze and disseminate reliable, comparable and anonymized data and statistics on a regular basis, disaggregated by sex and age, at the national and local levels on different forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, its causes and consequences, including the health costs and economic costs to society of such discrimination and violence, and also consider all other relevant factors, such as accessibility, to inform the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of laws, policies and programmes;

(ooo) Improve the collection, harmonization and use of administrative data, including, where appropriate, from the police, health sector and the judiciary, on incidents of violence against women and girls, including data on the relationship between the perpetrator and victim and geographic location, ensuring that confidentiality, ethical and safety considerations are taken into account in the process of data collection, and improving the effectiveness of the services and programmes provided and protecting the safety and security of the victim;

(ppp) Develop national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess policies and programmes, including preventive and response strategies to address violence against women and girls in both public and private spheres;

(qqq) Promote the sharing of best practices and experiences, as well as feasible, practical and successful policy and programme interventions; as well as promote the application of these successful interventions and experiences in other settings.

35. The Commission emphasizes that ending violence against women and girls is imperative, including for the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and must be a priority for the eradication of poverty, the achievement of inclusive sustainable development, peace and security, human rights, health, gender equality and the empowerment of women, sustainable and inclusive economic growth and social cohesion, and vice versa. The Commission strongly recommends that the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women be considered as a priority in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.

## The Road to Beijing: A U.N. Chronology

- 1945** The United Nations charter affirms “faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, and in equal rights of men and women.”
- 1947** The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women is established.
- 1948** UN General Assembly adopts the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- 1954** General Assembly urges governments to eliminate laws and customs specific to women that violate the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.
- 1974** Bucharest: First U.N. World Conference on Population. The West, led by the U.S., advocates strict population control policies. U.S. links economic assistance to development of family planning programs.
- 1975** Mexico City: First World Conference on Women, International Women’s Year. Equality, Development and Peace are the principle themes. Mexico City led to the declaration by the U.N. General Assembly of the United Nations Decade for Women 1975-1985.
- 1979** General Assembly adopts the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW or the Women’s Treaty). It includes commitments to equal political, economic, social, cultural and civil rights. As of May 1996, 185 nations have ratified the CEDAW Treaty. The U.S. is the only major industrialized nation that has not.
- 1980** Copenhagen: Second World Conference on Women. 1,326 official delegates from 145 countries attend; 8,000 people participate in the NGO forum’s parallel conference. Review progress of U.N. Decade for Women (1975-1985) and adopt a Program of Action for the second half of the Decade for Women.
- 1984** Mexico City: Second World Conference on Population. A significant number of countries identify growing population as a key restraint to national development and call for more family planning programs. The Reagan Administration’s Mexico City Policy signals cutbacks in U.S. support for family planning programs.
- 1985** Nairobi: Third World Conference on Women. 1,400 delegates from 157 nations adopt the “Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000,” which provides a framework for action at the national, regional and international levels to promote greater equality and opportunity for women based on the three objectives of the U.N. Decade for Women: Equality, Development and Peace. (These also served as the objectives of the Fourth World Conference on Women held in Beijing, China, in September 1995.) The goals of the strategies include: equal rights for women, the abolition of slavery and prostitution, establishment of a legal minimum age for marriage and punishment for female infanticide. At the social policy level, the strategies call for access by all women to maternity leave, maternal health care, family planning, nutrition and education, as well as increased national health budgets; shared parenting responsibilities, recognition of women’s unpaid work, wage equity, participation of women in society beyond the domestic sphere, and an end to the abuse of women and children.

- 1990** A mid-decade evaluation of the Forward-Looking Strategies by the Commission on the Status of Women reveals that the world community had become more conscious and sensitive to issues affecting women, however, there seems to be a loss of momentum in implementation.
- 1992** Rio de Janeiro: United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), known as the “Earth Summit,” recognizes the essential role of women in environmental management and sustainable development.
- 1993** Vienna: World Conference on Human Rights. The Global Tribunal on Violations of Women’s Rights and the Vienna Declaration condemn all forms of violence against women and affirms that “the human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable part of universal human rights.”
- 1994** Cairo: International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) recognizes women’s health and rights as the cornerstones of effective population and development policies. Acknowledges linkages between population, environment, development and economics. Program of Action calls for education, empowerment, comprehensive health and reproductive health programs for women and girls, and efforts to eradicate poverty and share family responsibilities.
- 1995** Copenhagen: World Summit for Social Development. Agenda reflects full range of women’s issues. Declaration confirms commitments to assuring equality, and determines that women’s political and economic empowerment is essential to combat poverty and social disintegration.
- 1995** Beijing: Fourth World Conference on Women. More than 4,000 delegates from 189 countries attend conference, and 50,000 participate at the NGO forum. The official Platform for Action addresses 12 Critical Areas of Concern including violence and discrimination against women and girls, reproductive and sexual rights, economic empowerment (including access to credit and inheritance rights), equal access to education and the need for family supports.
- 2000** The special session of the General Assembly on "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century" took place at the UN Headquarters in New York from 5 to 9 June 2000 and adopted a Political Declaration and outcome document entitled "further actions and initiatives to implement the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action".
- 2005** Beijing+10 Ten years of experience since Beijing have yielded further advances. What were once called women’s issues have been transformed into matters of primary national and international significance. Stronger women’s networks and alliances have taken shape across issues and borders alike. NGO Committee on the Status of Women meets worldwide.
- 2013** The Agreed Conclusions on The Elimination And Prevention Of All Forms Of Violence Against Women And Girls urges governments to address structural and underlying causes and risk factors so as to prevent violence.
- 2015** Beijing+20 The U.N. Commission on the Status of Women will undertake a review of progress made in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, 20 years after its adoption at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

## UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS TREATY BODIES

All ten receive support from the Human Rights Treaties Division,  
Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Geneva

Human Rights Committee (CCPR) monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (1966) and its optional protocols;

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR) monitors implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966);

Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) monitors implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (1965);

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) monitors implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979) and its optional protocol (1999);

Committee against Torture (CAT) monitors implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment (1984);

Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC) monitors implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) and its optional protocols (2000);

Committee on Migrant Workers (CMW) monitors implementation of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (1990);

Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) monitors implementation of the International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006);

Committee on Enforced Disappearances (CED) monitors implementation of the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (2006); and

The Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (SPT) established pursuant to the Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture (OPCAT) (2002) visits places of detention in order to prevent torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

[Ending female genital mutilation vital for healthy communities](#) June 2014 – At a high-level panel held in Geneva the United Nations human rights chief Navi Pillay called for concerted efforts to urgently address female genital mutilation, calling it a form of gender-based discrimination and violence that must be eradicated if women, girls and their communities are to thrive and be healthier.



## VII. Resources

### GENDER JUSTICE – A STUDY/ACTION GUIDE

By Elizabeth Fisher and Linda MacKay

#### Session 1 Gender, Human Rights and Global Organizing

Participants learn about the history of the U.N. conferences that led to Beijing and about women's organizing around the world. They also discuss the *Platform for Action* and the Critical Areas of Concern specifically, women's rights as human rights and violence against women.

#### Session 2 Health, Sexuality and Reproductive Rights

Through discussion and role play, participants share different perspectives on women's health, sexuality and reproductive rights and the connection between population, health and women's empowerment.

#### Session 3 Value of Work and Economic Issues

A comprehensive but accessible discussion helps participants understand global economics, income disparity issues, the origin of the global debt crisis, the gender division of labor, unwaged work and the impact of structural adjustment programs on poor women's lives in both the United States and abroad.

#### Session 4 Access to Education, the Media and Communications

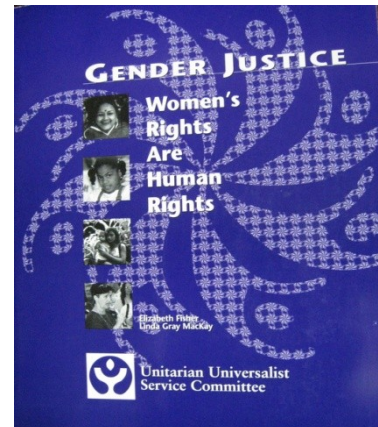
Through stories and sharing, participants learn the importance of women and girls access to education, their distorted portrayal in the media and their lack of access to decision-making positions in society.

#### Session 5 Environmental Sustainability

A key issue in environmental degradation is consumption patterns in the industrialized nations. During a role play, participants become acquainted with environmental projects and perspectives from different countries.

#### Session 6 Developing Plans for Action

The final session introduces participants to international human rights law and the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). They also learn how to analyze the federal budget and begin to see how few resources are allocated to meet the needs of poor women and their children. Participants then develop their own plan of action to promote women's rights. Among the options for action: forming a media task force to monitor how women are portrayed in the media.



Copies available for \$5 from Elizabeth Fisher; used copies can be found online



## Books, Videos, Organizations

### ***SNAP, the Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests***

[www.snapnetwork.org](http://www.snapnetwork.org) SNAP is the world's oldest and largest support group for clergy abuse victims. SNAP was founded in 1988 and has more than 18,000 members in 79 countries. Despite the word "priest" in their title, they have members who were molested by religious figures of all denominations, including nuns, rabbis, bishops, and Protestant ministers, as well as those who suffered institutional abuse or those hurt by scout leaders, coaches and teachers.

### ***#YesAllWomen***

In the days following a mass shooting spree in Santa Barbara, Calif., the outpouring of justifiable anger at misogyny on Twitter via the hashtag [#YesAllWomen](#) and on [Tumblr](#) has filled us with hope. The enormous online response to the deadly rampage in Santa Barbara went from comments on murders of women to catcalls and the events in-between that make girls and women feel like targets. They document that violence against girls and women is commonplace. Anita Hill praised [#YesAllWomen](#) for making the connection from harassment to murder. "Many of the women who wrote me letters after 1991 mentioned this," Hill told the audience.

### ***Rebecca Solnit, Men Explain Things to Me (2014)***

In her latest book, the anthology that begins with her internationally famous essay about the practice that has become idiomatically known as "mansplaining," Solnit offers a series of essays that move from the comical obtuseness of a patronizing white male in Aspen to the not uncommon end result of male entitlement: violence against women, including rape and murder.

### ***Our Whole Lives (Comprehensive Sex Education Curriculum)***

[www.uua.org/re/owl](http://www.uua.org/re/owl) The Unitarian Universalist Association and the United Church of Christ have long been supporters of comprehensive sex education and offer an outstanding lifespan sexuality education curricula entitled *Our Whole Lives* with specially prepared material for students of varied age groups.

### ***Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice (RCRC)***

[www.rcrc.org](http://www.rcrc.org) While member organizations are religiously and theologically diverse, they are unified in the commitment to preserve reproductive choice as a basic part of religious liberty. The Coalition founders are clergy and lay leaders from mainstream religions, many of whom had provided women with referrals to safe abortion services before the Supreme Court legalized abortion in *Roe v. Wade*.

### ***United Nations Association of the United States of America***

[www.unausa.org](http://www.unausa.org) The UNA-USA is dedicated to educating, inspiring and mobilizing Americans to support the principles and vital work of the United Nations, strengthening the United Nations system, promoting constructive United States leadership in that system, and achievement of the goals of the UN Charter.

### ***Office on Violence against Women — U.S. Department of Justice***

[www.ovw.usdoj.gov](http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov) Latest actions taken and interpretations given by the Justice Department and the Attorney General.

### ***United Nations Foundation***

[www.unfoundation.org](http://www.unfoundation.org) The United Nations Foundation links the UN's work with others around the world, mobilizing the energy and expertise of business and non-governmental organizations to help the UN tackle issues including climate change, global health, peace and security, women's empowerment, poverty eradication, energy access, and U.S.-UN relations. Headquarters in Washington, D.C. Publication: GLOBAL PROGRESS



### ***Women's International League for Peace and Freedom***

[www.wilpf.org](http://www.wilpf.org) WILPF is a non-governmental organization (NGO) covering every continent with an International Secretariat based in Geneva and a New York office focused on the work of the United Nations. Since 1915, they have brought together women from around the world who are united in working for peace by non-violent means and promoting political, economic and social justice for all.

### ***Meiklejohn Civil Liberties Institute***

[www.mcli.org](http://www.mcli.org) Founded in 1965, MCLI has become part of the infrastructure of the peace and justice community, empowering people to protect and expand their rights under law. Meiklejohn is a center for peace law, an organizer for the right to education, an information clearinghouse on social change, an advocate of government accountability, a training center, and repository of history. It has been called a "Civil Liberties Church" and a think tank combining archives and ongoing research. Headquarters in Berkeley, California. Publication: HUMAN RIGHTS NOW!

### ***Unitarian Universalist Service Committee***

[www.uusc.org](http://www.uusc.org) By partnering with grassroots organizations, mobilizing and educating members and supporters, and advocating for changes in public policy, UUSC promotes economic rights, advances environmental justice, defends civil liberties, and preserves the rights of people in times of humanitarian crisis — from the right to organize as workers to the right to safety and relief in the wake of disaster. Headquarters in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

### ***American Friends Service Committee***

[www.afsc.org](http://www.afsc.org) AFSC is a Quaker organization devoted to service, development, and peace programs throughout the world. Their work is based on the belief in the worth of every person, and faith in the power of love to overcome violence and injustice. AFSC has 38 U.S. offices, and 15 international locations. Look for the publication ***End Operation Streamline*** which exposes the system that wants to divide our communities, separate families, and make us see immigrants as criminals. [www.EndStreamline.org](http://www.EndStreamline.org)

### ***California Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking***

[www.castla.org](http://www.castla.org) Through legal, social, and advocacy services, CAST helps rehabilitate survivors of human trafficking, raises awareness, and affects legislation and public policy surrounding human trafficking. CAST was founded in 1998 in Los Angeles, Calif. and opened the country's first shelter exclusively housing survivors of human trafficking.

### ***Rise Up & Call Her Name: A Women-honoring Journey into Global Earth-based Spirituality by Elizabeth Fisher***

[www.RiseUpAndCallHerName.com](http://www.RiseUpAndCallHerName.com) Ethical principles central to a variety of earth and woman-honoring traditions around the globe and throughout history form the core of each session. A wide range of activities including chants, music, art, dance, poetry, dialogue and ritual provide diverse opportunities to develop fresh perspectives on fearlessness, compassion, nurturing and numerous other aspects of multiculturalism and personal spirituality.

### ***Funny Times***

[www.funnytimes.com](http://www.funnytimes.com) This monthly American publication (Cleveland Heights, Ohio) includes cartoons, columns and essays that derive humor from pop culture, current events, politics and day-to-day living. The political content is often subversive and has a progressive/liberal perspective. There is a print version, a website, and a digital edition.

### ***Defending Dissent Foundation***

[www.defendingdissent.org](http://www.defendingdissent.org) The DDF, previously known for many years as the **National Committee against Repressive Legislation** (NCARL) is a national not-for-profit advocacy organization in the United States, dedicated to defending the right of political dissent. Based in Washington, D.C., NCARL was founded in 1960 as a group opposing the House Un-American Activities Committee (known popularly by the acronym HUAC) of the U.S. House of Representatives. The DDF is dedicated to monitoring the FBI and police conduct, exposing the cyber intelligence excesses of the Homeland Security Department, and supporting civil liberties.

### ***People for the American Way***

[www.pfaw.org](http://www.pfaw.org) Located in Washington, D.C., People for the American Way monitors "right-wing" and hate group activities, conducting rapid response, political lobbying, and volunteer mobilization. In addition, the organization's affiliated foundation runs programs designed for voter education and politically progressive infrastructure building. PFAW has been active in recent years in battles over judicial nominations and on issues including school class size, and actively support such proposals as the separation of church and state, civil rights, voting rights, and equal rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) people and promotion of civic participation.

### ***Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch***

Both [www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org) and [www.hwr.org](http://www.hwr.org) have the goal to conduct research and generate action to prevent and end grave abuses of human rights, and to demand justice for those whose rights have been violated.



### ***Southern Poverty Law Center***

[www.splcenter.org](http://www.splcenter.org) SPLC is an American nonprofit civil rights organization noted for its legal victories against white supremacist groups; its legal representation for victims of hate groups; its classification of militias and extremist organizations; and its educational programs that promote tolerance. Founded in 1971 in Montgomery, Alabama.

## Celebrate Women's Equality Day

In 1971, at the behest of Rep. Bella Abzug (D-NY), the U.S. Congress designated August 26 as "Women's Equality Day," in honor of ratification of the 19<sup>th</sup> amendment (August 26, 1920) which gave women the right to vote nationally for the first time. Beginning in the earliest days of the Nation, women sought the right to vote. By 1917, advocates of women's suffrage, including Alice Paul, were picketing the White House. In January 1918, President Wilson embraced women's suffrage, urging Congress to pass legislation authorizing an amendment granting it. The 1920 passage of the 19th Amendment was the culmination of a massive, peaceful civil rights movement by women that had its formal beginnings in 1848 at the world's first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York.

### Alice Paul and the Suffrage Movement Gold Coin

In 2012 **the first coin was released in the First Spouse Gold Coin Series and features Alice Paul.** It is a 24-karat gold coin struck in proof quality, giving it a frosted foreground and a mirror-like background. The Presidential \$1 Coin Act of 2005 contains a provision to provide continuity of the First Spouse Gold Coin Program during those times in which a President served without a first spouse. This provision applies to Chester Arthur, whose wife, Ellen Arthur, died before he took office.



In this case the public law specifies that the obverse (heads side) feature:

"...a design incorporating the name and likeness of Alice Paul, a leading strategist in the suffrage movement, who was instrumental in gaining women the right to vote upon the adoption of the 19th amendment and thus the ability to participate in the election of future Presidents, and who was born on January 11, 1885, during the term of President Arthur;" and that "the reverse [tails] ...be representative of the suffrage movement."

### How far does this country still have to go to achieve gender equality?

**Five Things Women Still Can't Do In 2014...** **Receive equal pay** for equal work (the gender gap is real); **Marry another woman** (legal in 19 states, banned in 31); **Access an abortion** (restrictive legislation disproportionately impacts young women and poor women); Be **guaranteed paid maternity leave** (a devastatingly small number of U.S. companies — 16 percent — offer paid leave); **Be sure their health insurance covers contraception** (despite the mandate of the Affordable Care Act, some insurers are refusing to cover birth control).

**France has set an important example** for the rest of the globe by passing a sweeping gender-equality law (August 2014) that eases current restrictions on abortion, encourages paternity leave and the sharing of domestic duties at home. The new law also addresses equality in the workplace, and provides measures to support women vulnerable to domestic abuse and poverty. In 2013, France adopted legislation requiring the government to pay for all legal abortions, as well as contraception for adolescent girls between the ages of 15 and 18.



## About the Authors



**Liz Fisher** has extensive experience in writing and editing as well as bringing about the successful completion of specific project objectives in a variety of settings. Her experience and know-how includes:

- **Author of Rise Up & Call Her Name: A Woman-honoring Journey into Earth-based Spiritualities** Writing, editing and producing this multicultural curriculum gave Liz intimate insight into diverse cultural experiences and perspectives. Liz was the executive producer of the two hour video, the music CD, and the author and editor of the leader's guide and the 400-page sourcebook in print and CD-ROM versions.
- **Writing the majority of the text and collaborating on the design of *Gender Justice: Women's Rights are Human Rights*** she also traveled to the U.N. Women's Conference in China in 1995, bringing back stories and information that she wove into *Gender Justice*.
- **Leadership in grassroots Women and Religion Movement** – While acting as co-facilitator of a regional Women and Religion group for several years, Liz was a primary participant in the production of multiple programs and retreats dealing with the issues that arise when reflecting on the relationships among: spirituality, religious history and practice, individual freedom and equality of women. As a strategy for organizing, Liz wrote many publications that were used by grassroots groups to organize their own circles and committees, including ones that address woman-honoring circle worship and shared leadership group facilitation.
- **Professional Publishing** – As an acquisitions editor for many years, she was responsible for the publication of popular trade books that educated varied levels of audience, managing multiple projects simultaneously. This required: locating appropriate authors; negotiating and managing contracts with authors and consultants; evaluating industry trends for suitable topics; and establishing the style for effectively teaching the concepts.
- **Creator of *Revealing Ancestral Mysteries*** – Currently in development, this story-based public education, community building website encourages those experiencing this multimedia production to think deeply about spiritual questions which impact their personal and community life. Innovative actions designed to aid life passages are suggested.



**Bob Fisher** has made service to a democratic society and equal opportunity for all central tenants of his life. Bob espouses non-violent social change to bring about basic human and civil rights for all. Influenced by the progressive Catholicism of Vatican II in the 1960s, Bob supported the free university and student power drive, and actively opposed the war in Vietnam through participating in teach-ins and non-violent protests. He became active in the Unitarian Universalist Social Justice movement in the 1980s, supporting anti-apartheid and anti-nuclear weapons campaigns. Impressed by liberation theology, Bob was a prime mover in the religious movement providing Sanctuary to Central Americans who came here seeking political asylum under international law.

Bob has 15 years proposal and project management experience and 22 years global communications experience, specializing in complex, dynamic environments requiring network management and security. He has held positions as senior technical consultant, opportunity/bid manager, and global service manager, while working for several data networking and cloud computing companies including British Telecom, MCI, and Verizon.