



## Economic and Social Council

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### Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-ninth session

10–21 March 2025

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and  
to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly  
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and  
peace for the twenty-first century”**

### **Statement submitted by Slum Child Foundation, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council\***

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



## Statement

Gender inequality fuelled by poverty remains a major barrier to fulfilling international treaties and conventions, particularly among marginalized communities in remote, rural, and impoverished urban areas worldwide. This persistent inequality has opened the door to a range of interconnected issues, including substance use, crime, sexual and gender-based violence, violations of women's and girls' rights (spanning sexual, physical, financial, and psychological abuses), human trafficking targeting young women and girls (both locally and across borders), and firearm smuggling in conflict zones, to mention a few.

Both state and non-state actors worldwide have been working collaboratively to address emerging gender equality gaps in society. Efforts have been made through various platforms, with governments closely partnering with international organizations, intergovernmental bodies, and civil society to tackle these challenges.

Thirty years ago, governments worldwide convened in Beijing to develop strategies for addressing global inequality, with a particular focus on young women. Since then, significant gaps have emerged in effectively tackling gender inequality. The Beijing Declaration has played a crucial role in bridging these gaps, yet there is a need to review and update it to address evolving issues. This includes integrating substance use prevention and treatment, crime prevention and justice systems centered on young women and girls, local and cross-border human trafficking prevention, and a health-centered, human-rights approach to sexual and reproductive health for young women in marginalized and hard-to-reach communities. Much has changed since the Declaration's adoption, and these updates are essential to meet current challenges.

The theme for the 2024 International Day of the Girl is "Girls' Vision for the Future." To mark the day, the Slum Child Foundation, along with other like-minded civil society organizations, held a community-based consultative dialogue where girls voiced their concerns on issues affecting them, focusing on themes of the 2025 Commission on the Status of Women, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice. It was clear that these areas demand immediate attention from state parties.

The General Assembly adopted resolution [66/170](#), declaring October 11 as the International Day of the Girl Child, aiming to recognize girls' rights and address the unique challenges they face globally while promoting empowerment and human rights. However, slow political commitment from state parties remains a concern.

In 2025, the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women will mark the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration, where state parties will review their achievements, acknowledge shortcomings, and establish joint commitments for the future, emphasizing not only women's rights but also the often-overlooked rights of girls. Additionally, the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice will review the 2019 Ministerial Outcome Document and the Kyoto Declaration. It is essential that young people's voices take center stage in these discussions, now and in the future.

Substance use, crime, and human trafficking have increasingly affected marginalized young girls in rural and impoverished communities, exposing them to further vulnerabilities and limiting their access to emotional, physical, and psychological justice. These issues impede their growth and development, and without urgent action, even the best treaties, including the Compact for the Future, will fail to bring meaningful change.

Adolescent girls have the right to safe, educated, and healthy lives, not only during their formative years but also as they mature into adulthood. With effective support, girls can change the world – today as empowered individuals and tomorrow as workers, mothers, entrepreneurs, mentors, leaders, and advocates. Investing in adolescent girls' rights today promises a more equitable and prosperous future, with half of humanity as equal partners in addressing climate change, political conflicts, economic growth, disease prevention, and global sustainability.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals, adopted by world leaders in 2015, outline a roadmap for inclusive, sustainable progress. Achieving gender equality across these goals will foster justice and inclusion, build economies that work for all, and sustain our shared environment for future generations.

We, therefore call for immediate action by state parties around the globe for:

- Political Good will to ensure full implementation for women and girl's rights treaties and convention to the later by member states as outline in the Beijing, Maputo Declaration, 2019 ministerial outcome document, Kyoto Declaration and further harmonize all these policies to speak to each other in terms of implementation.
- Ensure inclusivity leaving no one behind especially the boy child who for the longest time has been side-lined in the entire equation and domestication of the same in all line departments and ministries by member states.
- Children centre conversation should form the review and domestication of the international policies by member states, it should be noted that children voice irrespective of gender are human rights voices too.
- Waiver on the cost of Sanitary / Dignity kit pack for girls and further more create a system where these dignity kits are accessible and available at the grassroots level through the establishment of sanitary Towel banks at the lowest level within the society, at this dare age we should not be having a fraction of our society who still does not have smooth monthly period without dignity kit.
- Accessible and affordable safe spaces for children, treatment drug treatment facilities for both boys and girls, and in addition to that calls for more technical and financial resources towards evidence based drug demand reduction programs, Gender Equality, Evidence based Crime Prevention programs, poverty reduction, Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights programs that promote dignity for both gender.
- Perpetrators of violence against children should be brought to book and justice accorded to affected and infected children since justice delayed is justice denied.
- Promotion of close working collaboration by both state and non-state actors to enhance service delivery to address the Gender Equality gaps within the emerging trends space.
- Bring to an end the violation of young girls rights that is being promoted by both local and international Human Trafficking actors all in the name of promoting safe and secure labour to minors who by a law are not allowed to work as per the united Nations convention on children rights.
- Promote an alternate Empowerment programs to the young children involved in crime at a tender age as they are reintegrated into the laid down education system so as to fight boredom.

- Return to school policies should be exercised and promoted by all member's states especially the young girls who become young mother before attaining the age of eighteen.
  - Allocation of more resources for the full realization of pact for the future goals.
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