



## Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
10 December 2013

Original: English

---

### Commission on the Status of Women

#### Fifty-eighth session

10-21 March 2014

**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly, entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”: implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives**

### **Statement submitted by Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, 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.



## **Statement**

### **No development without disarmament**

Militarization and cultures of militarism are double-edged swords wielded against peace: on the one hand, they exacerbate violence; on the other, they raid the coffers of peace.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom calls for a post-2015 development agenda that invests in gender equality and peace for sustainable development rather than in degenerative development, inequality and violence. It is vital that we change our course to adopt an integrated approach to security that invests in equality, sustainable development and peace rather than inequality, militarism and war. Therefore, the agenda must be deeply and widely inclusive of disarmament, human rights, and women, peace and security.

The members of Women's International League for Peace and Freedom around the world call on the Commission on the Status of Women and the international community to take the following actions:

- Reduce military spending and arms production with a view to total and universal disarmament
- Redirect resources from military spending towards human security, environmental sustainability and economic justice
- Promote women's full and equal participation and rights in all relevant processes

### **Total and universal disarmament**

Weapons are tools of war, which are used to create a culture of fear and violence. Since our founding in 1915, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom has called for total and universal disarmament, in particular through international agreements.

Conventional weapons, including small arms and light weapons, are used to wreak havoc and take lives. High-tech and emerging weapons technologies, such as nuclear weapons and drones, are used as political tools to manipulate international relations, destabilize our planet and undermine human rights. Environmental degradation and its incapacitating effect on sustainability and community health is similarly caused and exacerbated by conflict, the military-industrial complex, and arms production and consumption and, moreover, by the dangerous use and lasting effects of depleted uranium, the remnants of war and unsustainable mining.

### **Reduction of military spending and arms production**

Military spending and militarism also raid financing and threaten opportunities for women's human rights, development and peace.

In 2011, global military spending was more than \$1.7 trillion. This amount is equivalent to over 24 years of the foreign aid required to reach the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. It is also equivalent to 700 years of the United Nation regular budget, or to 2,928 years of funding the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women).

Many countries spend money on weapons and war, or clean-up after war, while struggling to meet their objectives for socioeconomic development or their obligations to achieve equal human rights. The reduction of weapons production and expenditure on military personnel and equipment would help free up resources for human rights-based development and provide a foundation for long-term sustainable peace.

### **Women's participation**

Rather than investing in militarism and arms, we call on Member States to invest in women's full and equal participation and human rights as a foundation for peace. We call on Member States to take concrete action and provide financing to realize their obligations to respect, protect and fulfil women's equal human rights, progressively and without retrogression.

Women have paid, economically and physically, the cost of militarization and arms proliferation for too long, and they must be included in developing relevant solutions. Disarmament and a redirection of resources from military spending to gender-equitable socioeconomic development will be crucial in ensuring that adequate resources are directed towards realizing women's right to equal participation and inclusive development and peace for all.

### **Conclusion**

There can be no development without disarmament and the achievement of women's full and equal human rights.

Women's International League for Peace and Freedom reaffirms our commitment to the realization of sustainable peace. We ask Governments to strengthen their commitments to an integrated approach that promotes people over profit, and human over military security. In this way, we can turn our swords into ploughshares and change course from investing in inequality, degenerative development and violence to investing in equality, sustainable development and peace.

---