



General Assembly

Distr.: General
23 September 2025

English only

Human Rights Council

Sixtieth session

8 September–3 October 2025

Agenda item 5

Human rights bodies and mechanisms

Joint written statement submitted by Women's Federation for World Peace International, International Alliance of Women, International Council of Women, International Federation of Business and Professional Women, Soroptimist International, Universal Peace Federation, Zonta International, non-governmental organizations in general consultative status, Dianova International, Federation of American Women's Clubs Overseas (FAWCO), Graduate Women International (GWI), International Association for Religious Freedom, Co-ordinating Council for South Asia, International Association of Youth and Students for Peace, Inc., Medical Women's International Association, Mothers Legacy Project, National Alliance of Women's Organizations, Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland (SIGBI) Limited, Soroptimist International of Europe, Soroptimist International South East Asia Pacific, Tandem Project, The, US Women Connect, Widows Rights International, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, non-governmental organizations in special consultative status*

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[18 August 2025]

* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



Human Rights and the United Nations Crisis: Protecting Women, Security, and the United Nations System

The Link between Liquidity Issues, Human Rights and Global Governance

Women's Federation for World Peace International, the NGO Committee on the Status of Women Geneva and other cosignatory partners to this statement, including the sister organization, NGO Committee on the Status of Women Vienna warn that the UN's liquidity crisis is not just a financial issue but a looming humanitarian crisis. It undermines the Human Rights Council's ability to protect vulnerable groups, including women, girls, and marginalized communities.

Funding delays stall investigations, treaty reviews, missions, and complaint mechanisms, potentially costing lives. Beyond operational setbacks, the crisis threatens the UN's credibility as a neutral defender of human rights and risks reducing its founding principles to empty promises.

The United Nations at 80 should not only be seen as a milestone but also as a turning point; a true moment for reflection and bold transformation. The world needs global governance. We live in a time where the rule of international law is undermined. The Human Rights Council must take a stand and put forward concrete suggestions for sustainable and equitable change.

Strengthening the tripartite collaboration between the UN, Member States, and civil society is essential to building resilience in times of crisis. We recommend that the Human Rights Council establish a new multi-stakeholder entity that amplifies the local voice, strengthens inter-agency linkages, and fosters genuine partnerships.

We all recognise that the UN human rights system is not just a safeguard for the vulnerable, but a safeguard for all nations. Its collapse would not be contained within any single country's borders. When it weakens, no country is immune.

History has shown that unchecked human rights violations in one region fuel instability, displacement, radicalization, and insecurity elsewhere. Refugee flows increase, borders are strained, and regional instability undermines trade and economic growth.

We cannot allow financial neglect to dismantle decades of progress, nor can we stand by while the world's most vulnerable are silenced. Timely funding is the lifeline of justice, stability, and peace.

Why the Crisis Exists

The liquidity crisis stems from:

- Delayed or withheld payments of assessed contributions.
- Rising demands due to global crises that far exceed current funding structures.
- Reduced trust and confidence in the United Nations as a whole.
- Concerns over equality within the United Nations (such as Security Council reform) leading to reduced trust and confidence in the United Nations as a whole.
- Mismanagement and overspending.

Decision-making power is concentrated in a few Member States, while smaller nations and civil society voices are marginalized. The growing and glaring disparities result in delays in payments, delays in approval of budgets and short-term fixes replacing long-term solutions. The ability of the UN to act effectively, either in times of crisis evinced by the many areas of outrageous conflict, or for the long term such as the inability to agree on plastic reduction, further undermines the United Nations. It is forced into a state of perpetual emergency, unable to plan or respond effectively.

The Impact on all Women and Girls

In all areas, and especially in fragile and conflict-affected settings, women and girls depend on UN supported programs for protection from violence, access to health care, education, and pathways to economic independence.

When funding is withheld or delayed:

- Shelters for survivors of gender-based violence close.
- Legal aid programs for women disappear.
- Girls are pulled from school or forced into child marriage.
- Maternal health services are cut, increasing maternal mortality and other preventable deaths.

Such setbacks are not temporary; they reverse decades of hard-won gains.

The crisis also undermines commitments under the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), and so importantly, the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Without resources, guaranteeing prioritization, women's leadership in peace processes, governance, and community decision-making is weakened or lost.

The Essential Role of United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

The stand-alone entity for all women and girls is more vital now than when it was established in 2010 because of the robust advocacy of civil society. UN Women remains central to achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls globally. Despite challenges, its existence has brought unprecedented visibility, coordination, and resources to the women's rights agenda.

Criticism of its performance should not be used to dismantle or merge it. Instead, Member States should:

- Highlight and replicate its success stories.
- Provide it with predictable, adequate funding.
- Expand its capacity to address emerging challenges, including climate change, digital gender divides, and economic inequality.
- An empowered UN Women benefits every society, because gender equality is a driver of economic growth, peace, and sustainable development.
- Women and girls are more than 50% of the world's population. They are the majority and without their full empowerment peace and prosperity for humanity is impossible.

Urgent Measures to Prevent Collapse

We call on all Member States to:

1. Pay all outstanding contributions immediately and honour their obligations under Article 19 of the UN Charter without delay.
2. Create a rules-based Financial Safety Net, ensuring essential mandates under Item 5 continue regardless of liquidity shortfalls.
3. Protect gender equality funding, by guaranteeing that resources for all women and girls are untouchable.
4. Institutionalize NGO consultation in all budgetary decisions affecting human rights.

5. Synchronize national payment cycles with UN assessments to prevent the accumulation of arrears.
6. Publish a quarterly “Human Rights Funding Dashboard” to ensure transparency of contributions and allocations.

The Role of Civil Society

Civil society is not merely a partner, but a co-guardian of the UN’s mission. Without the participation of Civil Society, the UN’s reach and legitimacy are diminished.

Organisations such as NGO CSW Geneva, a group of NGOs with consultative relations with ECOSOC, who:

- Monitor the Human Rights Council and other UN bodies.
- Provide data, analysis, and targeted recommendations.
- Share best practices from grassroots women’s movements.
- Provide expertise from the field.
- Provide analysis of global trends.
- Keep sustained public and diplomatic pressure on Member States.

A vibrant Civil Society keeps the UN accountable and ensures that human rights are defended from the ground up.

Call to all Member States

This is not about sustaining an institution for its own sake. This is about sustaining the promise that no voice will go unheard, no-one is left behind, and no abuse will go unchallenged.

When nations share responsibility, security is stronger for all. A weakened UN will have consequences for every Member State. Paying the dues on time now prevents far greater human, economic, and social costs later.

If the liquidity crisis is not urgently addressed, the consequences will be global, immediate, and irreversible, such as:

- Humanitarian programs will stall, leaving millions without aid.

Across conflict zones, refugee camps, and disaster-stricken regions, UN operations provide food, medicine, and shelter that governments and local systems cannot or won’t. Every week of delay in funding is measured not in accounting figures, but in lives lost.

- Progress toward the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will be reversed, especially on gender equality. Without urgent support, SDG 5 on gender equality will slip further out of reach, dragging the 2030 Agenda with it.
- Peacekeeping operations will shrink, risking fragile peace agreements.
- Women and girl’s rights protections will erode, increasing violence and inequality.
- Multilateralism will suffer irreparable harm, destroying global trust in cooperation.

This crisis is urgent. The Human Rights Council itself is already unable to carry out all its functions, undermining international law and weakening every Member State’s capacity to respond to human rights abuses. The choice before Member States is clear: invest in the UN today, or face a far costlier breakdown of peace, security, and justice tomorrow.

Our Recommendations

Immediate Payment of Assessed Contributions

- The UN needs timely delivery of resources, not just promises.
- Payment is both a legal obligation under the Charter and a moral duty for all Member States.

Diversified and Sustainable Financing

- Move beyond short-term, unstable funding.
- Encourage multi-year commitments, solidarity levies, and innovative mechanisms.
- Financial stability ensures continuity for vulnerable groups (women and girls in conflict, refugee children, climate-affected communities).

Strengthened Multi-Stakeholder Governance

- Human rights decisions should not rest with Member States alone.
- Establish a revitalized multi-stakeholder body (potentially in Geneva).
- Ensure active participation of all women, youth, and marginalized groups in UN decision-making.

Protect Gender Equality Funding

- Gender equality is crucial for peace and sustainable development.
- Funding for all women and girls is often cut first in crises.
- Safeguard gender equality resources as permanent, untouchable, and non-negotiable investments.

Reaffirm and Strengthen the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)

- UN Women amplifies women's voices in the UN system.
- Its mandate is underfunded despite strong accomplishments.
- Ensure adequate and predictable resources to empower women in recovery, peace, and climate action.

Engage Civil Society in United Nations reform

- Civil Society must be treated as a co-guardian of human rights.
- Institutionalize grassroots participation in UN financing and reform.
- Enhance legitimacy, accountability, and overall impact.

Urgent “Call to Action”

The UN system that protects human rights is on the brink of collapse. This is not about budgets, but about moral responsibility. If Member States fail to act, they will bear the consequences both abroad and at home.

This is a test of leadership. Inaction will erase decades of progress and erode the foundations of global peace. The choice is stark but simple: restore the UN's financial stability now, or watch the system unravel when the world needs it most.

We urge all stakeholders to strongly consider the urgent request for a new entity to ensure full stakeholder partnership to strengthen the Human Rights Council's work and act as an example of best practice to the UN structure.

We beseech you to uphold the principles of the Charter and all its pillars and ensure that the underlying issues behind the financial crisis are faced and overcome. None of us can afford the financial difficulties of the UN to become the barrier to peace, security and gender justice. All of us must act swiftly to ensure a peaceful, prosperous and equitable world for all.

NGO Committee on the Status of Women United Voices for Global Impact Avenir Liban I am
Claudia Womens United Nations Research Network Soroptimist International Africa NGO
Committee on the Status of Women Geneva NGO Committee on the Status of Women Vienna,
NGO(s) without consultative status, also share the views expressed in this statement.