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peace for the twenty-first century”

Statement submitted by Sociedade Filantropica Maria de Nazare, 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.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.



Statement

More than women's right to gender equality

For centuries, it was believed as an unquestionable axiom that women could not take positions of greater responsibility, because they would be inept to play roles that were regarded as exclusively meant for the *modus operandi* of men, for the masculine way of perceiving and thinking the world.

In the early decades of the modern feminist movement, great benefactors of humanity have bravely postulated that women were fully capable of performing any task executed by their counterparts of the opposite gender. The two great world wars of the twentieth century made this potential very clear, with the immersion, in mass, of millions of women in industrial and battlefield support activities.

For most of the past century, countless legions of sisters of our species made the effort to psychologically cross-dress, acting, speaking, and even interpreting existence from a male perspective, so that they could be respected as competent professionals and academics.

As the end of the last century approached, however, it began to sprout, in professional women of various fields, the willingness to imprint into the workplace their feminine prism of seeing, feeling, and acting, thus adding significant value to the efficiency of business, research, and achievements in all areas of human action and knowledge. It became obvious that women could not only do everything that men could, but they could do it differently and, very often, better.

In the universe of science, the arts, public administration, and media, among others, bloomed the realization that the feminine presence brings, in every sense, an extraordinary complementation of productivity and of quality in services, creations, and deliberations within institutions, companies, and human groupings. Still to this day, women's contribution is scantily dimensioned. Nonetheless, women have broadened angles of observation, opened previously undetected possibilities of solution to old problems, and integrated apparently divergent perspectives. They have carried sensitivity, intuition, and beauty to the contexts they take part in, although many of their contributions are not even measurable or immediately profitable.

However, in the course of the past decades, the results of this movement of insertion of women in all sectors of social life – which is causing them to become more powerful in culture, politics, and entrepreneurship each day – have not yet been clearly recognized and are often understood as consequences of a natural evolution of civilization. Yes, there is this development, coupled to a revolution of paradigms. Yes, there is an expansion of the potential to grasp the reality, a greater lucidity and shrewdness in the interpretation of events, and a more accurate intuition in the pursuit of purposes and creative solutions to problems. But all this can be perfectly attributed, without any exaggeration in the association of cause and effect, to the progressive and massive participation of women in the concert of societies.

Finally, at the turn of the century, it was already clear enough, in more enlightened environments, that women's influence was of paramount importance to the broader and more effective success of any enterprise, to the point that their male colleagues began to realize the need to acquire certain skills more peculiar to the feminine psyche, such as empathy, tolerance for difference, and the power to endure contradictory and indeterminately unresolvable situations.

Even leadership, highly valued in our ultracompetitive culture, has been better understood and exercised by women, in accordance with contemporary principles of respect for difference of opinion, free will, discernment, and the personal choices of

others. To that end, men who were more attentive to the evolutionary trend lines of the culture and the “collective organism” began to realize the need to compensate themselves for their limitations in many relevant cognitive and social abilities that women have and that almost spontaneously sprout from their complex and subjective feminine minds, such as the greater propensity for multitasking and the spirit of coordination and cooperation in work teams.

Today, women are seen as more appropriate options for many positions of action and command that used to be entirely dominated by the masculine gender. More feminine and gay men become successful in professional settings, due to having an experience of better integration of the two complementary psychic poles – feminine and masculine – of human consciousness.

On the other hand, in considering the historical crisis of survival we are experiencing on a worldwide scale, especially in regard to environmental issues, fratricidal clashes between cultures and civilizations, and progressive nuclear arms race between nations, it becomes evident that the feminine worldview and their inclusive and conciliatory approaches are urgently needed.

Therefore, we are of the opinion that, with the utmost urgency and in the greatest quantity possible, women must perch themselves on prominent positions in the heart of communities, countries, and organizations to heal the dangerous imbalance generated by the exacerbated masculinity and to reverse the risk of extinction of our species on the globe and the devastation of the entire planetary biosphere.

We understand that it is not simply about women’s rights to gender equality, but a moral duty for all of us – men and women – and a crying need for humanity to honour femininity, in order to foster the ascension of women to positions in the upper echelons and preferably of direct leadership, across the fabric of society and on as many and as broad battlefronts as possible.
