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entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and
peace for the twenty-first century”

Statement submitted by Uçan Süpürge Vakfı, 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

Uçan Süpürge Vakfı (the Flying Broom Foundation) is a women's civil society organization dedicated to fostering communication, cooperation, and solidarity among women's civil society organizations. Our mission encompasses combating early and forced marriages, enhancing women's and girls' right to access to justice, and striving for gender equality through our work in the realms of civil society, culture and the arts.

Article 16 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals titled “Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions” emphasizes the promotion of the rule of law at both national and international levels, and the assurance of equal access to justice for all. To this end, Flying Broom Foundation draws attention to the pressing problems of access to justice in Turkey and many other countries. Despite being a signatory to the Convention, Turkey was the first state to withdraw from the Istanbul Convention. With this, the guarantee for women and girls to live equally in a violence-free society has been greatly diminished. Violations persist daily, as the rights established by laws and international conventions remain underutilized by individuals seeking access to justice and are not fully embraced by those within the legal system, including judges, prosecutors, lawyers, and others.

CEDAW Recommendation No. 33 underscores the importance of six interrelated and necessary components, including the questionability, availability, accessibility, quality, remedies for victims and accountability of the justice system, all of which are critical for ensuring access to justice. While differences in the legal, social, cultural, political, and economic conditions for mainstreaming require the implementation of these features differently in each State Party, the core elements of the approach are universally applicable and require immediate implementation.

The review theme of CSW68, “Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls”, is among the agreed conclusions of CSW63. The climate crisis, disasters and wars around the world make it increasingly difficult for women and girls to access justice and legal aid services. In the aftermath of the earthquake disaster in Turkey, there was a surge in early and forced marriages, a decline in girls' school enrolment rates, and a rise in violations such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and sexual assault in settings such as makeshift containers and tents, with many of these incidents going unreported. The barriers to accessing justice encompass physical inaccessibility (especially for women with disabilities), economic inaccessibility, discriminatory discourse and hate language, and lack of education. As the whole world has experienced in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, discrimination deepens, and inequality grows after major crises and disasters. This is also true for access to justice and human rights mechanisms. The climate crisis and the ongoing global disasters emphasize the importance of preparedness for ensuring access to justice. We recognise that access to justice is an essential right for all, and yet it is evident that women and girls continue to face disadvantages due to gender inequality.

To ensure the universal access to justice and public services, we encourage all Member States to:

- Collect and analyse gender-disaggregated data related to access to justice, violence against women, and discrimination to identify areas of concern and track progress over time.

- Advocate for training programs for legal professionals, law enforcement, and judiciary personnel on gender sensitivity, human rights, and the unique challenges women and girls face in accessing justice.
- Promote the establishment and funding of legal aid services and support networks, especially in disaster-prone areas, to ensure that women and girls have access to legal assistance and counselling.
- Encourage community-based education and awareness programs to inform women and girls about their rights, available support services, and the importance of reporting incidents of violence and discrimination.
- Advocate for legal reforms to address gaps in existing legislation related to gender-based violence, child marriage, and other issues affecting women and girls.
- Promote policies and initiatives that enhance women's economic independence and financial inclusion, as economic empowerment is closely linked to access to justice.
- Highlight the importance of aligning efforts to improve access to justice for women and girls with the broader Sustainable Development Goals, particularly those related to gender equality, education, and reducing inequalities.
- Stress the importance of accountability mechanisms at both national and international levels to hold governments and institutions responsible for their commitments to gender equality and access to justice.
- Encourage the active involvement of civil society organizations, in the design, implementation, and monitoring of policies and programs related to access to justice and gender equality.
- Highlight the need to ensure that the voices of marginalized and disadvantaged groups, such as women with disabilities, LGBTQ+, elderly, immigrants, and those from minority backgrounds, are heard and considered in policymaking processes.
- Strengthening collaboration and coordination among women's organizations through a diverse range of networking, information-sharing, and awareness-raising initiatives, as well as cultural and artistic activities, to bolster grassroots access to justice.

Endorsed by below non-governmental organizations in consultative status:

Cinsel Şiddetle Mücadele Derneği

Kırmızı Biber Derneği
