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Statement submitted by Canadian International Chaplaincy Association, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Councils*

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

The theme of CSW68 encompasses poverty alleviation and the vital strengthening of institutions and financing with a gender perspective – objectives that align seamlessly with Ten by Three®’s core mission: to lift artisans out of poverty through our innovative Prosperity Wages® model which promotes a cycle of entrepreneur-driven growth.

It is our belief that poverty is not a life sentence but a condition. We further believe that the rural poor, particularly women in developing countries, are incredibly resourceful and fully capable of pulling themselves out of poverty, given the right financial framework. Our journey of graduating thousands of women out of poverty testifies to the incredible resilience and untapped potential of the rural poor, especially women. The success of our Prosperity Wages® model over nearly two decades serves as a testament to the transformative power of ethical, sustainable financial systems that enable dignified earnings. When they are given the means to earn with dignity, they do not just elevate themselves but also uplift their communities, thus serving as a catalyst for systemic change.

At CSW68, it’s vital to turn our discussions into action. We urge member nations and participants to:

Unveil the Unspoken Reality of the Current Fair Trade System

As a global community, we must address the limitations and gaps of Fair Trade. While groundbreaking, Fair Trade certifications can be prohibitively costly (often too costly for small organizations to obtain). Their enforcement at the grassroots level is often inadequately verified, leading to disparities between promised and actual practices.

Many Fair Trade vendors lack direct connections with artisans, functioning as middlemen without control over artisans’ working conditions, wages, or well-being. This results in artisans receiving low wages and working in substandard conditions. The certification becomes little more than a veneer, a palatable narrative for consumers who wish to shop ethically but may inadvertently perpetuate the very inequities they hoped to combat.

At Ten by Three®, we are committed to transcending these limitations. Our Prosperity Wages® model fosters a direct, impactful relationship with artisans, ensuring wages significantly higher than Fair Trade standards, often up to six times more in some countries. It’s beyond surviving. It’s thriving, growing, and investing in a brighter future for those we seek to help and support. In doing so, we represent what Fair Trade aspires to be – a truly ethical, transparent, and sustainable model that offers a path to financial independence for artisans.

We urge all organizations – no matter the size – to go beyond Fair Trade. We must scrutinize and reform systems to ensure true prosperity for those we serve. Sustainability must be central to our operations, creating living wages that allow artisans to invest in their futures and catalyze sustainable development. This approach not only impacts local economies but also advances global gender equality and poverty alleviation. We must focus on actual practices, not just certification badges, to achieve genuine, impactful, sustainable change.

Formulate and Implement Policies that Promote Ethical Trade Relationships

When nations unite to formulate ethical trade policies, the transformative impact is monumental. Fair Trade agreements that prioritize ethicality and sustainability

benefit artisans, communities, and economies. It markedly elevates the discourse from merely “surviving” to “thriving.”

When workers are paid not just the minimum but a living wage, they’re able to secure education for their children, healthcare for their families, and even make room for savings and investments for future growth. This is not charity; it’s a powerful form of economic stimulus. By empowering workers in developing nations to become active, financially independent agents of their destiny, new markets open and equitable global economic systems are created. When more people rise out of poverty, consumer choice expands, markets diversify, and global economic stability increases.

Channel Investments Toward Organizations and Initiatives with Proven Track Records

Targeted investment in organizations with proven track records of success, like Ten by Three®, is immensely powerful. These investments reverberate well beyond immediate beneficiaries, contributing to long-term global prosperity. Financially independent artisans, empowered by such investments, enter the global market, broadening the consumer base and encouraging sustainable practices.

At Ten by Three®, we have meticulously honed our Prosperity Wages® model over the past decade to reach a stage where we can confidently say that it works. It’s a living, breathing testament to what focused, ethical, and sustained investment can achieve.

Investing in models that work means rapid scaling and impact. For every dollar invested in organizations like Ten by Three®, the ROI is not just financial; it’s social and cultural. Women, the backbone of their communities, use these resources to enhance education, healthcare, and local welfare, leading to cyclical, multi-generational benefits. This investment reduces crime, improves health outcomes, and contributes to climate change mitigation through sustainable practices. It sets a precedent, a tangible example for other organizations and governments to follow.

By replicating this effective model, its collective impact can spearhead a global movement to eradicate poverty and economic disparities, forming a foundation for international partnerships. This network of responsible organizations can combat systemic inequities, leveraging collective financial and social power for real change.

Adopt Gender-Responsive Budgeting in International Aid Programs and Domestic Policies

Gender-responsive budgeting is not a luxury or an option; it’s a necessity. One that directly addresses systemic gender imbalances. More than a ‘women’s issue,’ it’s an economic, social, and ethical matter impacting everyone.

Adopting this approach sets a course for a more equitable world, channeling resources to programs and initiatives aimed at correcting gender disparities. It cultivates an environment where women’s contributions are essential and valued, not just welcomed but actively sought. Financially independent women significantly contribute to their communities, inspiring future generations.

The global impact of gender-responsive budgeting is profound. It serves as a replicable model, accelerating worldwide efforts towards gender equality. The financial power wielded by nations adopting such strategies influences international financial institutions, guides foreign policy, and steers global economic trends toward a more equitable future.

Gender-responsive budgeting sends a clear message to the global community: Women matter. Their empowerment is non-negotiable and central to sustainable

development goals. When this approach becomes a global norm, we can eradicate gender inequality, not just in isolated pockets but across the entire world at large.

Utilize Transparent Technology for Truth in Operations

In our quest for a more equitable world, technology's role is pivotal. Integrating transparent, advanced technology for data tracking is transformative, serving as a key ally in ensuring operational truthfulness. This transparency eliminates ambiguities, offering stakeholders a clear view of how practices affect both people and profits.

Technology brings ethical transparency, the backbone of trust. It offers indisputable, verifiable evidence of ethical practices, making visible how every dollar spent contributes to poverty alleviation. This is not just about accountability; it's about engendering trust and laying the foundation for a business model that can be scaled globally.

Technology, a catalyst for sustainable transformation, addresses the scalability challenges of traditional Fair Trade models. It provides a solid, replicable foundation, easily scalable to encompass more artisans, workers and markets, without compromising on ethical standards. This results in a model that mirrors its ethical prototype, creating a ripple effect that translates to real, measurable global impact.

Technology tracks tangible, quantifiable outcomes. It monitors vital success signals, such as artisans' escape from poverty and access to education, healthcare, essential services and viable housing. Technology such as this creates a transformative shift in how we view production and consumption. It redefines what ethical, transparent business looks like. Such a level of transparent technology magnifies the scope of what we can achieve in poverty alleviation and sustainable development.

Besides tracking dollars and cents, proper technology monitors real human progress. When consumers can see, firsthand, the life-changing effects of their purchases, when they can celebrate alongside artisans as they break free from poverty, it redefines what ethical, transparent business looks like and magnifies the ripple effect of human connection. Ten by Three®'s award-winning Artisan&You™ technology has been recognized by the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations and the BMW Group for intercultural innovation for doing just that and we know that it works.

By taking these steps as a global community, we create alignment with no less than fourteen of the admirable Sustainable Development Goals set forth by the United Nations as well as the theme of the CSW68. Making these efforts with decisive action also contributes directly to the effectiveness of initiatives like Ten by Three® and other smaller organizations who struggle to leave a larger global footprint of progress in the war on poverty and fight for women's equity. We welcome partnerships that aim to scale the impact of our Prosperity Wages® model and our Artisan&You® technology, thereby enriching the lives of artisans residing in poverty-stricken countries, fostering inter-organizational, multi-sector collaborations and advancing our collective mission toward gender equality and women's empowerment.