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**Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and  
to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly  
entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and  
peace for the twenty-first century”**

**Statement submitted by Deutsches Komitee für UN Women  
e.V, 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.

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\* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

## **Statement**

“Accelerating the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls” marked the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The strong call to action for the removal of systematic and structural barriers that prevent women and girls from enjoying their human rights across social, economic, political and environmental domains is still relevant. Yet, no country has achieved gender parity, and the current crisis threatens to erode hard-earned achievements.

While the world is facing numerous challenges that threaten progress for women and girls, the past years have also seen that gender equality is closely linked to achieving sustainable development for all.

The report of the UN Secretary-General on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, highlighted that commitments have not been matched by action, investments or accountability and that an approach of addressing symptoms rather than causes has led to a state of permanent crisis.

It is not enough that leaders recommit to turn the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action into a lived reality for all women and girls. We urge all member states to speed up action towards achieving Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality by implementing full financed, mainstreamed and monitored national action plans.

Particularly, participants in the Action Coalitions of the Generation Equality Forum need to take concrete steps for achieving measurable results. Closing the economic and social gaps are essential for women's and girl's empowerment. It requires legal regulations to enforce the principle of equal pay for equal work, a fair share of unpaid care work, quota systems, gender

budgeting and reporting, impact analysis on gender equality of every single measure and implementing supply chains and marketing practices that empower women.

COVID-19 pandemic underscored society's dependence on women both on the front line and at home, while simultaneously exposing structural inequalities across every sphere, from health to the economy, security to social protection. Responding to the pandemic is not just about rectifying long-standing inequalities, but also about building a resilient world in the interest of everyone with women at the centre of recovery. This will include implementation of social protection measures, wage subsidies and care services to counter the gender-specific impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, equal pay measures, and support for women in the informal economy and women entrepreneurs. All recovery plans need to be gender sensitive and need to improve gender equality.

Actions need to be taken to tackle all forms of violence against all women and girls. We urge all member states, especially the EU, who have not acceded to the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Istanbul Convention and the ILO Convention 190 to do so. We urge all Member States to raise awareness for these conventions and to implement it in legal education to condemn violence against women, to fight everyday sexism and to overcome role stereotypes.

Member States need to diminish the impact of climate change and achieve gender parity in leading positions of public and political life, including in parliaments and private sector of all countries around the world. It is most important to enhance collaboration with civil society to create safe spaces for women and girls to exercise their voice and leadership and ensure

enjoyment of their human rights. The elimination of stereotypes is crucial for attaining gender equality.

While the current COVID-19 pandemic created new challenges, the pandemic has led to a steep increase in violence against women and girls, particularly domestic violence in the context of COVID-19 lockdowns. Member States need to keep focused on closing the gender digital divide to ensure that women and girls can contribute to, and benefit from technology and innovation.

The National Committee Germany appreciates that UN Women has launched six Action Coalitions mobilizing governments, civil society, youth-led organizations, UN agencies and the private sector to catalyze collective action and drive increased investments to deliver concrete results to advance gender equality. We expect these partnerships to stand for activism, feminist solidarity, and youth leadership to achieve transformative change.