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Statement submitted by BPW Spain (Federacion Internacional De Empresarias BPW Spain), 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

“There is a woman at the beginning of all great things”. (Alphonse de Lamartine)

The future of our children is in our hands. We must continue fighting against governments that don't respect our planet and are driving us to the total destruction.

Women's rights mean life rights. Women are the driving forces that run the world. Women feed their families, especially in less developed countries.

As business women and business leaders, equality is our goal. We must accelerate female participation in boards of directors, in science, in technology. We must fix the leaky pipeline and retain female talent.

United Nations Climate Action:

We as BPW Spain (Federacion Internacional De Empresarias BPW Spain) have started an international campaign against climate crisis, #NOplanetNOlife. We want to promote prevention and adaptation campaigns to climate change in Latin America and particularly in Spain, our country.

Our planet is approaching an environmental crisis, which is already being felt in many important sectors for our society, such as human health, agriculture and food security, water supply, transportation, energy, ecosystems, and others. These impacts are expected to become increasingly disruptive to our world, societies and livelihood.

Our campaign's objective is to work as business women and important, active members of society by taking significant measures to prevent this crisis and integrate sustainable solutions into our business and daily lives. Leading by example.

As business women we think that the transition to the circular economy is the crucial response and the way to organize production and consumption in our global economy.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution has to be circular and our responsibility is that it becomes our moment, the female revolution.

Circular economy is the way to retain as much value as possible from resources, products, parts and materials to create a system that allows for longer life, optimal reuse, refurbishment, remanufacturing and recycling. It is the answer to the growing concern on resource shortages. We are increasingly aware that businesses as we historically knew them are literally unsustainable.

Humanity lives on ecological credit. It is no longer possible to exploit nature to infinity. To bridge the gap between the decrease in resources and the growing needs, we have to free ourselves from the linear logic of taking, doing, using, said Antoine Frérot. In the circular economy, the useless becomes useful. Less becomes more: less waste and more resources, less we take from nature, less pollution and more quality of life. Less is more!

We have celebrated a big sustainability forum to demonstrate business leaders that we can incorporate circular economy into our companies without losing profits, which rebounds in environmental benefits. Being a company committed to the environment will mean green long-term benefits.

Sustainable Development Goals. Making innovation and technology work for women.

We at BPW Spain also support Sustainable Development Goal 5 by empowering women through the use of information communications and technology.

If there are only men who create technology, we will end up in a world with products that respond mainly to their needs and skills, and women will be less prepared, thus making the digital gender gap bigger. If given the opportunity, women can become leading innovators in the age of automation and artificial intelligence. Women can help fix the digital gap. Women can help ensure that the algorithms are free of gender biases.

There is a deficit in knowledge of essential machine learning skills among women, with men outpacing them by 85 per cent. This means unequal access to economic opportunities. Given the current rates of tech evolution, an International Monetary Fund report estimates that 26 million female jobs across 30 countries are at risk of disappearing. It also predicts that 180 million women's jobs globally are at risk of displacement.

This demonstrates the urgent need to upskill women in this area and makes artificial intelligence a more welcoming environment for women. Without such efforts, it will be an uphill struggle to reach gender parity in this area.

The key is digital equality, leaving no one behind, boosting equality in the digital age to ensure that we do not widen inequalities through digital technologies.

Possible solutions to bridge the digital gap:

- Place greater focus on inclusion, empowerment and equality
- Promote intervention in algorithms
- Amplify women's voices: #Girlpower #Womanpower #womenleadership #somosbpw
- Follow female social networks
- Read women literature, educate
- Avoid damaging dialogues against women
- Invest in women businesses and start-ups.
- Engage young girls in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.
- Support UN Women's celebration of the International Girls in ICT Day around the world
- Boost men cooperation: men must help to promote women in the technology world and play a crucial role in improving workplace diversity

Women's general situation for the next 10 years

Women and children, who have contributed the least to the global climate crisis, suffer the worst impacts of it. Global warming will make them migrate to higher lands, or leave their islands. Higher temperatures and increased migration will also have harmful effects on the resurgence of diseases that we thought to have been long eradicated or brought under control.

Poverty around the world will increase. Measures have to be taken now to prevent widening income inequality. Greater investments in social security and laws that protect vulnerable populations are necessary.

We have to implement a new business approach. The Fourth Industrial Revolution will not take place without the circular economy. We have to use technology for our own profit and it should aim not only at improving businesses but also serving our society and placing human values, happiness and wellbeing at the heart.