



ICW-CIF

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF WOMEN

CONSEIL INTERNATIONAL DES FEMMES

Founded 1888

ICW-CIF Statement to mark the International Day of Peace

21 September 2024

The International Council of Women – ICW-CIF, a Non-Governmental Organization in consultative status with ECOSOC, has worked diligently to advance equal rights for women since its inception in 1888, holding steadfast in its commitment to help towards reaching the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. ICW-CIF firmly supports the efforts of the UN and of the International Community, to ensure that all human beings, including women and girls, will be able to reach their full potential in dignity.

The 2024 theme for the International Day of Peace - declared by the United Nations as “**Cultivating a Culture of Peace**” - has never been more of an actuality than this year...A year of unrest, conflicts and wars in so many places around the world.

We must remember that this year marks the 25th anniversary of the UN General Assembly's adoption of the Declaration and Program of Action on a **Culture of Peace**. However, 25 years after, can one say that there has been a “positive, dynamic participatory process where dialogue is encouraged, and conflicts are solved in a spirit of mutual understanding and cooperation” as stated in that Declaration? Unfortunately, with the rise of extremism which leads to terrorism, values needed for a culture of peace, such as respect for life, human rights, tolerance, solidarity, pluralism and cultural diversity, the promotion of non-violence through education, seem, unfortunately, to have become almost obsolete.

However, we cannot afford to give up! As women, as active actors in our societies, we must continue to educate towards peace, and to struggle for the mainstreaming of a gender perspective into humanitarian responses to crises and armed conflicts, as well as, into post-conflict reconstruction and resilience programs. By thus promoting gender equality and social justice, which are essential steps for **cultivating a culture of peace**, the international community, policy makers, and non-governmental organizations at all levels, can recognize and support women's associations, especially at the grass-roots level, and in regard to their preventing conflicts and promoting peace in their own environment.

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ICW-CIF moreover notably recalls that **education of women and girls** is fundamental for cultivating a culture of peace, respect for human rights and for gender-sensitivity. What is therefore requested is a climate of mutual understanding, equity and equality, one in which individuals and communities, particularly women, can develop and cooperate, rather than confront each other. Let us therefore keep in mind that peace can only grow and stand the test of time if it has deep roots in our societies. For that, women are thus needed, more than ever, **as agents of change**.

ICW-CIF accordingly urges UN bodies, international organizations and all stakeholders worldwide, to stand up as full partners in the global effort to advance a **culture of peace**, through cooperation, mutual assistance and unity.

At a time when war and violence once again monopolize our news cycles, the **International Day of Peace** due to be celebrated on the 21st of September, is an inspiring reminder of what can be achieved, working together, when goodwill and open mindedness are supreme. Never has our world needed peace more!

Paris, September 6th, 2024



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