Joint Statement to Promote an End to Gender-Based Violence submitted to the United Nations 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women on behalf of 16 Days Campaign Partners

We, the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL) at Rutgers University and women's and human rights organizations dedicated to gender equity and the elimination of gender-based violence, welcome the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) and States' consideration of the priority theme on the "elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls."

Since 1991, CWGL's international 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence campaign has mobilized thousands of activists and organizations worldwide to increase awareness of gender-based violence and call governments to respond, protect, and prevent such violence. Women's security and well-being are compromised by both the threat and experience of violence, particularly in conflict and post-conflict situations. Over the last three years the 16 Days Campaign has worked to highlight linkages between gender-based violence and militarism, including: (i) political violence against women; (ii) the proliferation of small arms and their role in domestic violence; (iii) sexual violence during and post-conflict; and (iv) the role of state actors as perpetrators of sexual and gender-based violence.

As set out in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action in 1993, Member States asserted that "gender-based violence and all forms of sexual harassment and exploitation…are incompatible with the dignity and worth of the human person, and must be eliminated" (paragraph 18). Since that time, States have reaffirmed their commitment to ending violence against women through the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the agreed conclusions of the 42nd and 51st sessions of the CSW, and Security Council resolutions 1325, 1820, 1888, 1889, and 1960.

Despite these commitments, violence against women persists as a widespread and pervasive human rights violation. States have clear and concrete obligations to prevent such violence, prosecute and punish perpetrators, and provide redress and relief to victims and survivors of violence. We, the members of civil society organizations worldwide, call on Member States to:

(a) Pursue by all appropriate means and without delay a policy of eliminating violence against women, strengthening the rule of law and the capacities of civilian and military justice systems to address gender-based violence;

(b) Recognize that a culture of militarism promotes and reinforces a culture of violence and take necessary measures to facilitate disarmament and promote peace, including through ratification and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty;

(c) Invest in those programs and projects that promote human security; and

(d) Respect, protect, promote and fulfill all human rights and take urgent and concrete measures to secure gender equality.

We call on the CSW to facilitate leadership to support States in fulfilling their human rights obligations. We remain committed to working with women's organizations and the United Nations in building a more peaceful world.

Signatories:

1. Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers University
2. A Common Future-Cameroon
3. ActionAid Liberia
4. African Centre for Democracy and Human Rights Studies (ACDHRS)
5. African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes
6. Agricultural Missions, Inc
7. Alliance against discrimination of LGBT, Albania
8. Alliances for Africa
9. Arab campaign for Education for All (ACIA)
10. Arus Pelangi Indonesia
11. Asia Pacific Forum on Women, Law and Development (APWLD)
12. Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA)
13. Association des Badinga du Congo - ABADIC ONG/ASBL
14. Association des Femmes pour la Promotion et le Développement Endogène (AFPDE)
15. Association for Progressive Communications (APC)
16. Association for Women in Development (AWID)
17. Association of War Affected Women
18. Bangladesh NGOs Network for Radio and Communication (BNNRC)
19. Bangladesh Society for the Enforcement of Human Rights - BSEHR
20. BAOBAB for Women's Human Rights
21. Boston Area Solidarity Economy Network (BASEN)
22. Center for Peace Education
23. Makiko Oku, Center for the Study of Genocide, Conflict Resolution, and Human Rights (CGHR), Rutgers University
24. Center for Women Policy Studies
25. Centre Women and Modern World
26. COC Nederland
27. Concertación Interamericana de Mujeres Activistas por los Derechos Himanos CIMA Costa Rica
28. Cordaid (Catholic Organisation for Relief and Development Aid)
29. Department on the Status of Women, City and County of San Francisco
30. Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era
31. Engender
32. EQUAL GROUND, Sri Lanka
33. Equality Now
34. FemLINKPacific
35. Femmes Junior
36. FOKUS-Forum for Women and Development
37. Fórum Mulher – Coordenação Para a Mulher no Desenvolvimento
38. Free the Marginalized Women Advocates Ghana

39. Gesellschaft fuer bedrohte VÖlker,Göttingen / Society for Endangered People
40. The Grail
41. Grupo de Información en Reproducción Elegida (GIRE)
42. House of Diversity and Education, Lithuania
43. Human Rights Centre "Tlachinollan"
44. Human Rights Project at the Urban Justice Center
45. INCIDE Social A.C. (Mexico)
46. INFORM Human Rights Documentation Centre, Sri Lanka
47. International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo
48. International Federation of Business and Professional Women
49. International Federation of Women Lawyers
50. International Federation of Women in Legal Careers
51. International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission (IGLHRC)
52. International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association
53. International Movement Against all Forms of Discrimination and Racism (INGO)
54. International Women’s Development Agency
55. International Women's Rights Action Watch Asia Pacific (IWRAW Asia Pacific)
56. Isis International
57. Isis-WICCE
58. Kirkina House
59. Lesley Hedges, Kirklees LGBT Community Network, United Kingdom
60. Armand KOUAKOU KAN, Abidjan, Côte d'ivoire
61. KULU-Women and Development, Denmark
62. Liga de Mujeres Desplazadas
63. Lokiaka Community Development Centre
64. Loretto Community
65. Ma'a Fafine mo e Famili Inc / For Women and Families Inc, Tonga
66. MADRE
67. Malta Gay Rights Movement
68. Masimanyane Women’s Support Centre East London South Africa
69. alicia masiá moreno, paiporta, valencia, españa
70. Rahab Njeri Mbugua, Kenya Medical Research Institute, Kenya Network of Women Living with HIV/AIDS, and Nairobi University
71. MENA Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflicts (MENAPPAC)
72. Metro Centre Ltd
73. MOSAIC - Training, Service & Healing Centre for Women
74. Mothers and Daughters of Lanka
75. Movimiento Manuela Ramos
76. NACOSA
77. National Alliance of Women Human Right Defenders Nepal
78. Nigerian Association for the Defense of Human Rights
79. National Council for Research on Women
80. Mairead Maguire, Nobel Peace Laureate, Nobel Women’s Initiative
81. ONG EHUZU AFRICA INTERNATIONAL
82. Onservatorio Género democracia y Derechos Humanos
83. Pacific Women's Watch (New Zealand) Inc

84. Peace Boat
85. Permanent Peace Movement (PPM)
86. Promundo
87. Rada Boric, Croatia (individual)
88. Réseau des Associations et Groupements des Femmes Handicapées du Tchad (RAGFHT)
89. Return to Manhood
90. Rights for Change, the Netherlands
91. Robin Chandler Consulting Group
92. Rozaria Memorial Trust
93. Ethel Brooks, Associate Professor and Director of Undergraduate Studies, Women's and Gender Studies Department, Rutgers University
94. Salamander Trust
95. Blanca Rico, Semillas, Sociedad Mexicana pro Derechos de la Mujer A.C.
96. SERR/Servicios Ecumenicos para Reconstruccion y Reconciliacion
97. Sewa Development Trust Sindh-SDTS
98. Soroptimist International
99. SOS Sexisme Organization
100. SRIA Rwanda
101. Sudanese Network for Education for All (SNEFA)
102. Tandem Project – WUNRN
103. The United Methodist Church General Board of Global Ministries
104. United Nations Association-USA East Bay
105. United Nations Association-USA Northern California Division
106. United Nations Association of San Diego
107. Marilyn P.Safir, PhD, Professor Emeritus, Department of Psychology, University of Haifa
108. University of Miami Human Rights Clinic
109. Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights
110. US Federation for Middle East Peace (USFMEP)
111. US Human Rights Network
112. Virginia Gildersleeve International Fund (VGIF)
113. Julie Matthaei, Professor of Economics, Wellesley College
114. WILPF International
115. WoMen Against Rape Trust, Maun, Botswana
116. Women Engaged in Action on 1325 (WE Act 1325)
117. Women in Business in South Africa
118. Women in Leadership and Development (WILAD)
119. Women in Security Conflict Management and Peace (WISCOMP)
120. Women Living Under Muslim Laws International Solidarity Network
121. Women Peacemakers Program
122. Women's Centre for Legal Aid and Counselling in Jerusalem
123. Women's Health in Women's Hands CHC
124. Women's Information Center
125. Women's Intercultural Network (WIN)
126. Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, DRC
127. Women's Network Croatia

128. Women's Political Academy - Sri Lanka
129. Women's Welfare Center (India)
130. Woodhull Sexual Freedom Alliance
131. WOREC Nepal
132. World YWCA
133. Worldwide Organization for Women
134. Women for Women’s Human Rights – New Ways
135. Zonta International