



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
7 December 2017

Original: English

---

## Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-second session

12–23 March 2018

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 Kirmizi Biber Dernegi — Red Pepper Association, 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

### **The Impact of the Law on the Rural Woman's Life**

According to data reported by United Nations, there is an overall migration from rural to urban areas in the world. While 70% of the world's population lived in rural areas in 1950, this share has dropped to 46% today, and is expected to further decline to 34% in 2050. With everyone's attention on urban areas, it is important not to forget about protecting and increasing gender equality in rural areas as well.

Sustainable Development Goal 5; Gender Equality, is an important area of improvement for Rural Women. Rural areas are usually places where the pressure of societal tradition on women is felt the most and women suffer from discrimination more and are under pressure of patriarchal values. It is where many women are married off at an early age, have limited access to good healthcare, and experience higher rates of domestic violence, encouraged to bear children often, and forced to put their education in the backburner for the sake of their families. They are away from all the resources to provide them a quality education. The oppression they are being exposed is not easy to address by any public authority due to the similar reasons of proximity.

Coupled with the effect of laws which do not secure their well-being and future, women's lives are effectively erased.

In this year's UN Women Session, we would like to call attention to the local laws that shape rural women's lives. We have seen many cases where, even though legislators are tasked with protecting rural women as equal citizens, they concede to local and religious traditions that victimize these women. We would like UN Women to audit the process of legislation concerning rural women's rights, recommend improvements to the process, and support local civil rights organizations in their quest to guide legislators towards empowering women. In countries where violence against women is still on the rise and civil and women's rights organizations' channels to seek justice are limited by despotic governments, we need external moderators to make sure national laws do not discriminate against women. Some of the areas of improvement our Association focuses on are:

- Prohibition of Child Marriage
- Divorce Related Laws
- Termination of Maternity - Abortion
- Prevention of Sexual Harassment/Violence against Women
- Representation of Women in all Decision-Making Positions, with special focus on Politics
- Gender Equality in Inheritance Law
- Encouraging Women's Entry to Workforce
- Gender Pay Gap

Laws that define marriage age as early as 9 for women is a crime against gender equality. Law proposals that release rapists of female children in case of marriage with the rape victim, cannot be accepted. Rape is a crime and has to be punished. Laws need to protect women, not victimize them.

The solution we would like to discuss with you is the establishment of a Women's Rights Watchdog, which will look out for rural women's rights in all new legislation that focuses on regulating and improving living conditions in rural areas. We would like this Watchdog to audit such new legislation in accordance with Sustainable Development Goals and the guidance of women's rights organizations in the country of legislation. To have an international auditory organization backed by the United Nations will give women of the developing world reassurance and hope towards a better future for our rural sisters.

---