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entitled “Women 2000: gender equality, development and
peace for the twenty-first century”

Statement submitted by Miss Caricom Int’l. Foundation CIP, INC, 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

Strengthening our women and girls to build strong nations

Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC, is a registered non-profit organization that was founded in 2004 by Dr. Monica Sanchez. The organization, which has its headquarters in New York City, operates in the United States, the Caribbean and Africa. It obtained its special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council in July 2019.

Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's mission is to empower and promote marginalized people, especially women and girls, through cultural, educational and training programs to improve their well-being, and influence policies and development in their respective communities.

Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's programs and activities in support of "the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action turns 25, includes:

- The PEACE Initiative is one of Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's signature programs which has developed programs and activities that are uniquely indigenous to communities in Africa and the Caribbean and is building the necessary infrastructures to support these programs and activities. The PEACE Initiative includes the following programs and activities:
 - o Pageant series
 - o Workshops, seminars and training programs that develop and enhance marketable job skill sets
 - o Establishment of a business incubation centre to teach entrepreneur skills to individuals, facilitate the establishments of small businesses and provide support to strengthen existing small businesses and indigenous entrepreneurs
- The Danny Glover Power of Dreams Awards (dreamers who make their dreams reality)
- United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) culture of peace program promotes peaceful co-existence in communities plagued by conflicts and/or those recovering from conflict as well as conflict prevention
- Commission on the Status of Women forum, and discussions and reflections of women's issues and concerns
- Christmas and holiday gift giveaways to children in underprivileged communities
- UNESCO's Institute for Fashion Education promotes indigenous fashion as a way of maintaining local culture and appreciating other cultures.

Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's support to the individual Beijing Declaration and Platform Areas:

- Women and poverty – the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action noted that poverty had various manifestations, including, inter alia, lack of income and productive resources, hunger and malnutrition, ill health, limited access to education and other basic services, homelessness and inadequate housing, unsafe environments, social discrimination and exclusion.

- Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's UNESCO Institute for Fashion Education provides training for grassroots women and girls in targeted underprivileged areas who have talents and skills but no formal education. Our training program arms them with the requisite business tools and knowledge that will assist them in harnessing, presenting and marketing their particular talents and skills in ways to make them employable and in so doing, give them a better advantage to get jobs and earn incomes to take care of their families. A model of this program is currently being successfully executed in Nigeria with over 2000 individuals especially women and girls. This pilot program, which began in 2018, is now operating in a number of high schools, local communities and villages and is headed by Rev. Ramsey O. Jeffrey – a local Nigerian Pastor.
- Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's business incubation centre will serve as a key vehicle to develop and build indigenous entrepreneurs that will transform the poverty landscape of women and girls by making them the engines of creating small businesses and employments for themselves and others.
- Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's cultural pageant series is a cultural oriented social event that promotes inter-generational dialogues. The pageant unites the community and brings together traditional elders and young people in a setting that encourages dialogue and the exchange of views and perspectives that maybe diametrically opposed; thus allowing for the discussions of topics that are often taboo – conflicting and difficult to discuss but necessary to bridge the generational gaps. This exercise is designed to promote understanding and appreciation of divergent views as a way of promoting peaceful co-existence and the fostering of local traditions. Participations are encouraged to speak on topics that directly affect and is associated with their lives such as early marriages, rights of the girl child, exploitation, violence against women, skills training and development, and eliminating negative cultural attitude and practices. It also encourages the strengthening of the role of the family as a unit of support. These cultural events showcase dialogues in healthy respectful manners, thus breathing goodwill, love and encouragement, and mesh together educational understanding, and most of all, tolerance of opposing views and opinions.
- Women and health: our cultural pageant is not all about physical beauty; rather, inner beauty. We believe that in “inner beauty” lies a woman's and a girl's strength, power and health. We preach and promote a holistic approach to beauty as a pageant philosophy. Our pageant embraces the physical, spiritual and intellectual aspects of women and girls. Therefore physical fitness not necessarily “bobby figure” is emphasized. We also promote spirituality and not religiosity as a way of helping to fashion a balanced woman or girl. In addition to the physical and spiritual, our pageant also encourages mental agility as a way of stimulating a healthy mind; thus promoting an overall healthy woman and girl. We hold the view that self-respect, self-love, and a healthy dose of self-esteem are important ingredients for a healthy life-style, and yes indeed, a healthy woman and girl.
- Violence against women: The danny glover power of dreams awards (dreamers who make their dreams reality) and our pageants are designed to recognize women and girls for their self-worth, dignity, sexuality and respect. Women and girls are certainly not subjects or objects of men. As such, they do not deserve to be abused or violently assaulted either verbally or physically. Our pageant teaches women and girls to value their self-worth and organize supporting groups to help them do so. By enhancing their capacities to earn their own monies, take charge of their own destinies, add values to whatever partnerships they entered, they make themselves less vulnerable to abuse and violence.

Therefore, the danny glover power of dreams awards (dreamers who make their dreams reality) recognizes these women and girls for their remarkable journeys and achievements.

- Women and media: both our cultural pageant and the danny glover power of dreams awards (dreamers who make their dreams reality) are heavily covered by the media – both print, digital and electronic. Of course social media is no exception. Our rationale is to give these women and girls maximum media exposure to enhance and promote their positive media profile and whatever positive journeys they chose to embark on. We don't abandon them after these events. We do follow-up with them – providing encouragements and support, helping to open new doors for them and having them participate in future Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's events.

In a nutshell, Miss Caricom Int'l. Foundation CIP, INC's, first and foremost is grateful to enjoy the special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and to support the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and its twenty fifth anniversary. We will certainly do our part to empower and train our women and girls especially those from marginalized communities to become powerful women and girls that will transform societies and communities.
