



GIRLS' STATEMENT

We the girls of the 61st Commission on the Status of Women demand the economic inclusion and empowerment of girls. Current labor practices such as unpaid or underpaid work, including child labor, are intolerable, and we must protect girls chained to these systems while working to eliminate these institutions altogether. Education with particular attention to vulnerable groups of girls is key to bringing about this desperately needed change.

Economic challenges girls face include unpaid work, child labor, and gender-based violence in schools or the workplace. Household chores and caregiving responsibilities must be divided equally to ensure girls have equal opportunities outside the home. Girls forced into child labor are unable to further their education, minimizing our future ability to thrive economically. Girls also experience harassment and sexual violence in schools and the workplace. This particular gender-based violence must be met with severe consequences as it threatens girls' safety and inhibits girls' involvement in economic spheres. We demand a safe working environment, fair wages, and opportunities to advance ourselves and eradicate forced child labor.

Comprehensive and continuous education is critical for girls' economic empowerment. Sex education decreases rates of teenage pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and thus poverty. Schools must provide sustainable access to proper feminine hygiene products because, without them, we are forced to abandon schooling. Education must also include access to leadership opportunities and skills that will prepare us for work. When girls are educated in financial literacy, we become economically empowered. Girls must have access to training in STEM fields. We demand equal educational opportunities for economic advancement.

Harmful cultural practices rooted in patriarchy must be ended. “Virginity tests” demean girls’ by attributing our value to our sexuality. Female genital mutilation and child marriage physically and mentally harm us and isolate us in school and society, hindering our financial independence. We demand Member States protect girls’ individual rights given current cultural practices.

Marginalized girls are particularly vulnerable to economic disempowerment. Displaced girls are at risk of sexual assault in refugee camps. Indigenous girls face de-legitimization of their rights. Girls with physical and mental disabilities lack equal opportunities and access in the workforce. Girls are disproportionately affected by climate change. Girls who are religious minorities or identify as LGBTQIA+ face societal stigmas that inhibit access to economic empowerment. We must address the increased vulnerability of these groups. We demand universal economic inclusion.

In order to eliminate economic disparity, girls must have a voice in decision-making. We call on our governments to drive economic empowerment by partnering with civil society, nongovernmental, and grassroots organizations who work with girls. We need you, our leaders, to stand beside us as we break these chains.