

Request to Contribute from Floor During General Discussion on Priority Theme

Organization(s): **Western Asia Caucus**

Preferred Session for Intervention: Monday, March 9, 10:00am

Name of the Speaker: Azza Kamel (Egypt)

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On behalf of the Western Asia Caucus, we commend and welcome the Commission's call for the intensification of efforts by governments to fully implement the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, and other international obligations to promote equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS. There remains a wide gap between the targets set out by relevant international agreements and the reality of women's lives on the ground.

The Western Asia Caucus expresses its concern about:

- The deterioration of women's economic conditions, especially under the international economic crisis, which has forced many women into prostitution and increases their risk of infection with HIV/AIDS;
- The absence of laws protecting women from violence, including rape and trafficking which increase their exposure and vulnerability to HIV/AIDS;
- Lack of resources allocated by governments on HIV/AIDS for prevention, education, treatment, care and support, and which take into account the responsibility of caregivers;
- The absence of precise statistics on HIV-infected women in many countries; and
- Lack of legislation to protect the rights, working conditions and representation of paid and unpaid caregivers.

The Western Asia Caucus urges governments in the region and the United Nations, to:

- Adopt national action plans, policies and mechanisms to promote gender equality and to protect women from violence;
- Repeal discriminatory laws that hinder equal sharing of responsibility, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS;

- Ensure that HIV-positive women are treated with dignity and remove the stigma associated with HIV/AIDS;

We recommend that the following be added to the text of the CSW53 Agreed Conclusions:

Add a paragraph under the number 6:

F. promote and adopt the articles of Security Council General Resolutions 1325 and 1820 to ensure the protection of women living under armed conflict and occupation

Add a paragraph under provision of services:

s.2 Support the UN relief and women's agencies working in the conflict areas to tackle women's needs and priorities, and create rehabilitation and support centers to deal with trauma caused by armed conflict and occupation, including displaced women and refugees.