

Oral Statement

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By

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As we speak, across the street, more than 5000 NGO participants are volunteering their time, often paying their own way, to tell the world that violence against women and girls must end. These NGOs care about girls trafficked as migrant workers and abducted as child soldiers. They fight for women and girls living with disabilities, and HIV/AIDS. Advocates for the human rights of indigenous women, rural women, widows, lesbians, gays and bisexuals, migrant workers, victim and survivors are calling for action.

The NGO Committee on the Status of Women/NY, with its sister organizations in all the regions, is dedicated to facilitating the interaction between these NGOs and the UN. On 3 March, more than 800 NGOs, representatives from governments, the UN, and the press gathered for the NGO CSW Forum Consultation Day. There were three strong messages from that event.

First, violence against women and girls is a grass-roots campaign that is taking hold and nothing can stop it from growing. All issues lie at the root causes and this is a unifying theme of the international women's movement from across diverse sectors. As Mallika Dutt, founder of Breakthrough, said in the closing, "Everyone here who is part of a campaign of any kind, whether in your communities or at a global forum, is helping to build a single global campaign to end violence against women and girls".

Second, we need to harness the tools of sophisticated communications to reach the youth and engage them in our process. We must invest in communications efforts

after the CSW is over through social media, IT, traditional messaging and good old-fashioned face-to-face dialogue.

Third, NGOs want to leave this CSW inspired and renewed. For this to happen, NGOs expect that governments will hold fast on the many commitments made in the past, move forward on new ground, and produce the best Agreed Conclusions ever adopted at a CSW. Please listen to this call for inspiration. It is real, it is urgent, and we promise, as 50 percent of the voting constituency, it will count in the women's vote for the next elections.

CSW 57 is probably the largest gathering of men and women concerned with violence against women and girls in the history of the UN. We count you as our allies—men and women politicians and ministers, representatives of UN agencies and funders to deliver what we need: a political jump-start to a new global campaign with an inspiring UN document.