

Joint Statement of the Young Women’s Caucus –World YWCA and WAGGGS.

We, the young women’s caucus, are the voice of the 860 million young women and girls around the world.

Violence against girls and women has been described as ‘one of the most heinous, systematic and prevalent human rights abuses in the world’ by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon. Violence against young women and girls includes but is not limited to physical, sexual and

psychological forms of

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Culture, tradition and religion should never be used as an excuse to justify violence such as female genital mutilation and early and forced marriage. Legislation, law enforcement and education targeting community leaders, parents and girls are essential for the eradication of FGM and early and forced marriage. The Young women's caucus brings forward the YWCA's petition with more than 4000 signatures calling on the UN to adopt a resolution on child, early and forced marriage.

Economic empowerment is a key tool in the prevention of violence against girls and young women by enabling women to have financial independence and choices. We know families living in extreme poverty sell their daughters into trafficking, forced-marriage or domestic servitude for economic reasons. We call for increased efforts to eliminate poverty and organised trafficking networks.

Young women are one of the most powerful driving forces to improve lives and transform communities. We call upon the United Nations to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda include a strong emphasis on the elimination of all forms of violence against girls, young women and women as well as securing peace with justice and respect for fundamental human rights.