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INTERNATIONAL INSTRUMENTS AND NATIONAL STANDARDS
RELATING TO THE STATUS OF WOMEN

CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS CONCERNING A NEW INSTRUMENT OR INSTRUMENTS
OF INTERNATIONAL LAW TO ELIMINATE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

Statement submitted by the Women's International Democratic
Federation, a non-governmental organization in consultative
status with the Economic and Social Council (category I)

The Secretary-General has received the following statement which is circulated in accordance with paragraphs 29 and 30 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

The Women's International Democratic Federation (WIDF) has on several occasions expressed its opinion on the need to prepare, on the basis of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, a single instrument, which would be of great significance because it would contain legal obligations for the States with regard to the status of women. This convention should embrace all aspects of the life of women, that is, political and civil rights, social, economic and cultural rights, and also family rights. Such a single international instrument would be an effective legal basis for winning and defending the real equality of women with men in many countries of the world.

Adoption of the single convention would place the States under the obligation to review existing legislation regarding women and indicate the shortcomings that exist in national legislation relative to the equality of women with men. It would thus enable the broad mobilization of public opinion around these problems.

The single convention, which would bring together the principles of procedure in the different fields relating to the status of women, should state clearly in its text that it does not impair existing instruments of international law adopted under the aegis of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and containing more detailed provisions.

Since women still suffer discrimination in many countries of the world, the WIDF considers that the time has come to have the first phase, the adoption of the Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against women, followed by the second: preparation of a convention on this subject in accordance with the customary procedure for the elaboration of instruments relative to human rights.

The WIDF, expressing the opinion of its 110 member organizations in 97 countries of the world, is looking forward with impatience to the adoption of this new document, and will do everything in its power to have it implemented.
