

CSO Closing Statement 20 August 2014

On behalf of Asia Pacific Civil Society Organisations and Networks we thank ESCAP, UN Women, and member states for the opportunity to participate at this review and make this closing statement. We appreciate the openness of the forum and the process. We thank the governments for their diligence and discussions over the last three days. We also wish to thank the secretariat for their effective management and guidance of this forum, and Madame Chair and your Vice Chair for your excellent facilitation and participatory leadership over this session. We hope this level of engagement continues as we move ahead on the process towards the November meeting and the Commission on the Status of Women.

We reiterate our view that human rights in every aspect of development are intrinsically linked as outlined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and other human rights instruments. We reiterate our call for personal, bodily, sexual and reproductive health and rights are parts of other rights in the civil, political, economic, social and cultural realms. Persistent discrimination and violence against women and girls – and other social groups - in both public and private spaces must continue to be at the center of this transformative approach to development and justice. As we move towards the 21st century, we strongly call on governments to bring back various means of social protection, rights to information, and market regulation to address social inequalities amidst the uncertainties of our times, including recurrent global financial meltdown, conflicts, disaster and the increasing effects of climate change.

In the last 20 years implementation the BPFPA has come a long way and this needs to be recognized and applauded. Yet, there remain worrying signs in backtracking where women and girls are glorified solely for our procreative functions and our rights and opportunities curtailed despite years of progress. This brings us to the fact that we are here now because we are all committed to the spirit of an inter-governmental regional cooperation and dialogue where the highest standard for gender equality must be aimed for, as we move forward to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in the era beyond 2015.

Forging ahead together in the spirit of women and girls human rights, gender equality and empowerment along a sustainable, effective partnership dialogue, we hope that this process can strengthen the way forward and reinforce the commitment made this year at the CSW for a stand alone goal on gender equality and gender mainstreaming across all the sustainable development goals and a solid commitment within a human rights framework.

Thank you. We look forward to renewed commitment and accountability and working with you in the spirit of Beijing-Empowering Women-Empowering Humanity—Picture it.