Economic and Social Council

**Commission on Crime Prevention
and Criminal Justice**
Thirtieth session
Vienna, 17–21 May 2021
Item 5 of the provisional agenda[*]
**Thematic discussion on effective measures to
prevent and counter the smuggling of migrants,
while protecting the rights of smuggled migrants,
particularly women and children, and those of
unaccompanied migrant children**

Statement submitted by Graduate Women International (GWI), a non-governmental organization in special consultative status with the Economic and Social Council[**]

The Secretary-General has received the following paper, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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[*] E/CN.15/2021/1.
[**] Issued without formal editing.

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In this written statement to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime Commission on Crime Preventions and Criminal Justice thirtieth session to be held 17–21 May 2021, Graduate Women International (GWI) urges the United Nations to accelerate a gender perspective in all crime prevention, criminal justice, anti-corruption, and anti-smuggling policies, and programmes at the international, regional, and national levels.

Corruption is the abuse of power by individuals, businesses, and government institutions for illegitimate gain. It impedes development, escalates conflicts, damages the environment, exacerbates gender, economic and social inequities, and violates human rights. Corruption is prevalent in all countries. Unless the United Nations Member States follow through on their commitments to improve the rule of law and implement much more effective anti-corruption efforts and measures, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development will not be achieved. People in all walks of life feel corruption's impacts but its most pernicious effects are on women and girls.

For instance, corruption:

> Reduces the effectiveness of measures to prevent human trafficking and the smuggling of migrants, particularly of women and children.

> Enables environmental crimes which damage our water, earth, and air, and can have a particularly unfortunate impact on women's health.

> Has a corrosive impact on girls' education.

> Can leave women and girls at risk and highly vulnerable to Organized Crime.

> Can prevent effective measures to reduce gender-based violence against women.

> Can prevent women from enjoying their basic human rights and/or taking effective action to exercise these rights, making them vulnerable to crimes such as sextortion and smuggling.

Social, economic, political, legal, and gender inequalities make women especially vulnerable to the consequences of corruption.

GWI, founded more than a hundred years ago, unites thousands of women graduates worldwide who welcome the United Nations Member States adoption of the Kyoto Declaration, with its commitment to mainstream gender perspectives in both crime prevention and criminal justice systems.

In particular, GWI urges the United Nations Member States to follow through with determination and commitment on their obligations to implement effective anti-corruption efforts, specifically:

> To develop intensive measures to prevent and counter the corruptive act of migrant smuggling, especially for children and women.

> To design more effective methods of accountability for those who exploit the smuggling of migrants and abuse their human rights.

> To co-operate much more closely and use more effective tools available under the existing United Nations anti-corruption architecture, such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

> To be much more energetic in moving to disrupt links between Organized Crime and corruption and to preventing the laundering of the proceeds of corruption. Illicit financial flows stemming from corruption must be stopped.

To continue to promote the rule of law through education. Ethics and anti-corruption modules should be encouraged at all education levels in all countries.

To increase public awareness of the means of reporting corruption; to protect those who report corruption; to prosecute and punish those responsible for threatening, intimidating or harming those who do report corruption.

Recognising the severe impact of corruption on women and girls, and particularly the serious harm to women and girls education posed by corruption in education, GWI also urges the UN Member States to

Mainstream a gender perspective in all crime prevention, criminal justice, anti-corruption and anti-smuggling policies and programmes at the international, regional and national levels. To implement and fully resource commitments under the Kyoto Declaration for gender mainstreaming promptly and comprehensively.

Provide gender-sensitive reporting and complaints mechanisms that allow women to report incidences of corruption and to demand accountability without fear of retaliation.

Enhance the role of women in anti-corruption programming by creating local alliances with women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) whose members can serve in direct contact with victims.

Create safe spaces to allow young women worldwide to engage in discussions about socially necessary ethical behaviour with the goal to teach future generations to live, function, and succeed in corrupt-free environments.

Render compulsory the publication of national, district, school, and university budgets to allow for detailed monitoring of education resources to prevent corruption in education.

Impose strict regulations, penalties, and monitoring processes in schools and universities to ensure that corruption does not taint the appointment of teachers and professors and the grading of students so that all students, particularly women and girls, are treated fairly.

Observing Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 16, GWI encourages the United Nations, its Member States and other organisations to create partnerships to fight corruption in education worldwide.

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