Statement by civil society organizations and women’s groups from Middle East/North Africa and Europe to World Humanitarian Summit participants

20 May 2016

“Women on the Move” move the world

World leaders from governments, international organizations, civil society and business, will gather on 23-24 May for the first World Humanitarian Summit (WHS) and agree on key commitments to restore the safety, dignity and rights of people in crisis. In view of this historical event, representatives of women’s groups, volunteer and humanitarian initiatives from 15 countries spanning from the Middle East, North Africa (MENA) to Europe came together on 16-18 May in Istanbul to discuss how to empower and protect women and girl refugees and migrants.

Faced with the failure of States to resolve conflict and end war; the erosion of international humanitarian law and human rights; the lack of responses to ensure the dignity and well-being of the displaced, which affect in particular women and girls on the move from MENA to Europe, we call on WHS participants to:

- Eliminate the root causes of displacement, especially armed conflict and inequalities
- Ensure the protection of women and girls living in conflict zones, and ensure access of humanitarian aid to besieged and hard to reach areas
- Secure safe and legal passage for forcibly displaced, speed up family reunification, and fully respect the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, especially the right to individual consideration of asylum claims
- Ensure greater participation of women in conflict prevention, peacebuilding, conflict resolution and the provision of assistance to refugees and migrants
- Improve women’s and girls’ access to education, work and other essential services, including health.
- Focus on the prevention of all forms of sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) and the protection and empowerment of survivors
- Strengthen legal systems to end impunity, ensure access to justice and reduce the dangers of the proliferation of small arms

We have agreed that we will continue to work on these issues, monitor and cooperate across borders, within a new regional coalition of civil society and women’s organizations, until women on the move have their rights and dignity restored.
Signatories
AkiDwA & Wezesha, Ireland
Amnesty International, Turkey
Arab Women Organisation, Jordan
ARDD – Legal Aid, Jordan
Association for Solidarity with Asylum Seekers and Migrants (ASAM), Turkey
Basmeh & Zeitooneh - Relief & Development, Syria
Belgrade Center for Human Rights, Serbia
Bint Al Rafidain Organization (BROB), Iraq
Bulgarian Platform of the European Women’s Lobby, Bulgaria
CEE Network for Gender Issues, Slovenia
Columbia Global Center, USA- Turkey
European Women’s Lobby – Coordination for Turkey
Foundation for Support of Women’s Work (KEDV), Turkey
Greek Forum of Refugees, Greece
Health Education and Research Association (HERA), former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia
InfoPark, Serbia
International Supporting Women Association, Syria
Jordan Women’s Union, Jordan
Kamer Foundation, Turkey
Keshmalek, Syria
Kvinna Till Kvinna, Sweden
Legis, Macedonia
Macedonian Young Lawyers Association, Macedonia
Mother & Child Education Foundation (ACEV), Turkey
NGO Atina, Serbia
NGO Praxis, Serbia
Open Gate/ La Strada, Macedonia
Oxfam
Praxis
Refugee Aid Miksaliste, Serbia
SAWA for Development and Aid, Syria
Section Terre d’asile Tunisia
Support to Life, Turkey
Supporting Women Association, Syria
Syria Relief and Development, Syria
Syria Relief Network, Syria
Women Empowerment Organisation, Iraq
Women for Women’s Human Rights – New Ways, Turkey
Women Now, Syria
Women Rehabilitation Organisation, Iraq
Women’s Solidarity Foundation (KADAV), Turkey
Zemljani - Are You Syrious?, Croatia