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UNHQ Conference Room 4

## Statement during the CSW69 Interactive Dialogue on “Peaceful and Inclusive Societies”

I’m delivering this statement on behalf of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, which is the longest-standing women’s peace organisation in the world. We are celebrating our 110th anniversary this year.

My name is Ludmilla Kwitko and I am the Asia-Pacific Regional Representative of WILPF.

In 1995, world leaders made commitments in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action to redirect resources from militaries towards human rights, peace and development. The Beijing Platform recognised that military spending, disarmament, foreign occupation and self-determination are all women’s rights issues.

The contrast between these obligations set 30 years ago and the reality today demonstrates how any progress that has been made towards gender equality, peace, and freedom is at risk.

Feminists continue to challenge militarist conceptions of peace and security. World leaders are spending record levels on militaries and weapons, contributing to growing numbers of armed conflicts around the world and leading to increased poverty, ecological destruction and forced displacement.

Communities in places such as Afghanistan, the DRC, Colombia, Iraq, Libya, Myanmar, Palestine, the Sahel, Sudan, Syria, Ukraine, and Yemen have all been subjected to repeated cycles of violence, repression, and devastation, with women and girls paying the greatest price. For example, in Palestine and Ukraine, communities are being targeted by indiscriminate bombing from well-armed aggressors with little respect for human rights or international law. Women and girls in Afghanistan and Iran are living under repression and violations that impact every aspect of their daily lives. Patriarchal power and militarised power go hand in hand.

The Women, Peace and Security Agenda called for the full and equal participation of women – a call to truly democratise decision-making around peace and security. Yet despite 10 resolutions and over 100 National Action Plans on WPS, exclusion remains the norm. The space for women and feminist civil society to participate in peace processes is also being undermined by continuing threats. Conflict prevention is largely absent from the implementation of WPS, particularly in a climate of growing militarisation. These trends also indicate where the most action is needed on WPS and where resources are most essential.

In order to promote peaceful and inclusive societies, WILPF is calling for urgent action and accountability. I want to close my statement by acknowledging the women human rights defenders and communities who are working tirelessly despite all odds to make peace. They are demanding action from all of us to bring an end to violence and armed conflict so that five years from now we are not here saying the same thing. Thank you.