

## Draft Statement

### 23rd Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

#### Global Indigenous Youth Caucus

Monday April 22nd, 2024

*Item 5(d) Human rights dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; annual review of progress on the implementation of general recommendation No. 39(2022).*

Thank you, Chair. Distinguished delegates, Indigenous relatives. The Global Indigenous Youth Caucus would like to recognize the efforts to implement general recommendation No. 39, and highlight our concerns about women's health and safety in our communities.

This year, a record number of youths have attended the Global Indigenous Youth Caucus, the majority of them women. We hurt to hear how many of us have already experienced violence and abuse, both inside and outside of our own communities. We hold space for our mothers and grandmothers and ancestors before us, who struggled with these same experiences and saw no justice.

Member states must take a more direct approach in order to fulfill their obligations to UNDRIP articles 22, and 24, regarding the special needs of elders, youth, women, and people with disabilities, and our right to access the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health without discrimination.

We see the domestic abuse and violence in our homelands as directly stemming from colonization and the effects it has had on community mental health. Your Youth Caucus would therefore like to encourage future work on the protection of women and girls' bodily autonomy and sexual health, and their access to restorative, culturally-sensitive justice.

- 1) We call on the member states to support education on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women internationally, with recognition that Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women is a global phenomenon that affects Indigenous women and girls everywhere.
- 2) We call on member states to prioritize implementing culturally appropriate sentencing models to deal with our health and safety crises, and provide language interpretation for Indigenous women and girls accessing healthcare services and justice in the court systems.
- 3) We urge the member states to prioritize the maternal health of women and girls, including providing access to women's health facilities that provide culturally-sensitive care, support, and abortions, and introducing legislation to safeguard that access.

- 4) We call on the Special Rapporteur to investigate the US Military's impact on women and girls in Indigenous communities, with recognition that the data currently collected is not disaggregated or shared with our communities sufficiently.
- 5) Finally, we call on the UN Commission on the Status of Women to ensure that a future theme centres Indigenous women and girls, to ensure that the discrimination that disproportionately affects our communities is adequately addressed.

Thank you.