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**The Statements on the Occasion of International Women’s Day
March 8th, 2023**
by
The Network of Civil Society Organizations for Gender Equality, Chiang
Mai

We are women workers and migrant workers, ethnic and indigenous women, LBTQ women, women living with HIV, women sex workers, stateless women, elderly women, girls and young women, rural women in agriculture, women who were pregnant and did abortion, women with disabilities, women who fight for democracy, women who protect human rights, community rights, land, environment and resource rights defenders, feminists and allies who rise up to support women's rights, freedom and gender equity.

We recognize the importance of social awareness and people’s involvement in the promotion and protection of the rights and freedom of women and LBTQ women. We invite everyone present here to support women’s rights and freedom, and our demands to come out, march, sing and rise up for our freedom and equity.

We are gathering here on March 8, 2023, to show the women’s collective power to celebrate the International Women’s Day and the struggles and achievements of women at all levels, as well as to show that women have been playing significant roles and contributing to the society.

From the work of our network, we found that exclusion, discrimination, and violation of the human rights of women happens in various forms. This is both gender-based violence and structural violence. For example,

Women human rights defenders face strategic lawsuits against public participation and organizing, are threatened, face sexual harassment, and a systematic violation and degradation of their human rights and dignity.

Indigenous women face multiple violations when they demand land rights, community rights, and rights to natural resources. Indigenous youth are at risk of forced marriage. Stateless indigenous women have no access to civil rights and political rights, such as the right to vote.

Women with disabilities do not have access to higher education nor access to the funds for people with disabilities in higher education. They do not have equal right to work according to the Promotion and Development of the Quality of Life of People with Disabilities Act B.E. 2550. In addition, they do not have access to disability allocation of 1,000 baht.

Lesbian, bisexual and trans women and girls are discriminated against on the basis of their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). This leads to employment discrimination, bullying in school, forced dressing according to their biological sex. They are unable to access the right to marriage and Marriage Equality. There is no gender recognition law for transgender people. We further face violence like corrective rape because of our sexual orientation and gender identity.

Migrant women do not have access to decent work and social welfare. They do not have equal rights as Thai workers. They do not have access to information due to lack of language translation. They cannot access shelters and safe houses when they face gender-based violence and need to be treated. The children of migrant workers themselves do not have equal educational opportunities.

Women sex workers face stigmatization and criminalization based on their work. They face discrimination and violence by the State's implementation of the criminal law, particularly the Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act.

The majority of women do not have access to safe abortion although the abortion law has been revised recently. And women of all marginal identities, of all ages, including elderly women, women living with HIV, women with disability and indigenous women do not have access to sexual reproductive health and rights. Non-discriminatory healthcare services are still inaccessible for these women.

Women do not have access to the justice process when they face domestic violence, rape, and sexual harassment as well as when they face online and cyber harassment.

In emergencies and humanitarian crises such as climate change crisis, PM 2.5 levels higher than the standard level, the outbreak of COVID-19, and war, women face more burdens because they are more vulnerable, have lesser access to preventative and adaptive policies and programs, are subjected to gender-based violence and hunger inequality. In addition,

women are not able to access and fully participate in any problem-solving process and policy advocacy. In peace building processes, women are still invisible and voiceless.

The issues of women and LGBTQ women are caused by militarism, neoliberal capitalism, patriarchy, and fundamentalisms, which is socialized and cultivated through mechanisms of various institutions such as religion, family, educational institution, and political institution. This affects the security, safety, and freedom of all women, particularly women with marginal identities.

With the continuous human rights violations faced by women, we urge all sectors of the society, including the government to support our demands as follows:

1. Support women's access to resources and provide equal opportunities for all groups of women leading to a shift in power relation.
2. Empower women at all levels so they are change makers who strongly believe in human rights and gender justice leading to creation of sustainable social movements.
3. Support social and political participation and decision-making processes of women at all levels including their participation in humanitarian crisis and sustainable development.
4. Foster people's movement for gender and social justice by ensuring inclusion of women's right issues at all levels: local, national, regional, and international.
5. Support and promote media's role in public communication to protect and raise awareness on the human rights of women and LGBTIQs in all dimensions including eliminating stigmas and reproduction of the gender stereotyping. Media can play a strong role to educate society about the impacts of gender stereotyping, stigmatization, discrimination and misogyny while recognizing the strength of women, and participate in eliminating the myths and social prejudices based on gender both at individual and institutional levels.
6. Push for policy and legal changes, ensure participatory democracy, amend the constitution, and advance women and SOGIESC right by applying various human rights instruments and international laws others international conventions that the Thai government has ratified, the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (UDHR), CEDAW, CRPD, UN Drip, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Universal periodic Review (UPR), Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the Yogyakarta principles.

7. Promote the participation of the civil society and communities in evaluating and monitoring processes of improving women's rights that the Thai government is committed to after ratifying international human rights instruments. The government must work closely with civil society to ensure accountability and transparency in promoting the human rights of women and LGBTIQs and gender equality, as ending all forms of violence against women and girls, aiming for a peaceful, just, inclusive, and sustainable society.

In herstory of women's struggle, it shows that the women's movement have been at the strategy of social, legal and policy changes. The International Women's Day is not only an opportunity for women to come together to celebrate but it is also an opportunity for women to rise up to reclaim their rights, freedom and equity. The society and the state must recognize that women's right are human rights.