**Suggestions to the Draft CEDAW General Recommendation on Trafficking in Women and Girls in the context of Global Migration**

**Submitted by: The Guild of Service, New Delhi, India**

**Supported by: Global Fund for Widows. (GFW)**

**Widows Development Organization ( WIDO)**

**Women’s UN Report Network (WURN)**

**The Global Alliance: The Last Women First**

**South Asian Network for Empowerment of Widows in Development ( SANWED)**

**Overview**

The CEDAW Committee has identified that groups of women who are subjected to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence are at a higher risk of being trafficked. This includes: migrants; asylum-seekers, particularly those whose claims have been rejected; refugees internally displaced women non-nationals stateless women; women forcibly returned to their country of origin; women in conflict or post-conflict situations; women living in post disaster situations; women living in poverty ; rural women; women with disabilities; women from religious, ethnic, and sexual minorities and, adolescents particularly girls without care or in alternative care settings. The discrimination experienced by these groups of women and girls is compounded by their concurrent social, economic and political marginalization. Such devaluation of their personhood renders these women and girls as easier targets of trafficking and exploitation.

**There is the urgent need to identify and acknowledge that widows and their dependents are a group highly vulnerable to trafficking, given their lower and weaker social economic and legal status.**

**Paragraph 21:**

**Suggestion:** Include ***“deprivations due to widowhood”*** in seventh line

**Justification:** Trafficking is rooted in and perpetuates gender-based discrimination. Women and girls continue to be the prime targets of traffickers, especially for the purpose of sexual exploitation, due to pervasive and persistent gender inequality resulting in their lower economic, social, and legal status than that which is enjoyed by men. Within this, **widows** suffer from an even lower economic social and legal status in many countries. Social structures limit women’s autonomy and access to key resources, including economic, land, information and knowledge. Patriarchal traditions within societies accord even more constraints on a widow’s autonomy.

These effects are compounded by gender-based violence against women, gender-based discrimination and marginalization. Widowhood faces even more nuanced layers of gender based violence as patriarchal societies view her as “unprotected” As a result of suffering these inequalities, widows are even more likely to be impoverished, uneducated and disempowered by societal and family structures.

**Paragraph 22**

**Suggestion:** Inclusion of ***“widowhood “***in third line

**Justification:** Widowhood has been described as the single most likely factor to cause increasing poverty among women across the world. Widows constitute a uniquely vulnerable segment of the population and are often subject to maltreatment.. Widows’ poverty is directly related to the absence of economic opportunities, and economic resources, including inheritance and land ownership; access to credit, access to social security, education and support services, non-participation in the decision-making processes and lack of rights. Enhanced poverty increases the widows’ vulnerability to violence.

**Paragraph 24**

 **Suggestion:** Inclusion of ***“widows and their children”***within the first line

**Justification :** The combined effects of these various forms of discrimination and marginalization due to entrenched patriarchal norms leaves many widows more vulnerable to trafficking, sexual assault, and domestic violence. It is estimated that there are 258 million widows across the world, more than 115 million live in poverty. It is estimated that over 500 million dependents and adult children of widows are caught in a vicious underworld in which disease, forced servitude, homelessness and violence are rampant and youngsters are denied schooling, enslaved or preyed upon by human traffickers. The poverty of widows and their daughters, makes them vulnerable to prostitution and human traffickers who transport them to other countries for sex work and domestic slavery.

**Paragraph 25 (b)**

**Suggestion:**” Include***martial status*** along with other parameters

**Paragraph25 ( c) iii**

**Suggestion:** Include **“*widowhood”***

**Paragraph 34**

**Suggestion:** Include ***“high incidence of widowhood”*** in third line

**Justification:** Widows of both state and non state actors face the trauma of widowhood particularly in societies where social and economic identities are closely linked with men and the marital status. Widows of state actors are supported by the state with compensations, pensions and affirmative discriminations. Widows of non state actors are stigmatised and become impoverished. Often to escape the stigmatization and the state’s suspicion of them due to their links with non state actors, they resort to migration

**Submitted by:**

**Meera Khanna**

***Trustee & Exec Vice President***

**The Guild of Service**

 *(NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC, United Nations)*

***Director:* The Global Alliance: The Last Woman First**

***Member Steering  Committee :*Every woman Treaty for ending violence against women & girls**

***Member Steering Committee:*South Asian Network for Widows Empowered in Development *Member, Civil Society Advisory Group***, **UN Women ( India**)

***Advisor: War Widows Association***

C 25 Qutab Institutional Area, New Delhi 10016, India

Phones: +91-11-41013416 / +91-11-41013417 / +91-11-41013418

Email: guildofserviceni@gmail.com

Website: [www.guild.org](http://www.guild.org/).in