

# ***Proposals: Workshop on Multiple Discrimination Against Minority Women***

World Conference Against Racism in Durban, South Africa  
August 30, 2001



The issue of elimination of "violence against women" has been getting more attentions of the world with the help of all efforts being made especially after the 1995 Beijing Conference. In reference to "violence against women," majority women, especially those in the industrialized countries, have been just sensitive to gender discrimination that they suffer in their own contexts. They have been indifferent to racial discrimination in which they can easily become discriminators or oppressors. They have also been indifferent to the compound form of violence that minority women are subject to under racism and racial discrimination and gender discrimination.

In the course of combating racism and racial discrimination, the focus has always been given on experiences of male victims, while totally lacking of the perspective of minority women. Male members of minority communities have been sensitive to the discrimination that they suffer, without being aware that it has involved gender discrimination against their female members.

We need to make analysis of the structure of systems and practices that cause and support various forms of violence against minority women. These include patriarchy, religious intolerance, judicial system and culture that are racially and sexually discriminatory, colonial rule, and economic gaps between the North and the South. In analyzing the structure of all these factors, we need to clarify how violence against minority women brings various disadvantages to them in terms of educational opportunities, employment and work, and economic and cultural life. Then, we need to take necessary approaches to solve them for the ultimate and common goal of "elimination of violence against minority women" through solidarity across the borders.

## **We call for the followings towards the "Beijing + 10" in 2005:**

### **To the United Nations**

1. We request the UN to make fact-findings and analysis of violence against minority women, make proposals for measures based on such findings and analysis, and take whatever actions necessary to ensure the implementation of the proposed measures including follow-up. Among others, in examining periodic reports submitted by State Parties, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women and the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination should take the perspective of violence against minority women into account. We request the UN to appoint a special rapporteur on the

topic of race and gender. We urge the UN to request the special rapporteur on the topic of violence against women to conduct fact-findings into violence against minority women.

To the United Nations and Governments

2. We urge the UN and Governments to recognize that the following facts are relevant to all societies and sectors at all levels: that globalization in the economic sphere, structural adjustment programs, negative legacies of the colonialism, armed conflicts, economic gaps between the North and the South, patriarchy, racially and/or sexually discriminatory judicial systems and cultures, racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, and those traditional and customary practices that women have asked for abolition have caused various forms of violence against minority women in their public and private lives; and that these forms of violence have brought different disadvantages to minority women in terms of education, employment and work, economy and culture. We request the UN and Governments to take all necessary measures at all levels in order to eliminate all forms of violence against these minority women, and guarantee their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights completely.

3. We urge the UN and Governments to adopt a convention to make the "Declaration for Elimination of Violence against Women" more effective, and to take steps to put the "violence" clause, one of strategies under the Beijing Platform of Actions, into practice.

4. We urge the UN and Governments to promote the ratification of the International Convention for the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families, and take steps to eliminate violence against migrant woman workers based on racism and gender, and to provide victims of such violence with protection.

5. We request the UN and Governments to make and implement policies and measures to punish those responsible to trafficking in women and to help such victims empower themselves for self-support and independence.

6. We request the UN and Governments to take concrete steps to eliminate all forms of violence based on racial discrimination and sexual discrimination against women and girls under armed conflicts and woman members of indigenous peoples.

### **To National Governments and Local Governments**

7. We request national governments and local governments to conduct investigations to understand actual situations of violence against minority women in their respective societies. In the course of such investigations, a focus should be given to the following aspects:

1) forms of violence and their manifestations,

2) conditions that may induce violence,

3) effects of violence, and

4) availability of remedies and complaint mechanisms for victims. Findings of the investigation together with the method of investigation should be made public, and they should be examined by experts who are sensitive to the issues of gender and human rights with the involvement of minority women themselves. Based on the examination, special measures should be immediately made and implemented to satisfy needs of victims including legal measures.

8. We request national governments and local government to review their judicial systems and policies from the perspective of minority women.

9. We request national governments and local governments to develop training programs sensitive to anti-racism and gender discrimination and provide it to all groups and all sectors of their respective societies including labor unions, business corporations, educational institutions, medical and health professions, immigration officers, the police, judges, and others. When groups in the private sector conduct and provide such trainings, they should be supported by the government in terms of financial and other resources.

10. We request national governments and local governments to develop support programs for minority woman victims of violence, and provide them with counseling and advice service, protection, remedies, rehabilitation and empowerment programs.

11. We request national governments and local governments to monitor any attitude of the media that may encourage violence against minority women, and urge them to change their attitude in such a way that it can rather contribute to the elimination of violence against minority women.

12. We request national governments and local governments to develop a methodology that reveals forms, causes and grounds of violence against minority women, to research the penetration of racial and sexual discriminatory attitudes into legislation, policies, systems and practices placing women and girls of minority communities in more disadvantageous positions, making them victims of intersectional discriminations and marginalizing them, and to take necessary actions accordingly.

13. We urge national governments and local governments to promote programs that encourage a change in attitudes of minority men towards minority women.

#### **To NGOs**

14. We request NGOs to build and promote solidarity and networks among women of different minority communities as well as between minority women and majority women, so that all can work together for the same goal - the elimination of violence against women.