

We, the Women of the World,

Representing the great diversity of humankind, united in a global sisterhood of empathy, stand together for the dignity, respect and equality of each woman, girl child, and boy child in the world.

We, mothers, grandmothers, daughters, sisters, wives, and girlfriends, with fathers, grandfathers, sons, brothers, husbands, and boyfriends; from different countries, religions and beliefs, but with one common love in our hearts for our families; declare our commitment to work together to bring safety and freedom to every woman and child.

Violence against women and their children is a gross breach of human rights. It prevents women and the children they raise from exercising their basic freedoms. Sex trafficking and slavery, still widely spread, are the most repulsive forms of violence, threatening women and children's inherent integrity of being.

Sex trafficking of women and children is not a private or family or religious matter, but rather a crime and its prevention and judgment is the responsibility of all public institutions.

Therefore, as givers of human life, as daughters of the earth, we stand firm as ...

We invite the support of people worldwide; our families, friends, colleagues, our religious, institutional and government leaders, for the common goal of women and their organizations; to eliminate sex trafficking of women and children and all forms of enslavement, and to promote the dignity of womankind throughout the world.

We require that all UN member states sign and ratify all relevant conventions and documents which will increase public awareness of this issue.

We require that all governments and local authorities develop adequate mechanisms and policies to prevent sex trafficking of women and children, and implement measures to protect and support victims of these crimes and their successful reintegration into society.

We require new economic and educational measures so that families will stop selling and trading their daughters and sisters. The damage done by these deeds to all concerned and to society is immeasurable. Life is sacred, and its trafficking can never be justified either as tradition, custom, morality or as religious ritual.

We require that the basic societal influences that support systems of trafficking be addressed: the business of gaining profit from exploitation, the attitudes that are expressed when relationships are established by force, extreme poverty, and the decay of family values. All the efforts of society must be directed towards diminishing the influences of these factors over people's lives.

We commit to working together to do whatever is needed to prevent sex trafficking and all forms of enslavement, to change the attitudes which promote these behaviors, and to build new systems of health and well-being for the women and children of the world.

We further commit to our common values: to the value of each woman, each girl and boy child, each human being, that each of us may live safely, freely, creatively, with equal opportunity, and with equal responsibility to our whole human family.



Declaration co-developed by Ways Women Lead, with Elka Krasteva, Director, Human Rights, Step by Step Association, Varna, Bulgaria, and many others. Please participate at www.wayswomenlead.net.