***Strengthening protection networks for women human rights defenders to combat discrimination***

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**RECOMMENDATIONS[[1]](#footnote-1)**

We, as a delegation of WHRD and networks, offer five specific recommendations:

1. Importance of supporting and encouraging collaboration and complementary work of special procedures to address the differentiated impact faced by WHRD (joint reports, communications, public and state meetings, research, academic visits).
   1. Specifically, to states, increase political and economic support to the special procedures offices in their efforts to integrate the WHRD framework and the experiences of WHRD in their mandates.
2. Encourage states to critically assess their progress, and that of other member states, on adopting and implementing resolutions related to women, gender discrimination and violence, and women HRD, including the 2013 Resolution on WHRD; especially in situations where non-state actors are perpetrators, (like religious fundamentalists, organized crime, corporations, and paramilitary/private security forces), since even in these instances, we believe that the state still has the obligation to protect citizen’s ability to organize and defend rights.
   1. Encourage states to utilize research and documentation done by WHRD and their networks that look at the specific gender components of the violence they face. This important data should be considered when developing laws and policy that affect WHRD.
3. Provide and guarantee an enabling environment for WHRDs and their organizations to exercise their legitimate right to freedom of association, expression and assembly in order to continue defending their rights and that of all constituents. Similarly, refrain from laws and actions that restrict the space available for civil society to organize and politically participate.
4. Allocate political and economic resources to reinforce and legitimize the work by WHRD and highlight gender specific discrimination and violence they face as women and HRD.
   1. Specifically, ensure that UN HR mechanisms (including the 2013 Resolution on WHRD) is accessible to WHRDs experiencing interconnected forms of discrimination and violence, such as race, sexual orientation, class and others, in your respective state.
5. Recognize formal and informal networks that women are organizing themselves for their holistic protection and sustainability, as a legitimate contribution to a robust democratic society and that can complement national protection and safety official mechanisms. Specifically, those represented here today from Mena, Southern Africa, and Mesoamerica.

1. **Made by JASS –Just Associates-, Mesoamerican WHRD Initiative, WHRD Middle East and North Africa Coalition, Women's Human Rights Institute, AWID and International Platform Against Impunity** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)