Madam / Mr. President,

Maat for Peace welcomes this session, and we thank you for giving us the opportunity to address our views in this subject.

With the United Nations being the global advocate for human rights and gender parity, it has called for improving women inclusion in different aspects, yet, it has a long way to go when it comes to achieve this goal within its own bodies and mechanisms. Therefore, Maat would like to make the following intervention in regard to the representation of women in human rights bodies and mechanisms, specifically; the participation of refugees and indigenous women.

Maat calls on Repeal or amend all laws or measures that may give rise to discrimination against refugees and indigenous women, including direct and indirect discrimination that is based on multiple grounds. Condemn and take effective measures against all acts and expressions of racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, against stereotyping of refugees (including on the basis of religion or belief) because they are non-citizens or have an irregular status, and against other intersecting forms of discrimination such as age and gender.

Hold those who commit such acts accountable, including politicians, opinion-leaders and the media, and enable victims to access justice, including through accessible complaint mechanisms; provide effective remedies. Make sure that serious and extreme instances of hate speech and incitement to hatred are criminal offences that are brought before an independent court or tribunal.

Although the General Assembly of the United Nations has shown efforts in achieving gender parity in different UN bodies and human rights mechanisms; the target of 50/50 representation that has been set by the General Assembly is witnessing slow progress.

Hereby, and while we acknowledge the efforts made by different UN human rights mechanisms in this regard, we are concerned with the collateral consequences of the gap in gender parity and low representation of women; as neglecting such perspectives may have a significant impact on the decision making process, thus, the precision of the final provided resolutions.

The situation is actually more critical when it comes to the representation of refugee women. During the recent decade; the global community has witnessed number of wars and conflicts that left large numbers of refugees and displaced persons behind. Unfortunately, women are being victims of not only such crisis, but also of sexual and physical violence that takes place in the shadows of these crises. Therefore, the presentation of refugee women in different UN bodies and human rights mechanisms is of a significant importance, as they reflect more realistic point of views in addressing human rights violations and indeed, counter mechanisms.

In order to achieve gender parity and increase women representation, it's important to conduct transparent election process where gender balance is being taken into consideration. Also, all UN bodies should welcome and encourage the participation of refugee women as advocates for human rights; this could be done by arranging with different UN offices especially in host countries where the free movement of refugees is restricted. Finally, it's vital to follow a comprehensive approach that brings together all concerned parties including states, national and international actors in order to increase the overall representation of women, since Maat received variable appeals from refugees and indigenous women calling for assisting in their participation in Human Rights Council meetings.

Thank you Madam/Mr. President.