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**Statement submitted by UNESCO Etxea (UNESCO Centre
Basque Country) in consultative status with the Economic and
Social Council^{1*}**

The Secretary-General has received the following statements, which are being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

^{1*} The present statements are issued without formal editing.

Statement

The UNESCO centre in the Basque Country works in partnership with AMUGE (Basque Country Gypsy Women's Association), the Basque Youth Council (EGK), the World Rural Forum (WRF), the “Mujeres en la Diversidad” women’s association and GEHITU (Basque Country Gay, Lesbian, Trans, Bisexual and Intersex Association), within the framework of the 2030 Agenda, in order to reflect and influence the needs and proposals of groups and individuals whose rights are undermined.

Given the Agenda’s premise of “leave no one behind”, we consider it essential to focus specifically on those people who, at present, are not at the centre, people who experience inequalities first-hand and who are subject to discrimination, stereotyping and prejudice on the basis of gender, origin, age, economic status and other factors.

Through this partnership, we have focused on five vulnerable groups in the Basque Country: gypsy women, young people, day labourers, migrant women and the LGBT+ community, with a view to investigating these communities’ and groups’ contexts, in order to then affect public policy by presenting a report with the key conclusions and proposals. Here are some of the most pertinent points:

- When investigating inequality and vulnerability, it is essential to work on the basis of a broad and multidimensional understanding of the vulnerable groups, including awareness of the concept of intersectionality, which is defined as “the interaction of multiple identities and experiences of exclusion and subordination” (UN Women, 2018).
- One of the main tools with which to transform society is inclusive and equitable education that includes a focus on human rights and contributes to achieving all the other objectives.
- At this time of crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, existing inequalities, such as the digital divide, have become even more apparent. The serious consequences have affected all people, but especially those who were already experiencing social, economic and environmental vulnerability.
- At times like this, reflection and consideration of how to produce change is fundamental. In this regard, we believe the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially in their decade of action, represent a shared roadmap with which to coordinate ourselves and create partnerships at every level.

In conclusion, we firmly assert the need to address the 2030 Agenda’s processes, including the diversity in contemporary societies and, in particular, facilitating the political participation of people and groups whose rights are undermined. Therefore, we also conclude that the effective and transformative implementation of the 2030 Agenda depends on it being consistent with the general commitment to human rights.