



**49th Commission on the Status of Women
9 March 2005, United Nations, New York**

The World Youth Alliance thanks you Madame Chair and members of the panel for your expertise and organization in this morning's presentation.

I and sixty other World Youth Alliance members have come to represent and be the voice of one million youth from over one hundred different countries.

The World Youth Alliance supports the fundamental reality that the equal and intrinsic dignity of women and men forms the basis of all our human rights and is also the basis for building free and just societies. It is in this spirit of solidarity with you, representatives of national governments and civil society that we are honored to present this reflection on the dignity of woman*:

"Who is woman? Daughter, mother, wife, patriot, policy-maker, sister, thinker, worker? The challenge of this changing world asks this question and every woman is called upon to answer.

We young people of different nations, cultures, religions, ethnicity's believe that every person is endowed with an intrinsic and inalienable dignity from conception throughout our natural lives. This dignity is inviolable and does not change regardless of the circumstances of one's life. It is the basis for human rights.

We believe that the freedom of the human person is most fully and rightly lived in the gift of ourselves to others. In the act of self-gift, the human person answers the question "Who am I?" through the experience of love.

Equal in dignity, and in a way that is complementary to man, woman is unique in her capacity for love and so can experience freedom in a radical way through her gift of self.

In motherhood, which is a continual invitation to self-gift, woman develops society through the transmission of life.

Woman recalls to humankind its humanity in a profound recognition of the dignity of each person. Woman is the architect of authentic peace from the basic cell of society to the highest levels of policy and decision making, constructing conditions in which persons are given the chance to live in accordance with their dignity.

The talents of woman foster and preserve the beauty of each culture. When exercises the key role in building, designing, and protecting societies, her participation enriches and sustains the culture for herself, her family and community and for all generations to follow.

Through her gift of self, every aspect of woman's life is enriched and transformed and society in turn is transformed on every level."

And to you we say, thank you.

**The World Youth Alliance Statement on Woman, Outcome document of the 2004 International Solidarity Forum, New York*