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The Declaration on Women's
Sex-Based Rights has been signed
by 39,294 individuals from 160
countries and is supported by 523
organisations

To: Reem Alsalem, Special Rapporteur on violence against women and girls, OHCHR,
hrc-sr-vaw@un.org

From: Women's Declaration International

Re: Surrogacy and violence against women and girls

Date: APRIL 16 2025

Email Subject Line: Nearly 40,000 people and 543 organizations consider surrogacy as a violation of the physical and reproductive integrity of girls and women

Submit to: hrc-sr-vaw@un.org

The [Declaration on Women's Sex Based Rights](#) has been signed by nearly 40,000 people from 160 countries and by 543 organisations. Given this wide support, we want to draw to your attention today to statements found under Articles One and Three, and in particular:

- **that States should recognize that harmful practices such as forced pregnancies, and the commercial or altruistic exploitation of women's reproductive capacities involved in 'surrogate' motherhood, are violations of the physical and reproductive integrity of girls and women, and are to be eliminated as forms of sex-based discrimination**
- that the rights of women are based upon the category of sex
- that women and girls have the rights to physical and reproductive integrity

- that States should ensure that the full reproductive rights of women and girls, and unhindered access to comprehensive reproductive services, are upheld
- that States should recognize that medical research which is aimed at enabling men to gestate and give birth to children is a violation of the physical and reproductive integrity of girls and women, and is to be eliminated as a form of sex-based discrimination.

The Declaration notes that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action (1995) states that, “The explicit recognition and reaffirmation of the right of all women to control all aspects of their health, in particular their own fertility, is basic to their empowerment”. (Annex 1, 17).

This right is undermined by the use of ‘surrogate’ motherhood, which exploits and commodifies women’s reproductive capacity.

The exploitation and commodification of women’s reproductive capacity also underpins medical research which is aimed at enabling men to gestate and give birth to children.

Some men who claim a female ‘gender identity’ make claims to be included in the legal category of mother in law, policies and practice, and that such inclusion erodes the social significance of maternity, and undermines maternal rights.

WDI appreciates the opportunity to provide input on this important issue. As the background information on your call for input points out, “women living in poverty or from minority and marginalized backgrounds account for an overwhelming share of surrogate mothers, highlighting the role played by social and economic power imbalances in the commodification of female reproductive capacities that underlie the practice.” And although sound, comprehensive evidence as to what is currently happening worldwide is scarce, even in countries where surrogacy is regulated to prevent commercialization of the practice, it is clear that the practice is rapidly growing, and occasional media exposés make clear that monitoring and enforcement of protections are inadequate.

The simple fact is that it is impossible for surrogacy, as a violation of the physical and reproductive integrity of girls and women, to ever be reconciled with the protection and advancements of women’s and girls’ rights and therefore must be eliminated as a form of sex-based discrimination.