

Statement from the Young Feminist Caucus

The United Nations' Financial Crisis: An Urgent Duty to Defend and Fund Multilateralism

Excellencies,

We write as the Young Feminist Caucus, as young feminists of a generation living through overlapping crises that were not of our making, but will define our future.

As a feminist constituency engaging with the UN system, we address you with urgency and clarity that the United Nations is facing a financial crisis that is not inevitable. It is political, it is preventable, and it is a choice.

This crisis is not simply a budgetary shortfall. It is a rupture in the global promise that multilateralism exists to serve people, not power. It is a failure that undermines the very foundation of international cooperation and erodes trust in the institutions that are meant to uphold peace and security, sustainable development, human rights, and justice.

Make no mistake, when the United Nations is underfunded, it is not abstract systems that collapse first. It is people. The multilateral system is not a luxury to be supported only when convenient. It is not an optional donation nor a bargaining chip. It is a shared responsibility.

We remind all Member States that the United Nations is not “them.” It is us, ‘We the peoples’. Its capacity to function is not determined by ideals alone, but by whether Member States meet their legal and political obligations.

We therefore issue this clear call: Pay in full. Pay on time. Pay without conditions. Do so as a matter of principle and legal obligation.

When contributions are withheld, delayed, or politicized, what is being weaponized is not paperwork, rather it is the ability of the UN to deliver mandates that you, Member States, have collectively adopted and that serve the people who depend on the blue flag most.

Let us be unequivocal that withholding funds does not punish bureaucracies, it punishes your populations. Delaying payment does not send a message, it triggers instability. Attaching conditions does not ensure accountability, it undermines independence. Selective funding does not prioritize efficiency, it creates dependency and distortion.

The UN cannot be expected to act boldly while being starved quietly.

Financial decisions are never neutral. Budgets reflect values, payment schedules reveal priorities, and funding gaps expose whose lives are treated as expendable.

When the UN is forced into austerity, it is often mandates, policies, and programmes on human rights, gender equality, and youth that are treated as flexible. But our rights are not flexible, our lives are not line items to be negotiated, and our futures are not optional.

Austerity in multilateralism does not produce efficiency, it produces silence where there should be accountability, absence where there should be protection, and delay where there should be action, deepening the very inequalities the UN was created to confront.

We reject the normalization of this budgetary crisis and the slow dismantling of multilateralism.

It has become far too easy for the international community to accept dysfunction as routine and collapse as inevitable. Multilateralism cannot be sustained on applause or statements alone. The UN cannot be run on promises, panels, and performative commitments. Member States cannot continue to demand results while denying resources.

We call on all Member States, especially those with the greatest capacity and influence, to act with integrity and urgency to:

1. Pay what is owed to the regular budget and to contribute more to the agencies, programmes, and funds across the UN system.
2. Stop using funding as leverage.
3. End the practice of turning multilateralism into a hostage of national politics.
4. Remember that when Member States fail to uphold the multilateral system, it is young people who inherit the consequences, unpaid, unresolved, and unforgiving.

If the multilateral system collapses under the weight of political neglect, it will not be because it lacked relevance. It will be because Member States lacked resolve.

Will you uphold the institutions you rely on when crises erupt? Or will you weaken them until only the powerful can survive the world you have created?

The Young Feminist Caucus stands firm in our conviction that a functioning UN is not optional, it is essential. A funded multilateral system is not negotiable. It is foundational. Payment in full, on time, and without conditions is not generosity, it is duty.

This is a collective responsibility. The stability and credibility of the UN depend on the shared commitment of all Member States to justice, rights, and equality. Feminist movements and civil society will continue to demand accountability and a UN that serves the rights, equality, and justice of all people.

This statement is issued in solidarity with the [Women's Major Group](#) and other gender constituencies.

**In solidarity,
On behalf of the Young Feminist Caucus**