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Celebrating International Day of Rural Women: Oct. 15th

Dear editor:

2015 marks the global celebration of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations (UN), which aims to honour the historic breadth of the Organisation's development, security and human rights work. The ?UN70? celebration also aims to unite Member States, global civil society and the many individual women and men working in common cause to enable a strong UN to realise a better world. October 24, UN Day marks the entry into force of the UN Charter. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, the UN officially came into being.

ACWW is uniquely placed to celebrate the International Day of Rural Women on 15th October and the particular contribution of rural women in advocacy regarding the work and achievements of the UN. In 1947, ACWW received Consultative Status with the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) enabling us to work with UN Agencies such as FAO, UNESCO, UNICEF and recently UN Women. ACWW is one of few original NGOs still working on advocacy at the UN. This year we congratulate our ACWW UN Representative and the Alliance for Health Promotion (NGO committee at WHO) as the gained Official Relations status at WHO.

More than half the world's women live and work in rural areas. ACWW represents almost 9million of these women worldwide. Over the past 68 years we have brought rural women's issues to the UN in the areas of economic development, empowerment, education, health, domestic violence, human rights, and social support. According to UN Women, women comprise on average 43% of the agriculture labour force but comprise less than 20% of land ownership and are responsible for 85-90 of household food preparation. While much has been achieved, the goal posts change and our work goes on. ACWW supports the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Resolution 1325 and the upcoming Sustainable Development Goals.

2015 is the International Year of Soils. Soils help combat and adapt to climate change by playing a role in the carbon cycle; healthy soils are the basis for healthy food production; soils support our planets biodiversity; soils are a non-renewable resource, its preservation is essential for food security and our sustainable future; soils store and filter water improving our resilience to floods and droughts; and soils are the foundation for vegetation, which is cultivated or managed to produce feed, fibre, fuel and medicinal products. The promotion of sustainable soil and land management is central to ensuring a productive food system, improved rural livelihoods and a healthy environment. We encourage each one to improve the health of your Soils by regularly applying compost.

This year on International Day of Rural Women, ACWW encourages all members and member societies to celebrate our special relationship with the United Nations, and reaffirm our beliefs that peace and progress can best be advanced by friendship and understanding through communication and working together to improve the quality of life for women and communities worldwide.

Sharon Hatten,
UN Committee Chair