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### CoNGO tribute in honour of beloved colleague and friend Dr. Krishna Ahoopatel

With the passing away of Dr. Krishna Ahoopatel on 27 December 2018, the world has lost a former international public servant and civil society activist—beloved, complete and par excellence. Even in death, she is forever to us a model of a person with indelible integrity, exemplary leadership, laudable collegiality, and deep-spirited friendship.

Krishna represented, including as president, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) at the United Nations (UN) in Geneva. In this capacity she actively participated in the work of the Conference of Non-Governmental Organizations in Consultative Relationship with the United Nations (CoNGO) whose purpose is to build and strengthen the official relationship of non-governmental organizations with the United Nations system.

Krishna's knowledge and experience as a former official of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic, were invaluable to CoNGO and the non-governmental community at large. Krishna's generosity of her precious time and wise counsel to CoNGO over the years will be fondly remembered and sorely missed.

Krishna presided over and led the work of several of CoNGOs special NGO committees in areas in which she had particular knowledge and experience. All her life she was engaged in the struggle for the human rights and equality of women and men in the family and society. At the ILO she worked in the gender equality section and edited the monthly magazine Women at Work. She never retired from this struggle; she continued it by contributing to the work of CoNGO's NGO Committee on the Status of Women and the NGO Committee on Development, both based in Geneva, Switzerland.

#### CoNGO INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

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Krishna fought all forms of racism throughout her life. She was at times a victim of racism herself. She was fully engaged in preparing and participating in the UN World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, held in Durban, South Africa in 2001. She remained an active supporter of the World Against Racism Network of which she was a founder and treasurer until recently.

Krishna abhorred colonialism about which she had considerable and direct personal experience. As the UN advanced in its decolonization efforts, she actively promoted and supported the call for economic and social development of newly decolonized countries. She believed that as countries gained their political independence they must be free to choose how they want to organize their economic, social and political systems.

Krishna was an academic, and for years after her official “retirement” from the UN system, she taught courses and workshops at several of the universities in Halifax, Canada, including as distinguished visiting professor of international development studies at Saint Mary’s University.

Krishna leaves a legacy of engagement and leadership in forging a more just world order based on deep respect for the values of human rights, equality of all peoples, sustainable development, and the basic principles enunciated by the United Nations Charter. We are forever indebted to her for showing us in words and in deeds what advocacy demands to make these values and principles real in the lives of people and in the relations of nations.

Krishna shared her thoughts freely, writing profusely and sharing them publicly through publications. Her book, *Development Has a Woman’s Face: Insights from Within the UN* (Brunswick Books, 2008), is a window to Krishna’s forthright witness and civic courage in the public square. She showed us how multilateralism can and must work simultaneously at local, national, regional, and global levels, even in a world of competing and compelling global challenges.

Many will miss Krishna’s profound friendship and the deep honesty and religiosity she nurtured such friendships. We will draw for generations from the well of her friendship which runs deep.

CoNGO—its officers, NGO Committees, and member organizations worldwide—deeply honours and profusely thanks Dr. Krishna Ahoopatel. With this tribute we express our sincerest condolences to the members of her family, relatives, friends, and everyone near and dear to her.

*Liberato C. Bautista*

Dr. Liberato C. Bautista, CoNGO President

New York, 1 January 2019

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