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WOMEN'S GROUPS LAUNCH EFFORT TO MONITOR
UNITED NATIONS WORLD SUMMIT

*Leading NGOs Say Governments Must Recognize Centrality of Women's Perspectives
In Upcoming Meetings on Peace and Security, Development, Human Rights and U.N.
Reform*

United Nations, August, 2005 – Three leading women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have launched an advocacy and monitoring campaign to ensure that voices of women are heard in the forthcoming meeting of world leaders at the United Nations September 14-16. **Gender Monitoring Group of the World Summit** is a project of the Center for Women's Global Leadership (CWGL), Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era (DAWN) and the Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO); all are NGOs with a long history of advocacy on the issues that the Summit will address and how they affect women around the world.

During the Summit, heads of governments from most of the world's nations – the overwhelming majority of whom are men – will gather to debate a series of proposals regarding peace and security, human rights and development as well as reform of the United Nations itself. Yet the United States threatens this process by seeking last minute, far-reaching amendments that would gut the proposals on sustainable development, debt relief and financial assistance to poor countries, and the environment, and weaken support for agreements on social and economic issues reached at past conferences.

The Gender Monitoring Group has developed a position paper, *What's at Stake for Women*, which highlights how the key issues are relevant to women and how to implement a gender perspective into proposed policies.

"Women bear the brunt of war and therefore any proposal for peace and security that fails to incorporate their voices will be inadequate. Women are persistent targets for violence, discrimination and other human rights violations, and have critical experience that needs to be taken into account. And because women represent the majority of the world's poor, women's input is essential to any effective poverty eradication strategies. We must seize the opportunity this Summit presents to demand, once and for all, that governments do not develop policies and proposals that are uninformed by the needs of women and their families," said June Zeitlin.

Officials with the Gender Monitoring Group of the World Summit will be available for interviews and for comments before, during and after the Summit.