



DRIVING THE GENDER-RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT



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UN WOMEN

New York, August 2016

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Photos above capture some of the key moments of the sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) held at the United Nations Headquarters, New York, in March 2016. All photos: UN Women/Ryan Brown.

FOREWORD

LEAVING NO WOMAN OR GIRL BEHIND: FROM PROMISE TO REALITY

The year 2015 was historic. As UN Women turned five, a historic ‘gender equality compact’ was adopted by world governments and placed at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development with truly transformative, comprehensive and universal ambition. Other milestones further strengthened this framework during 2015, including the Financing for Development outcome (Addis Ababa Action Agenda), the 1325 Global Review on Women, Peace and Security and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

Gender equality was recognized and affirmed as a precondition for the realization of sustainable development and also defined as a key sustainable development goal by itself, Goal 5. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 is a promise to “achieve (not just promote) gender equality and empower all women and girls.” The 2030 Agenda declares that justice for women and girls and their human rights matter because they are half of humanity, and their needs and potential cannot and must not be ignored.

With the new agenda, world leaders have set an expiry date for gender inequality, discrimination and violence against women. This was clearly seen at the historic and groundbreaking 27 September 2015 “Global Leaders’ Meeting on Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment: A Commitment to Action”, co-hosted by UN Women with the Government of China, where 140 countries participated and nearly 70 Heads of State and Government from all regions came together in New York to move from commitment to action and to step it up for implementing the Beijing Platform for Action and achieving the SDGs for women and girls. Substantive equality and transformative change must be achieved by 2030 and must benefit the most vulnerable and marginalized. At the current pace, it would take another century to achieve our goal. Acceleration of transformation is not an option but an imperative.

This acceleration requires extraordinary political will, action and investment in the gender equality project to translate international commitments into national and local realities for women and girls. The road ahead has many challenges, and it is imperative to front-load progress, so that concrete results are already evident

by 2020 when the international community can take stock, recommit and do course correction as required.

Catapulting the rights and needs of the world’s women and girls, SDG 5, also known as the Gender Equality Goal, is a promise to all women and girls in their diversity of circumstance and status. Its six targets address the structural barriers to women’s enjoyment of their human rights and assure physical integrity and security, voice and choice. These include:

- End all forms of discrimination in law and practice;
- Eliminate violence against women and girls, including harmful practices;
- Ensure women’s equal participation and leadership at all levels of political, economic and public life;
- Recognize and redistribute unpaid care work and provide public services, infrastructure and social protection; and
- Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights.

The 2030 Agenda also promotes the economic rights of women and girls by calling for decent work, equal pay and equal rights, and ownership and control over economic resources—such as land, property, technology and financial services.

Sustainable Development Goal 5 and all other gender-sensitive targets in 11 other SDGs constitute a **Gender Equality Compact** that embraces the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) as foundational frameworks for sustainable development, offering a real opportunity and urgency to drive lasting change for women’s rights and equality.

The sixtieth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) in March 2016, and its outcome, the Agreed Conclusions, heralded a road map for the gender-responsive implementation of all the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. This must now guide Member States and the UN system to bolster efforts to make the SDGs a reality for all. UN Women, which has been assigned a central role in the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, must and will play its part.

A path-breaking aspect of CSW60 was the youth-led and organized first ever Youth CSW Forum. The outcomes of the youth forum were presented to the CSW and a young woman leader addressed the CSW opening plenary. Some 300 young women and men leaders participated and gave their vision of what the gender equality compact means to them and how they want to contribute to a gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. We hope this becomes an annual feature of the CSW, to garner the inputs and perspectives of the global youth for creating a gender equal world soonest.

The CSW commitment was made in the presence of over 120 government ministers and deputy or vice ministers and 1,825 senior officials and parliamentarians. More than 4,000 civil society representatives gave voice to a range of issues crucial to women and girls at CSW60.

At CSW60, Member States reiterated their commitment in the 2030 Agenda to significantly increase investments to close the gender gap, to strengthen support for gender equality institutions at all levels, and to systematically embed gender perspectives into all aspects of implementation, including in their work on data and statistics, indicators, follow-up and review, and to build accountability and give primacy to women's leadership at all levels.

The road map for implementation of the gender equality compact, as outlined in this publication drawing on the CSW60 Agreed Conclusions, covers the ten vectors of action—the “10 I’s”—which aim to create the enabling environment which ensures the accelerated implementation of gender equality commitments. It is a clarion call to **Step it Up for Gender Equality for a Planet 50:50**. It is a **Call to Action** to those who have committed to making gender equality and

women's empowerment a reality, it is a call to all stakeholders, including governments, civil society, business communities, the media, academia, men and boys, and youth. The “10 I’s” are fundamental to the way forward towards the 2030 Agenda. They include:

Inspiration from the intergovernmental normative frameworks and human rights conventions, including the historic gender equality compact and commitments of 2015, to achieve sustainable development, human rights, peace and security, and humanitarian response and related strategies at all levels. Governments must own the agenda and citizens must too, and both state action and movement building should happen simultaneously.

Implementation: localization through adoption and reform of laws, policies and measures including special measures and actions, the removal of discriminatory laws and policies, and ensuring their full, effective and accelerated implementation.

Indivisibility of the SDGs and targets—horizontal and vertical. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all SDGs must deliver for gender equality and women's empowerment. In this regard, the prioritization of SDG 5 and gender-sensitive targets threaded across all SDGs in their implementation is a key task for all governments and will have a force multiplier effect on the achievement of all SDGs.

Integration of gender equality and women's empowerment across all SDGs and the entire 2030 Agenda, systematic mainstreaming in the implementation of its three dimensions, economic, social and environmental, an all-of-government approach including in development assistance activities and initiatives.

Inclusion of all key stakeholders, particularly civil society, women's movements, youth, men and boys, faith-based organizations and the private sector for movement building, transforming social norms and addressing the needs of all women and girls, especially those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization. Not only must the implementation of the 2030 Agenda ensure that no woman or girl is left behind, it must mean that the poorest and most vulnerable groups of women—for example disabled and indigenous women and girls—move forward.

FIGURE 1

UN Women gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 agenda



Institutions: creating, empowering, strengthening and resourcing gender equality and women's empowerment institutions at global, regional, national and local levels, and ensuring that all key institutions—political, economic, judicial, social, cultural, public services, etc.—work in a gender-responsive manner.

Investment: significantly increased and enhanced financial investment and resource mobilization from all sources, including official development assistance (ODA), to close gender equality gaps at all levels, and targeted and mainstreamed transformative actions for financing gender equality and women's empowerment as committed to in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Information: generating comprehensive gender equality and women's empowerment related value chain of data, statistics, indicators, knowledge hubs, monitoring systems, frameworks, and capacities in SDG implementation, follow-up and review at all levels to assess progress and gaps, and guide policies and actions. There are 50 indicators on gender equality and women's empowerment in the Global Indicators Framework on SDGs, which require a gender statistics revolution and support.

Innovation: driving political, economic and social innovation that is gender equality through deployment of science, technology and innovation, modalities and means of implementation, information and communications technology (ICT), and media, including social media, innovative partnerships and advocacy platforms is a priority.

Impact: these commitments must lead to actual change in the enabling environment and make systemic and substantive impact on the situation of all women and girls, especially those most marginalized, and must be the benchmark for accountability. At the same time, for this to happen movement building with the mass mobilization of people for changing social and cultural norms through advocacy and programs for engagement of men and boys, youth and faith-based organizations, media and entertainment leaders is a must.

Lakshmi Puri

Lakshmi Puri,
UN Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy Executive Director of UN Women

1.

DRIVING THE GENDER-RESPONSIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

The annual session of the Commission on the Status of Women is always one of the largest and most engaging intergovernmental meetings of the United Nations and a premier global forum for policy dialogue and consensus building on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, with a unique and impressive public profile. This year a record number of representatives of governments, UN entities, civil society, academia and the private sector participated in policy discussions, advocacy and activism, with UN Women facilitating many of these activities. In total, over 120 government ministers and deputy or vice ministers, 1,825 officials from capitals, parliamentarians, and more than 4,000 civil society representatives gave voice to a range of issues crucial to women and girls of all backgrounds and sectors through meetings, side events—197 onsite and some 450 offsite—and numerous other activities.



Above: UN Women/Ryan Brown

The Commission's session assumed particular significance this year not only as it celebrated its milestone sixtieth session, but more so as it blazed a trail and set high standards for driving the implementation of the historic 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Leveraging its unique role as the key intergovernmental policymaking body on gender equality and the empowerment of women, CSW adopted direction-setting Agreed Conclusions on the priority theme "Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development". The Agreed Conclusions establish intergovernmental commitments and a positive trajectory of actions to effectively implement and monitor the progress of the historic gender equality compact contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in conjunction with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

KEY MESSAGES OF THE AGREED CONCLUSIONS

Historic commitment to gender-responsive implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda

The priority theme helped to frame and contextualize the gender equality dimensions of the 2030 Agenda as outlined in the Secretary-General's report prepared by UN Women. Through the Agreed Conclusions, the Commission made a historic commitment to gender-responsive implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda.

The Commission recognized that the 2030 Agenda is of “unprecedented scope and significance. It is accepted by all countries, is applicable to all and will be implemented within countries” (20).¹ It also recognized that the “gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development requires the acceleration of action on both recent and long-standing commitments to realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms” (17).

The centrality of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls for progress on all SDGs affirmed

The Commission welcomed “the commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls contained in the 2030 Agenda”, and recognized that “women play a vital role as agents of development” (7). It acknowledged “that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is crucial to making progress across all Sustainable Development Goals and targets ... that the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if women and girls continue to be denied the full realization of their human rights and equal opportunities” (7).

¹ The relevant paragraphs of the agreed conclusions are referenced in brackets. For more, visit: http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/2016/27&Lang=E

Beijing Platform for Action as a foundational basis of the 2030 Agenda reiterated

The Commission reaffirmed that the “Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of its reviews, and the outcomes of relevant major United Nations conferences and summits and the follow-up to those conferences and summits, have laid a solid foundation for sustainable development and that the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action will make a crucial contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that will leave no one behind” (5). Regional conventions, instruments and initiatives are recognized as playing an important role “in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including for sustainable development” (6), thus encouraging the regional ownership for the gender equality agenda for sustainable development.

Human rights of women and girls reaffirmed

The Commission prioritized human rights of women and girls in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, and reaffirmed human rights treaties—the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and their Optional Protocols. These instruments were reiterated as providing “an international legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls throughout their life cycle” (2). Also emphasized is “the promotion and protection of, and respect for, the

human rights and fundamental freedoms of women, including the right to development, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated” (3) to be mainstreamed into all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty, and to “take measures to ensure that every person is entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development” (3). National human rights institutions are invited, among other actors, to contribute to the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

The imperative of social norms change emphasized

The Agreed Conclusions elevate the focus on action towards changing social norms in the implementation of the gender equality compact of the 2030 Agenda, building on the important work done in previous years by the Commission. Member States and other actors are called upon to “design and implement appropriate domestic policies at all levels that aim to transform discriminatory social attitudes and gender stereotypes and to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls” (23s),



Clockwise from top left: UN Women/Piyavit Thongsa-Ard; UN Women/Joe Saad; UN Women/Felix Eldridge; UN Women/Joe Saad

THE AGREED CONCLUSIONS: AN IMPLEMENTATION ROAD MAP FOR THE 2030 AGENDA

The Agreed Conclusions set out a road map for the why, what and how of implementation of all SDGs without singling out any particular SDG. The emphasis throughout the text is that all SDGs—over and above the dedicated SDG 5 and the gender-sensitive targets in other goals—have to be implemented in a gender-responsive way even where there is no explicit reference to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. This confirms that all SDGs and the entire Agenda need to deliver for women and girls, and are in line with the 2030 Agenda’s affirmation that the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the Agenda is crucial.

The strategy and road map for gender-responsive implementation spelled out in the Agreed Conclusions sought to create and reinforce the enabling environment at all levels, in all contexts and by all actors, with actions aimed at:

- Strengthening normative, legal and policy frameworks;
- Fostering enabling environments for financing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;
- Strengthening women’s leadership and women’s full and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of sustainable development;
- Strengthening gender-responsive data collection, follow-up and review processes; and
- Enhancing national institutional arrangements.

The role of the United Nations system entities to support Member States in their gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda is highlighted, and particular emphasis is placed on UN Women’s central role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in support of the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda.

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

While there is no explicit mention of SDG 5, the full gender equality compact of the 2030 Agenda with SDG 5 at its heart emerges strongly within the Agreed Conclusions as illustrated below.

End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere (target 5.1); Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels (target 5.c); Undertake reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property, financial services, inheritance and natural resources, in accordance with national laws (target 5a) as well as enhance the use of enabling technology to promote the empowerment of women (target 5b)

Under the rubric of strengthening normative, legal and policy frameworks, the Agreed Conclusions call for action to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls through development, adoption, accelerated and effective implementation and monitoring of laws and comprehensive policy measures, the removal of discriminatory measures, the setting up of legal, policy, administrative and other comprehensive measures, including temporary special measures to

ensure women's and girls' equal and effective access to justice and accountability for violations of their human rights (23d).

The Agreed Conclusions also call for action to enact legislation and undertake reforms to realize the equal rights of women to access economic and productive resources, including access to, ownership of, and control over land, property and inheritance rights, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance, and equal opportunities for women for full and productive employment and decent work (23e). They also call for action to develop and facilitate the availability of appropriate knowledge and technologies globally, and increase awareness among decision makers, the private sector and employers of the necessity of women's economic empowerment and their important contribution (23ee); as well as mainstream a gender perspective into education and training programmes, including science and technology, eradicate female illiteracy and support school-to-work transition through skills development to enable women's and girls' active participation in economic, social and cultural development, governance and decision-making, and create conditions that facilitate women's full participation and integration in the formal economy (23q).

Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation (target 5.2); Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation (target 5.3)

The Commission strongly condemned all forms of violence against all women and girls and expressed deep concern that discrimination and violence against women and girls, in particular against those who are most vulnerable, continue in all parts of the world and include, inter alia, sexual and gender-based violence, domestic violence, trafficking in persons and femicide, as well as harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage, and female genital mutilation (15). All forms of violence against women and girls are recognized as "impediments to the full achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, the realization of all human rights and

fundamental freedoms for all women and girls and the development of their full potential as equal partners with men and boys, as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals" (15).

The Agreed Conclusions call for action to "adopt, review and ensure the accelerated and effective implementation of laws that criminalize violence against women and girls, as well as comprehensive, multidisciplinary and gender-sensitive preventive, protective and prosecutorial measures and services to eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against all women and girls, in public and private spaces, as well as harmful practices" (23r).

The Agreed Conclusions also call for action in regards to violence against women migrant workers (23i); to address the linkage between inadequate water and sanitation and violence and harassment (23k); to address sexual and gender-based violence as an integral and prioritized part of every humanitarian response (23m); to recognize the right of women to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, free from coercion, discrimination and violence (23o); and to engage men and boys in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls (23t).

Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate (target 5.4)

The Commission recognized that achieving the 2030 Agenda requires "changing the current gender-based division of labour to ensure that unpaid care and domestic work is equally shared and recognized, reduced and redistributed" (11).

Expanding upon target 5.4, the Agreed Conclusions call for action to "recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work by prioritizing social protection policies, including accessible and affordable quality social services, and care services for children, persons with disabilities, older persons, persons living with HIV and AIDS and all others in need of care, and promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men" (23g).

Action is called for to link unpaid care work to the role and responsibility of men and boys in the equal sharing of responsibilities (23t); to address such work as a barrier to women's participation in decision-making (23gg); and to improve data collection and analysis in this area (23mm).

Ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (target 5.5)

The Commission recognized women's effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life (11.) It called for action to ensure "women's full, equal and effective participation in all fields and in leadership at all levels of decision-making in the public and private sectors and in public, social, economic and political life and in all areas of sustainable development" (23ff). It also called for action towards the full, equal and effective participation of rural women and of indigenous women in society, the economy and political decision-making (23u and 23v).

The Commission called for specific measures to ensure women's full, equal and effective participation in decision-making including "through temporary special measures as appropriate, by setting and working to achieve concrete goals, targets and benchmarks, including by providing education and training, and by removing all barriers that directly and indirectly hinder the participation of women, and girls where applicable, in decision-making roles in all sectors and at all levels, such as lack of access to quality and inclusive education and training, as well as such barriers as violence, poverty, unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work, and gender stereotypes" (23gg). The Commission also called for measures to ensure women's effective participation at all levels and at all stages in peace processes and mediation efforts, conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and recovery, as set out in relevant Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security (23m).

The Commission called for action on shared work and parental responsibilities between women and men in order to promote women's increased participation in

public life, and called for measures to reconcile family, private and professional life (23ii).

Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences (target 5.6)

The Commission called for action to "ensure the promotion and protection of the human rights of all women and their sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences" (23o). This is to include "the development and enforcement of policies and legal frameworks and the strengthening of health systems that make universally accessible and available quality comprehensive sexual and reproductive health-care services, commodities, information and education, including, inter alia, safe and effective methods of modern contraception, emergency contraception, prevention programmes for adolescent pregnancy, maternal health care such as skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care which will reduce obstetric fistula and other complications of pregnancy and delivery, safe abortion where such services are permitted by national law, and prevention and treatment of reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and reproductive cancers" (23o). The action goes on to recognize that "human rights include the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free from coercion, discrimination and violence" (23o).

Setting a holistic women's economic empowerment agenda

The Commission recognized that women's equal economic rights, economic empowerment and independence are essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda (1o) and set out a holistic approach towards implementation.

It underlined the importance of undertaking legislative and other reforms to realize the equal rights of women and men, as well as girls and boys where applicable, “to access economic and productive resources, including land and natural resources, property and inheritance rights, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance” (10), and “equal opportunities for women for full and productive employment and decent work, and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value” (10). The Commission recognized that achievement of the 2030 Agenda requires the “full integration of women into the formal economy” (11).

The Commission called for action to “implement macroeconomic, labour and social policies that promote full and productive employment and decent work for all” (echoing SDG 8) “in order to benefit women and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women” (23ee) and “optimize the contribution of women to economic growth and poverty reduction, promote processes” (23ee). Action is also called for “to develop and facilitate the availability of appropriate knowledge and technologies globally, and increase awareness among decision-makers, the private sector and employers of the necessity of women’s economic empowerment and their important contribution” (23ee).

The Commission affirmed women’s economic rights and independence, and called for action to promote “women’s right to work and rights at work through gender-responsive policies and programmes that promote decent work for all, ensure equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, protect women against discrimination and abuse in the workplace, invest in and empower women in all sectors in the economy by supporting women-led businesses, including by tailoring a range of approaches and instruments which facilitate access to universal public services, finance, training, technology, markets, sustainable and affordable energy and transport and trade” (23f).

Recognizing the linkages between education and skills development and economic empowerment, the Commission called for action to “mainstream a gender perspective into education and training programmes, including science and technology, eradicate female

illiteracy and support school-to-work transition through skills development to enable women’s and girls’ active participation in economic, social and cultural development, governance and decision-making” (23q). It also called for the creation of “conditions that facilitate women’s full participation and integration in the formal economy” (23q).

Interconnections with other SDGs

End poverty in all its forms everywhere (SDG 1)

The Commission clearly elaborated the enabler/actor-beneficiary relationship between gender equality and women’s empowerment and poverty eradication, that is, between SDG 5 and SDG 1. Indeed, the Commission expressed concern on the continued feminization of poverty, emphasizing that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development (8). It acknowledged the mutually reinforcing links between the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and poverty eradication, and stressed the need for ensuring an adequate standard of living for women and girls, throughout their life cycle, including through social protection systems (8). The impact of poverty was also referenced in relation to education (9), women’s economic empowerment (23ee), rural (23u) and indigenous women (23v), financing (23ee), and data collection (23mm).

End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture (SDG 2)

The Commission called for action to “recognize the important role and contribution of rural women and girls, as well as local communities, to food security, poverty eradication, environmental sustainability and sustainable development and commit to supporting their empowerment, and ensure rural women’s full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy, and political decision-making” (23u).

Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all (SDG 4)

Echoing SDG 4, the Commission placed strong emphasis on the importance of education for women and girls for achieving gender equality and women’s

empowerment (9). The Commission reaffirmed that the “realization of the right to education contributes to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, human rights, sustainable development and poverty eradication” (9). It stressed the need for all women and girls to enjoy access to lifelong learning opportunities and equal access to quality education at all levels—early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary education, and technical and vocational training (9). The Agreed Conclusions noted with concern the lack of progress in closing gender gaps in access to, retention in, and completion of secondary schooling, which is key to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the realization of their human rights and fundamental freedoms (9).

The Commission affirmed women’s and girls’ right to education throughout their life cycle at all levels, especially for those who are most left behind (23p). The Commission called for action by: providing universal access to quality education; ensuring inclusive, equal and non-discriminatory quality education; promoting learning opportunities for all; ensuring completion of primary and secondary education and eliminating gender disparities in access to all areas of secondary and tertiary education; promoting financial literacy; ensuring that women and girls have equal access to career development, training, scholarships and fellowships; adopting positive action to build women’s and girls’ leadership skills and influence (23 p). It also called for action to adopt measures that promote, respect and guarantee the safety of women and girls in the school environment and that support women and girls with disabilities at all levels of education and training (23p).

Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all (SDG 6)

Echoing SDG 6, the Commission recognized that women and girls are disproportionately affected by inadequate water and sanitation facilities, are at greater risk of violence and harassment when practicing open defecation and have specific needs for menstrual hygiene management. It called for action to “provide universal and equitable access for all to safe and affordable drinking water and adequate

sanitation and hygiene, in particular in schools, public facilities and buildings, paying special attention to the specific needs of all women and girls” and to “improve water management and wastewater treatment with the active participation of women” (23k).

Reduce inequality within and among countries (SDG 10)

The emphasis in the Agreed Conclusions on empowering all women and girls as subjects of sustainable development and human rights aligns with the comprehensive scope of SDG 5, i.e. “to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” so as to meet the needs, interests and rights and enable the voice and leadership of all women and girls, throughout their life cycle.

While the Commission welcomed progress made, it emphasized that “no country has fully achieved gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, that significant levels of inequality between women and men, girls and boys persist globally and that many women and girls experience vulnerability and marginalization owing to, inter alia, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination throughout their life cycle” (16).

The Commission highlighted the situation of and called for action for rural (23u) and indigenous (23v) women and girls, women and girls with disabilities (23p and w), refugee (13) and migrant (10 and 23i) women and girls and those facing vulnerabilities in different contexts, such as conflict, natural disasters (12, 13 and 23m) or climate change (14 and 23l), in an effort to respond to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination.

Thus, the Agreed Conclusions have reinforced the 2030 Agenda’s key pledge of leaving no one—no woman or girl—behind, and reach those furthest behind first. They reinforce the commitment to addressing discrimination against women and girls in the context of other factors of inequality.

Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts (SDG 13)

The Commission reiterated its concern over the challenge climate change poses to the achievement of sustainable development and that women and girls,

who face inequality and discrimination, are disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change and other environmental issues, such as diverse types of extreme weather events. Referring to and building on the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Commission reiterated that countries should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote, and consider gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (14).

The Commission called for action to “recognize the critical role of women as agents of change and leaders in addressing climate change, and promote a gender-responsive approach, the integration of a gender perspective and the empowerment of women and girls in environmental, climate change and disaster risk reduction strategies, financing, policies and processes, towards achieving the meaningful and equal participation of women in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues and towards building the resilience of women and girls to the adverse effects of climate change” (23l).

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels (SDG 16)

The Commission recognized that “conflicts, trafficking in persons, terrorism, violent extremism, natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies and other emergency situations disproportionately affect women and girls” (12), and that their human rights are promoted and protected and their needs and interests prioritized in all development efforts, as well as in conflict, humanitarian and other emergency situations (12). The Commission for the first time in a definitive way, underlined the imperative of and called for action to “ensure that the rights and specific needs of women and girls affected and displaced by conflicts, trafficking in persons, terrorism, violent extremism, natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies and other emergency situations are addressed in national and international plans, strategies and responses (23m)”. It also called for action to “ensure the participation of women and girls at all levels of decision-making in emergency, recovery,

reconstruction, conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes (23m)”.

In encouraging the World Humanitarian Summit (23 and 24 May 2016, Istanbul, Turkey) to give due consideration to integrating a gender perspective into its deliberations, the Commission stressed the importance of addressing sexual and gender-based violence as an integral and prioritized part of every humanitarian response as well as of providing education for all, especially girls, to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development (23m).

Cognizant of the high-level meeting of the plenary of the General Assembly to address large movements of refugees and migrants, on 19 September 2016, the Commission called for action to recognize the positive “contribution of migrants, including women migrant workers, to sustainable development, and acknowledge the need to eliminate violence and discrimination against women migrant workers and to promote their empowerment, including through international, regional or bilateral cooperation among all stakeholders, in particular countries of origin, transit and destination” (23i).

In a similar vein, and in the context of ensuring that no one is left behind in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Commission recognized “the challenges faced by refugee women and girls and the need to protect and empower them, including in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, and the need to strengthen the resilience of communities hosting refugees” (13). It underscored the importance of development support for those communities, particularly in developing countries.

The Commission asked for measures to be taken “to ensure women’s effective participation at all levels and at all stages in peace processes and mediation efforts, conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and recovery, as set out in relevant Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security” (23hh).

Creating an enabling environment

Strengthening national institutions

Building on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which pledged to strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels (paragraph 20), the Commission called on Governments to strengthen the authority and capacity, including through funding, of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at all levels and promote the visibility of and support for these mechanisms (24), also with the aim to “support the mainstreaming of a gender perspective across all policies and programmes in all sectors of government in the context of the 2030 Agenda” (24).

Governments are called upon to “enhance coherence and coordination of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, with relevant government agencies and other stakeholders, where appropriate” (25). They are also to ensure that “national planning, decision-making, policy formulation and implementation, budgeting processes and institutional structures contribute to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls” (25), thus endorsing an all-of-government approach to achieving the gender equality compact of the 2030 Agenda.

Transformative financing for gender equality and sustainable development

Taking inspiration from and building on the strong financing for gender equality commitments in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda as well as the 2030 Agenda, the Commission reaffirmed the importance of “significantly increased investment to close resource gaps for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including through the mobilization of financial resources from all sources” (18), including public, private, domestic and international resource mobilization and allocation and “including by enhancing revenue administration through modernized, progressive tax systems, improved tax policy, more efficient tax collection” (23bb).

The Commission stressed the need for building on progress achieved and strengthening international cooperation, “pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors and reinvigorating the global partnership for sustainable development” (23y). Drawing upon the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (paragraph 6), the Commission reiterated “the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies, and adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation and transformative actions for the promotion of gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment at all levels” (23z).

The Commission called for action to “support and institutionalize a gender-responsive approach to public financial management, including gender-responsive budgeting and tracking across all sectors of public expenditure, to address gaps in resourcing for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and ensure all national and sectoral plans and policies for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are fully costed and adequately resourced to ensure their effective implementation” (23aa).

It made a novel recommendation for eliminating the practice of gender-based price differentiation, whereby goods and services intended for or marketed to women and girls cost more than similar goods and services for men and boys (also known as the ‘pink tax’) (23j).

The Commission urged developed countries to fully implement their respective official development assistance commitments and encouraged developing countries to build on the progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help meet development goals and targets and help them, inter alia, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women (23cc). It called for increased priority on gender equality and the empowerment of women in official development assistance (23bb).

The Commission called for action to strengthen international cooperation, including the role of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, with

the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in government, civil society and the private sector, while noting that national ownership and leadership in this regard are indispensable for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (23dd).

Gender-responsive data collection, follow-up and review

To guide and measure systematic progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the Commission called for action to include a gender-responsive approach in the national follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda (23ll). This should take into account, where applicable, the agreed global indicator framework. Strengthening of national statistical capacity, including by enhancing technical and financial assistance to developing countries, to systematically design, collect and ensure access to high-quality, reliable and timely data disaggregated by sex, age and income and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, is also called for (23ll), as are efforts to enhance technical and financial collaboration between countries and the participation of civil society organizations as appropriate, with the aim of collecting data and statistics to follow up on and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda from a gender equality perspective (23nn).

Also significant was the Commission's call for action to develop and enhance standards and methodologies to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of gender statistics to measure progress for women and girls with regard to sustainable development in the context of the 2030 Agenda. Areas such as poverty, income distribution within households, unpaid care work, women's access to, control and ownership of assets and productive resources, participation at all levels of decision-making and violence against women are enumerated for such efforts (23mm).

The role of different actors in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls

Major role of civil society, and feminist and youth-led organizations

The Commission welcomed “the major contributions made by civil society, including women's and community-based organizations, feminist groups, women human rights defenders and girls' and youth-led organizations, in placing the interests, needs and visions of women and girls on local, national, regional and international agendas, including the 2030 Agenda” (21). The Commission recognized the importance of having “an open, inclusive and transparent engagement with them in the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda” (21).

This is followed by a call to “promote a safe and enabling environment for all civil society actors so that they can fully contribute to the gender-responsive implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda...” (23jj); and to “increase resources and support for grass-roots, local, national, regional and global women's and civil society organizations to advance and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls” (23kk).

Men and boys as allies and agents and beneficiaries of change

The 2030 Agenda addressed the engagement of men and boys for ending all forms of discrimination and violence against women. The Agreed Conclusions highlighted the role of men and boys in the implementation of the gender equality compact in the 2030 Agenda. Key elements include the recognition of “the importance of fully engaging men and boys as agents and beneficiaries of change ... and as allies in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, as well as in the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and in the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda” (22).

This recognition is followed by a call to engage men and boys as strategic partners and allies in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and to design and implement national policies and programmes that aim to “ensure the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men in caregiving and domestic work, transform with the aim to eliminate those social norms that condone violence against women and girls and attitudes and social norms by which women and girls are regarded as subordinate to men and boys, including by understanding and addressing the root causes of gender inequality, such as unequal power relations, social norms, practices and stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination against women and girls ...” (23t).

Role for a socially responsible and accountable private sector

The Commission included the private sector and employer organizations in its call to support the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda. It recommended promoting “a socially responsible and accountable private sector that acts in line with, among others, the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations ‘Protect, Respect and Remedy’ Framework, the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, labour, environmental and health standards, and the Women’s Empowerment Principles established by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Global Compact, in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the realization of their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms” (22h).

Role of family

The Commission called for action to recognize the family as a contributor to development, including in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals for women and girls, and that gender equality and women’s empowerment improve the well-being of the family, and in this regard stress the need for elaborating and implementing family policies aimed at achieving gender equality and women’s

empowerment and at enhancing the full participation of women in society (23x).

The Commission’s own role in the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda

The Commission recognized its primary role for follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in which its work is grounded. Importantly, it stressed that it is critical to address and integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls throughout national, regional and global reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to ensure synergies between the follow-up of the Beijing Platform for Action and the gender-responsive follow-up to the 2030 Agenda (27).

As regards the global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda, the Commission affirmed that it “will contribute to the thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals taking place at the high-level political forum on sustainable development and will exercise its catalytic role for gender mainstreaming so as to ensure that follow-up and review processes benefit all women and girls and contribute to the full realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by 2030” (30). This confirms the ‘expiry date’ for gender inequality and stresses the urgency for action.

The role of the UN system and of UN Women

The Commission called upon the United Nations system entities, within their respective mandates, to support States, upon their request, in their gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda (26).

In its Political Declaration adopted at the fifty-ninth session, the Commission had recognized the “important role of UN Women” in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and the “central role” it is playing in supporting Member States, in coordinating the United Nations system, in mobilizing civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, at all levels, for the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including through systematic gender mainstreaming, the mobilization of resources to deliver results and the monitoring of progress with robust data and accountability systems.

This mandate was reiterated and further reinforced by the Commission at its sixtieth session with the additional reference to the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Conclusion

UN Women will work to ensure that the 2030 Agenda is implemented in a gender-responsive manner, across the vectors of the “10 I’s”.

Inspiration from the intergovernmental normative frameworks and human rights conventions including the historic gender equality compact and commitments of 2015 to achieve sustainable development, human rights, peace and security, and humanitarian response and related strategies at all levels. Governments must own the agenda and citizens must too, and both state action and movement building should happen simultaneously.

Implementation: localization through adoption and reform of laws, policies and measures including special measures and actions, the removal of discriminatory laws and policies, and ensuring their full, effective and accelerated implementation.

Indivisibility of the SDGs and targets—horizontal and vertical. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all SDGs must deliver for gender equality and women’s empowerment. In this regard, the prioritization of SDG 5 and gender-sensitive targets threaded across all SDGs in their implementation is a key task for all governments and will have a force multiplier effect on the achievement of all SDGs.

Integration of gender equality and women’s empowerment across all SDGs and the entire 2030 Agenda and systematic mainstreaming in the implementation of its three dimensions, an all-of-government approach including in development assistance activities and initiatives.

Inclusion of all key stakeholders, particularly civil society, women’s movements, youth, men and boys, faith-based organizations and the private sector for movement building, transforming social norms and addressing the needs of all women and girls, especially

those facing multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization. Not only must the implementation of the 2030 Agenda ensure that no woman or girl is left behind, it must mean that the poorest and most vulnerable groups of women—for example disabled and indigenous women and girls—move forward.

Institutions: creating, empowering, strengthening and resourcing gender equality and women’s empowerment institutions at global, regional, national and local levels, and ensuring that all key institutions—political, economic, judicial, social, cultural, public services, etc.—work in a gender-responsive manner.

Investment: significantly increased and enhanced financial investment and resource mobilization from all sources, including official development assistance (ODA), to close gender equality gaps at all levels, and targeted and mainstreamed transformative actions for financing gender equality and women’s empowerment as committed to in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.

Information: generating comprehensive gender equality and women’s empowerment related value chain of data, statistics, indicators, monitoring systems, frameworks, and capacities in SDG implementation, follow-up and review at all levels to assess progress and gaps and guide policies and actions. There are 50 indicators on gender equality and women’s empowerment in the Global Indicators Framework on SDGs which require a gender statistics revolution and support.

Innovation: driving political, economic and social innovation that is gender equality through deployment of science, technology and innovation, modalities and means of implementation, information and communications technology (ICT), and media, including social media, innovative partnerships and advocacy platforms is a priority.

Impact: these commitments must lead to actual change in the enabling environment and make systemic and substantive impact on the situation of all women and girls, especially those most marginalized, and must be the benchmark for accountability.



Top: top: UN Women/Deepak Malik; bottom left: Valencia CF/Lazaro de la Pena; bottom right: UN Women/Thao Hoang



Clockwise from top left: UN Women/Ryan Brown; UN Women/Karin Shermbrucker; UN Women/ Fatma Elzahraa Yassin; UN Women/Ryan Brown; UN Women/Ryan Brown; UN Women/Gustavo Stephan

ANNEX

2016 COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN AGREED CONCLUSIONS

Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the declarations adopted by the Commission on the occasions of the tenth, fifteenth and twentieth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women.
2. The Commission reaffirms that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocols thereto, as well as other relevant conventions and treaties, provide an international legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls throughout their life cycle.
3. The Commission reaffirms that the promotion and protection of, and respect for, the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women, including the right to development, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and inter-related, should be mainstreamed into all policies and programmes aimed at the eradication of poverty, and also reaffirms the need to take measures to ensure that every person is entitled to participate in, contribute to and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development and that equal attention and urgent consideration should be given to the promotion, protection and full realization of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights.
4. The Commission reaffirms the commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls made at relevant United Nations summits and conferences, including the International Conference on Population and Development and its Programme of Action and the key actions for its further implementation. The Commission also reaffirms commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls made at the United Nations summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda, as well as the recognition of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls at the Third United Nations World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction, the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and the twenty-first session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, and recalls the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Commitment to Action, held on 27 September 2015, and the meeting of the Security Council, held on 13 October 2015, on women and peace and security.
5. The Commission reaffirms that the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of its reviews, and the outcomes of relevant major United Nations conferences and summits and the follow-up to those conferences and summits, have laid a solid foundation for sustainable development

and that the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action will make a crucial contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development that will leave no one behind.

6. The Commission acknowledges the important role played by regional conventions, instruments and initiatives in their respective regions and countries in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including for sustainable development.
7. The Commission welcomes the commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls contained in the 2030 Agenda, recognizes that women play a vital role as agents of development and acknowledges that realizing gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is crucial to making progress across all Sustainable Development Goals and targets. The Commission stresses that the achievement of full human potential and of sustainable development is not possible if women and girls continue to be denied the full realization of their human rights and opportunities.
8. The Commission expresses concern that the feminization of poverty persists, and emphasizes that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. The Commission acknowledges the mutually reinforcing links between the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the eradication of poverty, and the need to ensure an adequate standard of living for women and girls throughout the life cycle, including through social protection systems.
9. The Commission reaffirms that the realization of the right to education contributes to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, human rights, sustainable development and poverty eradication. The Commission notes with concern the lack of progress in closing gender gaps in access to,

retention in, and completion of secondary education, which is key to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the realization of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as enabling other positive social and economic outcomes. All women and girls must therefore enjoy access to lifelong learning opportunities and equal access to quality education at all levels, including early childhood, primary, secondary and tertiary education and technical and vocational training.

10. The Commission recognizes that women's equal economic rights, economic empowerment and independence are essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. It underlines the importance of undertaking legislative and other reforms to realize the equal rights of women and men, as well as girls and boys where applicable, to access economic and productive resources, including land and natural resources, property and inheritance rights, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance, and equal opportunities for women for full and productive employment and decent work, and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value. The Commission acknowledges the positive contribution of migrant women workers to inclusive growth and sustainable development.
11. The Commission further recognizes that achievement of the 2030 Agenda requires the full integration of women into the formal economy, including through their effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life and through changing the current gender-based division of labour to ensure that unpaid care and domestic work is equally shared and recognized, reduced and redistributed.
12. The Commission recognizes that conflicts, trafficking in persons, terrorism, violent extremism, natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies and other emergency situations disproportionately affect women and girls. It therefore recognizes that it is essential to ensure that women

are empowered to effectively and meaningfully participate in leadership and decision-making processes, that their needs and interests are prioritized in strategies and responses and that the human rights of women and girls are promoted and protected in all development efforts, as well as in conflict, humanitarian emergencies and other emergency situations.

13. The Commission stresses the need to ensure that no one is left behind in implementing the 2030 Agenda and in this regard recognizes the challenges faced by refugee women and girls and the need to protect and empower them, including in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations, and the need to strengthen the resilience of communities hosting refugees, and underscores the importance of development support for those communities, particularly in developing countries.
14. The Commission reiterates its concern over the challenge climate change poses to the achievement of sustainable development and that women and girls, who face inequality and discrimination, are often disproportionately affected by the impacts of climate change and other environmental issues, including, inter alia, desertification, deforestation, dust storms, natural disasters, persistent drought, extreme weather events, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification. Furthermore, the Commission recognizes, in line with the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, that countries should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote, and consider gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
15. The Commission strongly condemns all forms of violence against all women and girls. It expresses deep concern that discrimination and violence against women and girls, in particular against those who are most vulnerable, continues in all parts of the world and that all forms of violence against women and girls, including, inter alia, sexual and gender-based violence, domestic violence, trafficking in persons and femicide,

among others, as well as harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, are impediments to the full achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, the realization of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women and girls and the development of their full potential as equal partners with men and boys, as well as the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

16. The Commission, while welcoming progress made towards gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, emphasizes that no country has fully achieved gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, that significant levels of inequality between women and men, girls and boys persist globally and that many women and girls experience vulnerability and marginalization owing to, inter alia, multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination throughout their life cycle.
17. The Commission recognizes that gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda requires the acceleration of action on both recent and long-standing commitments to realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms.
18. The Commission reaffirms the importance of significantly increased investment to close resource gaps for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including through the mobilization of financial resources from all sources, including domestic and international resource mobilization and allocation, the full implementation of official development assistance commitments and by combatting illicit financial flows, to build on progress achieved and strengthen international cooperation, including the role of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, bearing in mind that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation.

19. The Commission stresses the urgency of the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and recalls that the systematic mainstreaming of a gender perspective in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda is crucial.
20. The Commission notes that the 2030 Agenda is of unprecedented scope and significance. It is accepted by all countries, is applicable to all and will be implemented within countries and at the regional and global levels, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting national policy space for sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, in particular for developing States, while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments. The Commission affirms that Governments have the primary responsibility for the follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda at the national, regional and global levels with regard to progress made.
21. The Commission welcomes the major contributions made by civil society, including women's and community-based organizations, feminist groups, women human rights defenders and girls' and youth-led organizations, in placing the interests, needs and visions of women and girls on local, national, regional and international agendas, including the 2030 Agenda, and recognizes the importance of having an open, inclusive and transparent engagement with them in the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
22. The Commission recognizes the importance of fully engaging men and boys as agents and beneficiaries of change in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and as allies in the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls, as well as in the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and in the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
23. The Commission, in order to continue working towards the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which will make a crucial contribution to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, urges Governments, at all levels and as appropriate, with the relevant entities of the United Nations system and international and regional organizations, within their respective mandates and bearing in mind national priorities, and invites national human rights institutions where they exist, civil society, including non-governmental organizations, inter alia, women's and community-based organizations, feminist groups, youth-led organizations, faith-based organizations, the private sector, employer organizations, trade unions, the media and other relevant actors, as applicable, to take the following actions:
 - (a) Consider ratifying or acceding to, as a matter of particular priority, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Optional Protocols thereto, limit the extent of any reservations, formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible to ensure that no reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Conventions, review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them, withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the relevant Convention and implement the Conventions fully by, inter alia, putting in place effective national legislation and policies;
 - (b) Accelerate the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of their review conferences as a foundation for sustainable development, gender equality and the empowerment of all

Strengthening normative, legal and policy frameworks

women and girls, and compliance of States Parties with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocols thereto, as well as other relevant conventions and treaties;

- (c) Implement all goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a comprehensive manner, reflecting its universal, integrated and indivisible nature while respecting each country's policy space and leadership while remaining consistent with relevant international rules and commitments, including by developing cohesive sustainable development strategies to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and by mainstreaming a gender perspective in all government policies and programs at all levels;
- (d) Eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls through the development, where needed, adoption and accelerated and effective implementation and monitoring of laws and comprehensive policy measures, the removal, where they exist, of discriminatory provisions in legal frameworks, including punitive provisions, and setting up legal, policy, administrative and other comprehensive measures, including temporary special measures as appropriate, to ensure women's and girls' equal and effective access to justice and accountability for violations of the human rights of women and girls;
- (e) Enact legislation and undertake reforms to realize the equal rights of women and men, and where applicable girls and boys, to access economic and productive resources, including access to, ownership of, and control over land, property and inheritance rights, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including microfinance, and equal opportunities for women for full and productive employment and decent work;
- (f) Promote women's economic rights and independence, women's right to work and rights at work through gender-responsive policies and programmes that promote decent work for

all, ensure equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, protect women against discrimination and abuse in the workplace, invest in and empower women in all sectors in the economy by supporting women-led businesses, including by tailoring a range of approaches and instruments which facilitate access to universal public services, finance, training, technology, markets, sustainable and affordable energy and transport and trade;

- (g) Undertake all appropriate measures to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work by prioritizing social protection policies, including accessible and affordable quality social services, and care services for children, persons with disabilities, older persons, persons living with HIV and AIDS and all others in need of care, and promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men;
- (h) Promote a socially responsible and accountable private sector that acts in line with, among others, the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights: Implementing the United Nations "Protect, Respect and Remedy" Framework, the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, labour, environmental and health standards, and the Women's Empowerment Principles established by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Global Compact, in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the realization of their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms;
- (i) Recognize the contribution of migrants, including women migrant workers, to sustainable development, and acknowledge the need to eliminate violence and discrimination against women migrant workers and to promote their empowerment, including through international, regional or bilateral cooperation among all stakeholders, in particular countries of origin, transit and destination;

- (j) Take concrete steps towards eliminating the practice of gender-based price differentiation, also known as the “pink tax”, whereby goods and services intended for or marketed to women and girls cost more than similar goods and services intended for or marketed to men and boys;
- (k) Urges governments to provide universal and equitable access for all to safe and affordable drinking water and adequate sanitation and hygiene, in particular in schools, public facilities and buildings, paying special attention to the specific needs of all women and girls, who are disproportionately affected by inadequate water and sanitation facilities, are at greater risk of violence and harassment when practising open defecation and have specific needs for menstrual hygiene management, and to improve water management and wastewater treatment with the active participation of women;
- (l) Recognize the critical role of women as agents of change and leaders in addressing climate change, and promote a gender-responsive approach, the integration of a gender perspective and the empowerment of women and girls in environmental, climate change and disaster risk reduction strategies, financing, policies and processes, towards achieving the meaningful and equal participation of women in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues and towards building the resilience of women and girls to the adverse effects of climate change;
- (m) Ensure that the rights and specific needs of women and girls affected and displaced by conflicts, trafficking in persons, terrorism, violent extremism, natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies and other emergency situations are addressed in national and international plans, strategies and responses, and also ensure the participation of women and girls at all levels of decision-making in emergency, recovery, reconstruction, conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes, provide education for all, especially girls, to contribute to a smooth transition from relief to development and address sexual and gender-based violence as an integral and prioritized part of every humanitarian response, and in this respect, the Commission encourages the World Humanitarian Summit, to be held in Istanbul, Turkey, on 23 and 24 May 2016, to give due consideration to integrating a gender perspective into its deliberations;
- (n) Refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries;
- (o) Ensure the promotion and protection of the human rights of all women and their sexual and reproductive health, and reproductive rights in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, including through the development and enforcement of policies and legal frameworks and the strengthening of health systems that make universally accessible and available quality comprehensive sexual and reproductive health-care services, commodities, information and education, including, inter alia, safe and effective methods of modern contraception, emergency contraception, prevention programmes for adolescent pregnancy, maternal health care such as skilled birth attendance and emergency obstetric care which will reduce obstetric fistula and other complications of pregnancy and delivery, safe abortion where such services are permitted by national law, and prevention and treatment of reproductive tract infections, sexually transmitted infections, HIV, and reproductive cancers, recognizing that human rights include the right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free from coercion, discrimination and violence;
- (p) Promote and respect women’s and girls’ right to education throughout their life cycle at all levels, especially for those who are the most left behind, by providing universal access to quality

education, ensuring inclusive, equal and non-discriminatory quality education, promoting learning opportunities for all, ensuring completion of primary and secondary education and eliminating gender disparities in access to all areas of secondary and tertiary education, promoting financial literacy, ensuring that women and girls have equal access to career development, training, scholarships and fellowships, and adopting positive action to build women's and girls' leadership skills and influence, and adopt measures that promote, respect and guarantee the safety of women and girls in the school environment and that support women and girls with disabilities at all levels of education and training;

- (q) Mainstream a gender perspective into education and training programmes, including science and technology, eradicate female illiteracy and support school-to-work transition through skills development to enable women's and girls' active participation in economic, social and cultural development, governance and decision-making, and create conditions that facilitate women's full participation and integration in the formal economy;
- (r) Adopt, review and ensure the accelerated and effective implementation of laws that criminalize violence against women and girls, as well as comprehensive, multidisciplinary and gender-sensitive preventive, protective and prosecutorial measures and services to eliminate and prevent all forms of violence against all women and girls, in public and private spaces, as well as harmful practices;
- (s) Design and implement appropriate domestic policies at all levels that aim to transform discriminatory social attitudes and gender stereotypes and to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls;
- (t) Fully engage men and boys, including community leaders, as strategic partners and allies in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against

women and girls in both the public and private spheres, design and implement national policies and programmes that address the role and responsibility of men and boys and aim to ensure the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men in caregiving and domestic work, transform with the aim to eliminate those social norms that condone violence against women and girls and attitudes and social norms by which women and girls are regarded as subordinate to men and boys, including by understanding and addressing the root causes of gender inequality, such as unequal power relations, social norms, practices and stereotypes that perpetuate discrimination against women and girls, and engage them in efforts to promote and achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls for the benefit of both women and men, girls and boys;

- (u) Recognize the important role and contribution of rural women and girls, as well as local communities, to food security, poverty eradication, environmental sustainability and sustainable development and commit to supporting their empowerment, and ensure rural women's full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy and political decision-making;
- (v) Formulate and implement, in collaboration with indigenous peoples, in particular indigenous women and their organizations, policies and programmes designed to promote capacity-building and strengthen their leadership while recognizing the distinct and important role of indigenous women and girls in sustainable development, and prevent and eliminate discrimination and violence against indigenous women and girls, which has a negative impact on their human rights and fundamental freedoms, to which they are disproportionately vulnerable and which constitutes a major impediment to indigenous women's full, equal and effective participation in society, the economy, and political decision-making;
- (w) Take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social, educational, employment and other

measures to protect and promote the rights of all women and girls with disabilities, ensuring their full and effective participation and inclusion in society, and to address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination they face;

- (x) Recognize the family as a contributor to development, including in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals for women and girls, that gender equality and women's empowerment improve the well-being of the family, and in this regard stress the need for elaborating and implementing family policies aimed at achieving gender equality and women's empowerment and at enhancing the full participation of women in society;

Fostering enabling environments for financing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

- (y) Promote gender equality and the empowerment of women by reaffirming the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, pursuing policy coherence and an enabling environment for sustainable development at all levels and by all actors and reinvigorating the global partnership for sustainable development;
- (z) Reiterate the need for gender mainstreaming, including targeted actions and investments in the formulation and implementation of all financial, economic, environmental and social policies, and adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation and transformative actions for the promotion of gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment at all levels;
- (aa) Support and institutionalize a genderresponsive approach to public financial management, including gender-responsive budgeting and tracking across all sectors of public expenditure, to address gaps in resourcing for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and ensure that all national and sectoral plans and policies for gender equality and the

empowerment of women and girls are fully costed and adequately resourced to ensure their effective implementation;

- (bb) Take steps to significantly increase investment to close resource gaps, including through the mobilization of financial resources from all sources, including public, private, domestic and international resource mobilization and allocation, including by enhancing revenue administration through modernized, progressive tax systems, improved tax policy, more efficient tax collection and increased priority on gender equality and the empowerment of women in official development assistance to build on progress achieved, and ensure that official development assistance is used effectively;
- (cc) Urge developed countries to fully implement their respective official development assistance commitments, including the commitment made by many developed countries to achieve the target of 0.7 per cent of their gross national income for official development assistance to developing countries and the target of 0.15 to 0.20 per cent of their gross national income for official development assistance to least developed countries, and encourage developing countries to build on the progress achieved in ensuring that official development assistance is used effectively to help meet development goals and targets and help them, inter alia, to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women;
- (dd) Strengthen international cooperation, including the role of North-South, South-South and triangular cooperation, bearing in mind that South-South cooperation is not a substitute for, but rather a complement to, North-South cooperation, and the Commission invites all States to enhance South-South and triangular cooperation, focusing on shared development priorities, with the involvement of all relevant stakeholders in government, civil society and the private sector, while noting that national ownership and leadership in this regard are indispensable for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls;

- (ee) Implement macroeconomic, labour and social policies that promote full and productive employment and decent work for all in order to benefit women and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women, as well as to enhance economic efficiency and optimize the contribution of women to economic growth and poverty reduction, promote processes to develop and facilitate the availability of appropriate knowledge and technologies globally, and increase awareness among decision-makers, the private sector and employers of the necessity of women's economic empowerment and their important contribution;

Strengthening women's leadership and women's full and equal participation in decision-making in all areas of sustainable development

- (ff) Take measures to ensure women's full, equal and effective participation in all fields and in leadership at all levels of decision-making in the public and private sectors and in public, social, economic and political life and in all areas of sustainable development;
- (gg) Take measures to ensure women's full, equal and effective participation, including through temporary special measures as appropriate, by setting and working to achieve concrete goals, targets and benchmarks, including by providing education and training, and by removing all barriers that directly and indirectly hinder the participation of women, and girls where applicable, in decision-making roles in all sectors and at all levels, such as lack of access to quality and inclusive education and training, as well as such barriers as violence, poverty, unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work, and gender stereotypes;
- (hh) Take measures to ensure women's effective participation at all levels and at all stages in peace processes and mediation efforts, conflict prevention and resolution, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and recovery, as set out in relevant

Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security;

- (ii) Encourages States to recognize shared work and parental responsibilities between women and men in order to promote women's increased participation in public life, and take appropriate measures to achieve this, including measures to reconcile family, private and professional life;
- (jj) Promote a safe and enabling environment for all civil society actors so that they can fully contribute to the gender-responsive implementation, follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda in line with the relevant provisions of the Agenda;
- (kk) Increase resources and support for grass-roots, local, national, regional and global women's and civil society organizations to advance and promote gender equality and the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls;

Strengthening gender-responsive data collection, follow-up and review processes

- (ll) Include a gender-responsive approach in the national follow-up to and review of the 2030 Agenda, taking into account, where applicable, the agreed global indicator framework, and strengthen national statistical capacity, including by enhancing technical and financial assistance to developing countries, to systematically design, collect and ensure access to high-quality, reliable and timely data disaggregated by sex, age and income and other characteristics relevant in national contexts;
- (mm) Develop and enhance standards and methodologies at the national and international levels to improve the collection, analysis and dissemination of gender statistics on, inter alia, poverty, income distribution within households, unpaid care work, women's access to, control and ownership of assets and productive resources, participation at all levels of decision-making and violence against women, to measure progress for women and girls with regard to sustainable development in the context of the 2030 Agenda;

- (nn) Enhance technical and financial collaboration between countries, with the support of United Nations entities, within their mandates, and the participation of civil society organizations as appropriate, with the aim of collecting data and statistics to follow up on and review the implementation of the 2030 Agenda from a gender equality perspective.

Enhancing national institutional arrangements

24. The Commission calls upon Governments to strengthen the authority and capacity, including through funding where possible, of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, at all levels, including to support the mainstreaming of a gender perspective across all policies and programmes in all sectors of government in the context of the 2030 Agenda, and promote the visibility of and support for these mechanisms.
25. The Commission also calls upon Governments to enhance coherence and coordination of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, with relevant government agencies and other stakeholders, where appropriate, to ensure that national planning, decision-making, policy formulation and implementation, budgeting processes and institutional structures contribute to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.
26. The Commission calls upon the United Nations system entities, within their respective mandates, to support States, upon their request, in their gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
27. The Commission recognizes its primary role for the follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in which its work is grounded

and stresses that it is critical to address and integrate gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls throughout national, regional and global reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and to ensure synergies between the follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and the gender-responsive follow-up to the 2030 Agenda.

28. The Commission calls upon UN-Women to continue to play a central role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and in supporting Member States, upon their request, in coordinating the United Nations system and in mobilizing civil society, the private sector and other relevant stakeholders, at all levels, in support of the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda.
29. The Commission recalls General Assembly resolution 70/163 and encourages the secretariat to consider how to enhance the participation, including at the sixty-first session of the Commission, of national human rights institutions that are fully compliant with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles), where they exist, in compliance with the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council.
30. The Commission affirms that it will contribute to the thematic reviews of progress on the Sustainable Development Goals taking place at the high-level political forum on sustainable development and will exercise its catalytic role for gender mainstreaming so as to ensure that follow-up and review processes benefit all women and girls and contribute to the full realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by 2030.

Source: E/2016/27

ABOUT THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), is a global policy-making body dedicated exclusively to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. The Commission was established in 1946 with a mandate to prepare recommendations on promoting women's rights in political, economic, civil, social and educational fields. It is also responsible for monitoring, reviewing and appraising progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at all levels, and to support gender mainstreaming.

Representatives of Member States, United Nations entities, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in consultative status with ECOSOC and other stakeholders participate in the Commission's annual session at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The session, which is usually held for ten days in March, provides an opportunity to review progress

towards gender equality and the empowerment of women, identify challenges, and set global standards, norms and policies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide. The session includes plenary meetings, high-level round tables, interactive dialogues and panels, as well as many side events. Its principal outcome are the "agreed conclusions" on the priority theme, negotiated by all States.

UN Women serves as the substantive Secretariat for the Commission and in that capacity, supports all aspects of the Commission's work. UN Women prepares policy analysis and recommendations that form the basis for the Commission's deliberations on the themes selected for each session, as well as for negotiated outcomes. UN Women reaches out to stakeholders to create awareness and build alliances around the topics under consideration, and also facilitates the participation of civil society representatives in the Commission's sessions.

**UN WOMEN IS THE UN ORGANIZATION
DEDICATED TO GENDER EQUALITY
AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN.
A GLOBAL CHAMPION FOR WOMEN AND
GIRLS, UN WOMEN WAS ESTABLISHED
TO ACCELERATE PROGRESS ON
MEETING THEIR NEEDS WORLDWIDE.**

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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