



Europe and North America CSW Caucus  
Civil Society zero draft  
Commission on the Status of Women 66<sup>th</sup> session

Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,<sup>1</sup> the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly<sup>2</sup> and the declarations adopted by the Commission on the occasion of the tenth, fifteenth, twentieth and twenty-fifth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women.<sup>3</sup>
2. The Commission reaffirms the Agreed Conclusions of the Sixty-fifth session E/CN.6/2021/L.3 especially in regard to the primary responsibility of Governments in the implementation of Agenda 2030; the significant impact of climate change on women and girls in small island States and other areas vulnerable to climate change; the need to strengthen resilience and adaptive capacities of women and girls to respond to and recover from the adverse impacts of adverse environmental change communities; the inadequacy of decision making without women involved; the need for no discrimination on the basis of race, colour, sex, age, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, disability or other status; the vital need to include young women in all areas of decision making; the condemnation of all forms of violence against women and girls and its effects including in the digital context; the need for investment in girls; the need to combat trafficking in all forms; the effect of COVID-19 on society, especially women and girls and the need for a response in the light of the knowledge that we are one human race inhabiting one planet; persisting structural barriers; the results of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization; the situation and positive contribution of indigenous, migrant, rural and women and girls with disabilities; the effect of economic disparity; the negative use of information and communication technologies and the media; the importance of education and the continued shocking continuance of illiteracy; the importance of the universal enjoyment of all forms of health and well-being; the role of unpaid care and access to social benefit systems; the feminization of poverty; occupational segregation, the gender pay gap, disparity in career advancement and other economic and employment issues; the need for equitable trans-global funding for women's economic empowerment; the special needs of women and girls in areas affected by humanitarian disasters and conflict; the positive role of men and boys.

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<sup>1</sup> Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4 –15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution I, annexes I and II

<sup>2</sup> General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex

<sup>3</sup> See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7 and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and E/2005/27/Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; *ibid.*, 2010, Supplement No. 7 and corrigendum (E/2010/27 and E/2010/27/Corr.1), chap. I, sect. A; *ibid.*, 2015, Supplement No. 7 (E/2015/27), chap. I, sect. C, resolution 59/1; and *ibid.*, 2020, Supplement No. 7 (E/2020/27), chap. I, sect. A

3. The Commission reaffirms articles in the Agreed Conclusions of the Sixty-fifth session E/CN.6/2021/L.3 relating to existing UN conventions and treaties.
4. 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<sup>4</sup> and to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.
5. The Commission recalls the high-level meeting of the General Assembly on the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in New York on 1 October 2020, which demonstrated commitment to the full and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of its reviews.
6. The Commission recalls the Agreed Conclusions of its Sixty-fifth session, noting the anniversary of the establishment of the women and peace and security agenda, reaffirming the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in all stages of peace processes is one of the essential factors for the maintenance and promotion of international peace and security and the need to address the effects of armed conflict and post-conflict situations on women and girls, including victims and survivors of sexual violence, especially as a result of climate change and natural disasters.
7. The Commission acknowledges the important role played by regional conventions, instruments and initiatives in their respective regions and countries, and their follow-up mechanisms, in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including through the engagement of women in decisions relating to climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes. The Commission particularly recalls the Istanbul Convention.<sup>5</sup>
8. The Commission recalls that the parties to the Paris Agreement acknowledged that they should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls and intergenerational equity and, in this context, also recalls the adoption of the second gender action plan by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its twenty-fifth session.<sup>6</sup>
9. The Commission is committed to the prosperity of all, recognizing that the welfare of individuals rests in the welfare of society at large and recognizing the oneness of humanity advocates for tolerance and understanding.
10. The Commission notes that building a society that consciously pursues the collective purpose is the work of not only this generation, but of many generations to come, and welcomes all who labour alongside them in this undertaking.

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<sup>4</sup> General Assembly resolution 70/1

<sup>5</sup> Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. (CETS No 210)

<sup>6</sup> See FCCC/CP/2019/13/Add.1, decision 3/CP.25. E/CN.6/2021/L.3 21-04183 5/22

11. The Commission recognizes that those living in areas affected by climate change and environmental disasters possess the capacity to steer the course of their own development and therefore need to be included in all decision-making processes.
12. The Commission notes that in order to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes a rise in the capacity of the individual, the local community, and institutions is necessary, as each have a part to play, and each one has capacities and qualities that must be developed as each is incapable of manifesting its full potential on its own. It is by strengthening their dynamic relationships that their powers are combined and multiplied.
13. The Commission reaffirms the need to promote women's full and effective participation and leadership in decision-making regarding climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.
14. The Commission recognizes the active and essential role of women as technology drivers in accelerating development of technological advances in climate impact areas such as health, air and water pollution, food production, soil conservation, reforestation, carbon sequestration, and renewable energy.
15. The Commission notes women continue to be marginalized, and men are overrepresented on all constituted bodies on climate process with only 33 % women government delegates. In the ICT arena women make up only 17 % of students, 19 % of managers and 9 % of developers.
16. The Commission recognizes women are powerful change agents who bring specific knowledge, skills, and perspectives to effectively contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation.
17. The Commission also recognizes that climate change financing has largely ignored women and girls in funding allocations and decision making, thereby failing to incorporate the perspectives of women and girls into policies, programs, and projects.
18. The Commission recognizes that industry, both private and public sectors, are the key drivers in carbon emissions and air, water, and land pollution; and yet are also vital in ameliorating the effects of climate change through positive technology changes and renewable energy as well as policy and legislation.
19. The Commission recognizes that 80% of people displaced by climate change are women, and women and are 14 times more likely to suffer health consequences and die during disasters; and that climate change, pollution, and destruction of environment equally impacts both hemispheres with a negative effect on women.
20. The Commission recognizes climate change is the single biggest, alarming health threat facing humanity, that has already harmed women's health disproportionately through air pollution, poor water quality, rampant disease, extreme weather events, forced displacement, food insecurity and pressures on mental health; climate change has exacerbated the deterioration of women's health, compounded by the lack of good healthcare across the globe.
21. The Commission recognizes the lack of gender and age-disaggregated health data disguises the needs of women and girls across the life course regardless of marital status, perpetuates lack

of awareness, and impedes completion of education and action at all levels of decision-making for governments and global healthcare agencies at global and regional levels.

22. The Commission recognizes the differentiated impacts that climate change has on women, in particular on maternal and child health, older women, and widows, and on women's unpaid care work and their ability to earn an income, feed their family and send their children to school.
23. The Commission also recognizes the need to implement international, regional and national commitments and obligations aimed at achieving gender equality, including through temporary special measures, as appropriate, and create an enabling environment to promote women's full and effective participation in all matters pertaining to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.
24. The Commission welcomes the major contributions made by civil society, including women's and community-based organizations, feminist groups, women human rights defenders, organisations of older people, widows organisations, girls' and youth-led organizations and trade unions, in placing the interests, needs and visions of women and girls on local, national, regional and international agendas, including the 2030 Agenda. It recognizes the importance of having an open, inclusive and transparent engagement with civil society in the implementation of measures to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.
25. The Commission recognizes the vision of "peace, justice and prosperity for all" is one held by noble-hearted people the world over and there are many challenges to overcome. It recognizes this calls for an expanded vision, a nuanced understanding of coexisting imperatives, added flexibility, and heightened institutional collaboration.
26. The Commission therefore 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 civil society, inter alia, women's organizations, organisations of older people, widows organisations, youth-led organizations, feminist groups, faith-based organizations, the private sector and, national human rights institutions, where they exist, and other relevant stakeholders, as applicable, to help previously antagonistic groups find unity through pursuit of a common goal; to learn to put aside inherited customs and attitudes that belong to humanity's period of adolescence, and to overcome prejudices of all kinds; to guard against any tendency to view matters with cynicism or an eye for faults, and instead sustain an eager and constructive outlook; to put the equality of women and men into practice; to cast off inertia and apathy through the exercise of individual initiative; to harness the power of modern technologies without succumbing to their potentially enervating effects and take the following actions:

### **Strengthen normative, legal and regulatory frameworks**

- a. Take action to ensure robust systems are in place to continually build capacity and support women and girls affected by climate change and other environmental change and disasters;

- b. Take action to recognize everyone as a potential partner to collaborate with, fostering fellow feeling even among groups who may traditionally have been hostile to one another, remaining clear sighted about the creative power of unity and humanity's capacity for altruism;
- c. Take action to focus on transcending differences, harmonizing perspectives, and promoting the use of consultation for making decisions, emphasizing qualities and attitudes—such as trustworthiness, cooperation, and forbearance—that are building blocks of a stable social order;
- d. Take action to focus on building capacity for service, recognizing the ability of a population to become the protagonists of their own development;
- e. Take action to ensure training for women in climate-resilient jobs, including food and water security, to transition to a carbon-free environment and education in schools on climate crisis mitigation and adaptation for a sustainable future;
- f. Prioritise knowledge management and strategies for disaster reduction and resilience that focus on the care, protection and support of girls and women who are dependent on natural resources for their well-being and livelihoods;
- g. Take robust action to ensure the collection of comprehensive data on displaced girls and women, disaggregated by birth and marriage documentation, to form evidence-based policies on climate-induced migration, as outlined in the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly Migration;
- h. Take action to ensure robust investment in gender-responsive policies and programs that prioritize girls and women of all ages (including underrepresented, rural, indigenous and people with disabilities and widows) in decision-making, implementation and monitoring of mitigation and adaptation strategies at the local, community and national level;
- i. Take action to provide financial support for mitigation and adaptation to climate change for women in the Global South through dedicated funds, debt cancellation, grants instead of loans and reparations from the Global North that privilege local ecosystems, indigenous knowledge and youth leadership;
- j. Take action to increase the numbers of women on all bodies relating to climate change including those providing funding;
- k. Take action to ensure funding mechanisms alleviate not exacerbate the feminisation of poverty and play a catalytic role in increasing climate action;
- l. Take action to fund women innovating technological advances and solutions, both of which critically require equitable access to participation and decision making at all levels;
- m. Take action to ensure equitable deployment of funds by assessing projects through a gendered lens in investment portfolios and women-led projects, noting fiscal policies responsive to women's need and gender equality objectives contribute to better economic outcomes and social benefits as stated by IMF 2016;
- n. Take action to ensure the elimination of legal barriers to women, including widows, concerning land ownership, resources and inheritance, to reduce the economic impacts of climate change on girls and women who suffer most from food and water insecurity;
- o. Take action to fully implement existing commitments and obligations with respect to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and the full and equal enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms without discrimination of any kind, so as to ensure their contribution to decisions on policies and programmes relating to climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction;
- p. 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 E/CN.6/2021/L.3 21-04183 13/22 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;
- q. 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, especially those that have a direct effect on climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction;
  - r. Take measures to achieve women's equal and meaningful participation and equal opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programme;
  - s. Set specific targets and timelines to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes through relevant measures, such as affirmative actions, appropriate temporary special measures, inter alia quotas, appointments, training programmes and targeted outreach to women, including young and widowed women, and women who are in vulnerable situations;
  - t. Ensure that the perspectives of women and girls are taken into account in armed conflict and post-conflict situations and in humanitarian emergencies and that they effectively and meaningfully participate, on equal terms with men, in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and activities related to conflict prevention, peace mediation, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, as well as take into account the perspective of women and girls who are internally displaced and who are refugees; and ensure that the human rights of all women and girls are fully respected and protected in all response, recovery and reconstruction strategies and that appropriate measures are taken to eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against women and girls in this regard and ensure their positive participation in climate change action;
  - u. Mainstream a gender perspective in the conceptualization, development and implementation of digital technologies and related policies especially in regard to climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes;
  - v. Strengthen the capacity of national machineries for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, by providing sufficient allocation of financial, technical and human resources, to enable them to effectively carry out their mandates with addition funding for their work in regard to climate change;
  - w. Call on the United Nations system to continue to mainstream a gender perspective into its policies and programmes, including those addressing COVID-19 response and recovery, with additional resources for work on climate change and environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes;
  - x. Integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of national policies, climate change mitigation and adaptation programmes, needs assessment, forecast and early warning systems, and response and recovery plans on disaster risk management, biodiversity loss, environmental degradation and pollution, especially in developing countries, and recognize the full and effective participation of women in decision-making at all levels, in particular on strategies and policies related to the impacts of climate change, while also noting the importance of

the ongoing discussions regarding the post-2020 global biodiversity framework to be adopted at the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity; E/CN.6/2021/L.3 21-04183 17/22;

- y. Support the resilience and adaptive capacities of women and girls to respond to and recover from the adverse impacts of climate change, natural disasters and extreme weather events, through the provision of essential infrastructure and services, social protection and decent work for women as well as appropriate financing, including public and private climate finance, capacity-building, technology, humanitarian relief and disaster preparedness to avert, minimize and address loss and damage associated with the adverse impacts of climate change; and further increase the gender-responsiveness of climate finance with a view to strengthening the capacity of women;
  - z. Urge developed countries to fully implement their respective commitments, including 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 achieve gender equality;
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 all women and girls throughout national, regional and global reviews of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 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 the United Nations system entities, within their respective mandates, and other relevant international financial institutions and multi-stakeholder platforms to support Member States, upon their request, in their efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.
29. The Commission calls upon the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) to continue to play a central role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and in supporting Governments and national women's machineries, upon their request, in coordinating the United Nations system and in mobilizing civil society, the private sector, employers' organizations and trade unions, 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 gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, including in their efforts to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes.