

**Commission on the Status of Women  
Sixty-second session  
12 – 23 March 2018**

**Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality  
and the empowerment of rural women and girls  
Draft agreed conclusions**

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 occasion of the tenth, fifteenth and twentieth anniversaries of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

2. The Commission [reiterates] **[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, such as the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, **the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families,** and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, **[the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime including the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children]** and provide an international legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for realizing gender equality and the empowerment of **[all]** women and girls and the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls, including rural women and girls, throughout their life cycle **[course]**.

3. 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 and to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of **[all]** rural women and girls **[in all their diversity]** **[and the full enjoyment of their human rights]** **[and their full enjoyment of human rights]**.

***International commitments, conferences***

**4. (1.3, 2.1, 4.6 merged with 1.2, 2.3 and 3.2)**

**The Commission reaffirms the commitments to gender equality, [human rights] 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 outcome documents of its reviews, the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction, the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, and the New Urban Agenda [all of which**

contribute to the improvement of the situation of rural women and girls.]. The Commission also recognizes the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

**5. (New Para)**

The Commission also recalls the United Nations Declaration on the Right to Development, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants.

**6. (2.2, 8.5 merged with p.1 and v.5)**

The Commission recognizes the importance of relevant International Labour Organization standards related to the realization of women's right to work and rights at work that are critical for the economic empowerment of rural women, including ILO Convention 100 on Equal Remuneration and Convention 189 on Domestic Workers, recalls the decent work agenda of the International Labour Organization and the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and calls for its effective implementation in rural areas.

**7. (2.4, 4.9, 4.10 and 4.11)**

The Commission acknowledges the important role played by regional conventions, instruments and initiatives and their follow-up mechanisms in the in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and notes the recent regional consultations on gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

**8. (4. merged with 4.alt.1 and 4.alt.2)**

The Commission emphasizes the mutually reinforcing relationship among [achieving gender equality] and the empowerment of all rural women and girls [in all their diversity] [and the realization of their human rights], and 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. The Commission reiterates that gender equality and the empowerment of all rural women and girls and their full and equal participation and leadership in the rural economy are vital for achieving sustainable development, promoting peaceful, just and inclusive societies, enhancing sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth and productivity, ending poverty in all its forms everywhere and ensuring the well-being of all.

***Human rights of rural women and girls***

**9. (4.1 merged with 8.3 and elements of 7 and 7.6)**

The Commission emphasizes that achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls and the full realization of their human rights are essential to achieving sustained, inclusive and equitable economic growth and sustainable development. It also stresses the urgency of fulfilling the rights of rural women and girls to an adequate standard of living, to land and productive assets, to food security and nutrition, to decent work and to development.

**10. (11.10, 11.9, 7.5)**

The Commission recognizes that rural 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 rural 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, whether in agriculture, livestock, forestry, fishery, or nonagricultural activities in rural areas.

***National policy space***

**11. (1.1, 4.7)**

The Commission reiterates that the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development needs to be implemented in a comprehensive manner, reflecting its universal, integrated and indivisible nature, taking into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and 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. 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.

**12. (3.1, 4.8, 4.17)**

The Commission reaffirms the sovereign rights of Member States, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and the need for all countries to implement the commitments and pledges in the present [agreed conclusions] consistent with national laws, national development priorities and international human rights.

***Structural barriers to the empowerment of rural women and girls***

**13. (6. merged with 6.alt.1, 4.12, 4.13 and with 6.alt.2)**

The Commission recognizes that progress in achieving gender equality, the empowerment of all rural women and girls and the realization of their human rights has been held back owing to the persistence of historical and structural unequal power relations between women and men, poverty, inequalities and disadvantages in access to resources, growing gaps in equality of opportunity, discriminatory laws and policies, negative social norms, attitudes, and gender stereotypes, harmful customary and contemporary practices and [limited access to sexual and reproductive health and rights.] The Commission stresses the urgency of eliminating these structural barriers to enable rural women and girls to respond to challenges and seize opportunities for change.

**14. (5.)**

The Commission acknowledges that rural women and girls **[in all their diversity]** face multiple and intersecting [inequalities and] forms of discrimination **[throughout their life course] [throughout their life cycle] including** as young women and girls, **mothers, widows, older women, and as heads of households, indigenous women and girls, women and girls of African descent, women and girls** affected by HIV/AIDS **and other diseases**, women with disabilities, women migrants, refugees and internally-displaced persons, **[on the basis of birth, sex, age, marital status, household and relationship status, indigeneity, race, colour, ethnicity, social origin, caste, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, belonging to a minority, health, citizenship, income, property, socioeconomic status, employment [situation], sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sex characteristics, location and albinism, climate change and disaster/environment affected persons, trafficked persons and other grounds factors, which heightens their risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, poverty] , which represent significant obstacles in the exercise of their human rights and in contributing to sustainable development.** It also acknowledges that different groups of rural women and girls have particular needs, **capacities**, and priorities, warranting tailored **legislative, policy, and institutional responses.**

### *Poverty*

#### **15. (4.2, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 10.16 merged with 6.4)**

The Commission expresses concern that poverty acts as a serious impediment to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all rural women and girls. 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.

#### **16. (7.alt.3 merged with 7.4 and 6.4)**

The Commission stresses the urgency of supporting countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including multidimensional poverty and extreme poverty, and to promote the empowerment of rural women and girls, noting that progress has been uneven and inequality has increased.

#### **17. (7.alt.1; 7.alt.2; 5.1 merged with 7.29)**

The Commission expresses concern that many rural women continue to be economically and socially disadvantaged because of their limited access to economic resources and opportunities and their limited financial inclusion and lack of access to quality education, public health, including health-care services, justice, land, sustainable and time- and labour-saving infrastructure and technology, water and sanitation and other resources, as well as to financial services, credit, extension services and agricultural inputs, and expresses further concern about their exclusion from planning and decision-making and their disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work.

### *Contribution of rural women to poverty eradication, agriculture and food security*

**18. (6.1., 6.2 merged with 11.12 and 6.5 and 9.4)**

The Commission recognizes the important role and contribution of rural women in poverty eradication, and their contribution to enhancing agricultural and rural development, and improving food security and nutrition. It underlines the fact that meaningful progress in agricultural development necessitates, inter alia, closing the gender gap, introducing appropriate gender-responsive interventions at all stages in agricultural innovation processes, including at the policy level, and ensuring that women have equal access to agricultural technologies, related services and inputs and all necessary productive resources,

to the protection of land rights and tenure security and access to land, fisheries and forests, and water, and access to and participation in local, regional and international markets.

**19. (5.3, 5.11 merged with 8.4 and 4.5 and 7.28 and 5.2 and second half of 9.5 and 7.7)**

The Commission recognizes the crucial contributions of rural women to local and national economies and to food production and food and nutrition security, as well as to the well-being of their families and communities, including through work on family farms and unpaid care and domestic work. The Commission also expresses deep concern that, while women contribute significantly to the food produced worldwide, women and girls are disproportionately affected by hunger, food insecurity and poverty, in part as a result of gender inequality and discrimination. It recognizes women's critical role in both short- and long-term responses to food insecurity, malnutrition, excessive price volatility and food crises in developing countries.

***Infrastructure and Services***

**20. (10)**

The Commission reaffirms the importance of investing in the provision of infrastructure, technology and public services, such as safe drinking water and sanitation, renewable energy, transport and information and communications technology to realize fully their human rights and contribute to gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

**21. (10.15)**

The Commission reiterates the importance of transport and transit corridors in facilitating transport linkages on domestic routes and promoting urban-rural connectivity in order to boost economic growth at the local and regional levels, promote interconnections between cities, peoples and resources and facilitate intraregional and interregional trade.

***Education***

**22. (8.6 merged with 5.8, 11.7, 7.23, 5.7)**

The Commission stresses that education is a human right, and reaffirms that equal access to quality and inclusive education, training and science and technology contributes to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. It notes

with concern the lack of progress in closing gender gaps in access to, retention in and completion of secondary and tertiary education and emphasizes the importance of lifelong learning opportunities. It recognizes that new technologies, which are changing the structure of labour markets, provide new and different employment opportunities that require all rural women and girls to acquire skills ranging from basic digital fluency to advanced technical skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and in information and communications technology.

**23. (5.9, 7.20, 7.21, 5.10)**

The Commission recognizes that, despite gains in providing access to education, rural girls are still more likely than rural boys and urban girls to remain excluded from education, and recognizes also that among gender-specific barriers to girls' equal enjoyment of their right to education are child, early and forced marriage, early pregnancy, gender-based violence in and outside of school, including sexual violence and harassment on the way to and from and at school, the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work and gender stereotypes and negative social norms that lead families and communities to place less value on the education of girls than boys.

***Health***

**24. (7.27 merged with 10.11 and 7.26 and 7.25)**

The Commission reaffirms the right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, and recognizes that its full realization is vital for women's and girls' lives and well-being and for their ability to participate in public and private life, and is crucial for achieving gender equality and empowering rural women and girls. The Commission recognizes that targeting the root causes of gender inequality and discrimination in health care, including the unequal and limited access to public health services, is important for rural women and girls, especially those who are vulnerable or in vulnerable situations.

**25. (10.12 merged with 7.25)**

The Commission emphasizes the need to accelerate progress towards the goal of universal health coverage that comprises universal and equitable access to quality health services and quality, essential, affordable and effective medicines for all, with particular attention to rural women, and the promotion of physical and mental health and well-being, especially through primary health care, health services and social protection mechanisms, including through community outreach and private sector engagement, and with the support of the international community. The Commission also stresses the importance of strengthening health systems in terms of availability, accessibility, acceptability, and quality in order to better respond to the needs of rural women and girls, and enabling their active participation in the design and implementation of health systems.

**26. (7.24 merged with 8.7)**

The Commission expresses deep concern that as a result of lack or limited access to essential health-care services and information and limited agency over their own lives, rural women and girls experience significant disparities in reproductive health outcomes,

such as higher rates of maternal mortality, maternal morbidity, including obstetric fistula, unsafe abortion, and unmet need for modern contraception, than women and girls in urban areas. The Commission expresses further concern that these disparities are exacerbated by multiple and intersecting forms of inequalities and discrimination.

*Violence, including sexual harassment*

**27. (5.4 merged with 10.3)**

The Commission strongly condemns all forms of violence against all women and girls and expresses its concern that such violence in all its different forms and manifestations is underrecognized and underreported, particularly at the community level, and pervasive, which reflects discriminatory norms that reinforce stereotypes and gender inequality, the corresponding impunity and lack of accountability. The Commission reiterates the need to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in the public and private spheres in rural areas in all regions of the world, and reemphasizes that violence against women and girls violates, and impairs or nullifies their full enjoyment of, all human rights and is a major impediment to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

**28. (7.12 and 7.13 merged with 7.15, 7.17 and 7.9, 7.10, 7.11, 7.8)**

The Commission recognizes that violence against women and girls, including in rural areas, is rooted in historical and structural inequality in power relations between men and women, and marginalization. The Commission also expresses deep concern that women and girls in rural and remote areas may be particularly vulnerable to violence because of multidimensional poverty, limited or lack of access to services including effective legal remedies, social care and protection services, and employment opportunities.

**29. (5.6 merged with 5.5)**

The Commission reaffirms that women play a vital role as agents of development in society, and recognizes, in this context, that sexual harassment is a form of violence and a violation and abuse of human rights, impedes the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and constrains their ability to positively contribute to development, including in rural areas.

*Harmful practices*

**30. (7.18)**

The Commission recognizes that rural girls are disproportionately affected by child, early and forced marriage, and that its long-term effects, on women and girls may include lack of decision-making power over their health and bodies, complications from early pregnancy and childbearing, which are the second leading cause of death for girls between 15 and 19, and increased vulnerability to violence and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

**31. (7.19)**

The Commission is deeply concerned that, despite the increase in national, regional and international efforts focused on the elimination of female genital mutilation, the practice

continues to persist in all regions of the world and that in many countries, rural women and girls may be disproportionately affected.

***Family***

**32. (10.10)**

The Commission recognizes that in different cultural, political and social systems, various forms of the family exist, as defined in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and that, in this context, the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of all family members must be respected.

**33. (4.15, 4.16, 5.supra.1 , 5.supra.2, 4.18)**

The Commission recognizes the family as a contributor to development, including in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals for rural 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.

***Unequal sharing of responsibilities / unpaid care and domestic work***

**34. (10.7, 10.8, 4.alt.3)**

The Commission recognizes that the sharing of family responsibilities between all family members creates an enabling environment for the empowerment of all rural women and girls, that women and men make a significant contribution to the welfare of their families and societies, and that, in particular, women's and girls' contribution to the home, including unpaid care and domestic work, which is still not adequately recognized, generates human and social capital that is essential for social and economic development.

**35. (10.5 merged with 5.10)**

The Commission recognizes that rural women and girls undertake a disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work, including caring for children, older persons, persons with disabilities and persons living with HIV and AIDS, and that such uneven distribution of responsibilities is a significant constraint on women's and girls' completion of or progress in education and training, including in science and technology, on women's entry and re-entry and advancement in the paid labour market and on their economic opportunities and entrepreneurial activities, and can result in gaps in both social protection and pensions. The Commission stresses the need to recognize, reduce and redistribute the disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work by promoting the equal sharing of responsibilities between all family members and by prioritizing, inter alia, social protection policies and infrastructure development.

**36. (10.6)**

The Commission stresses the need to 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.



***Global context***

**37. (9.1 merged with 9.alt.1 and 9.2)**

The Commission expresses deep concern about the impacts of the world financial and economic crises and the increasing challenges caused by the rising inequalities within and among countries, volatile food and energy prices, continuing food and energy insecurity, water scarcity, compounded by slow or stagnant economic growth and development, unplanned and rapid urbanization, the lack of access to markets, the lack of investment in sustainable rural development, demographic changes, epidemics, environmental degradation, climate change, natural disasters, humanitarian emergencies and armed conflicts, which exacerbate the disadvantages and inequalities that rural women and men, girls and boys and their families face.

**38. (9.3)**

The Commission recognizes that globalization presents both challenges and opportunities for rural women's economic empowerment. It also recognizes that there is a need to make broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon our common humanity, to ensure globalization is fully inclusive and equitable for all, including rural women and girls, and becomes an increasingly positive force for women's economic empowerment.

**39. (6.3)**

The Commission notes with great concern that millions of rural women and girls are facing famine or the immediate risk of famine or are experiencing severe food insecurity in several regions of the world, and that poverty, armed conflicts, drought and the volatility of commodity prices are among the factors causing or exacerbating famine and severe food insecurity and that additional efforts, including international support, to respond to, prevent and prepare for increasing global food insecurity are urgently needed.

***Climate change***

**40. (9.8, 9.9, 9.11, 9.12 merged with 10.2, 9.10 and 5.21 and 9.14 and 9.7 and 9.13)**

The Commission is deeply concerned that climate change poses a challenge to poverty eradication and the achievement of sustainable development, and that owing to gender inequalities, rural women and girls, especially in developing countries and SIDS, are disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change and environmental degradation, including desertification, deforestation, sand and dust storms, natural disasters, persistent drought, extreme weather events, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification. Furthermore, the Commission reaffirms that countries should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote, and consider gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and in this context, welcomes the adoption of the Gender Action Plan by the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its 23<sup>rd</sup> session.

***Armed conflict***

**41. (9.17 merged with 9.16)**

The Commission acknowledges the impact of armed conflict on rural women and girls, and the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peace-building, and stresses the importance of their equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution, and reiterates the important engagement by men and boys as partners in promoting this participation.

### *Participation*

#### **42. (8. merged with 8.alt.1 and 4.14)**

The Commission also stresses the importance of strengthening rural women's and girls' voice, agency and leadership and full, informed, equal and effective participation at all levels of decision-making in all matters affecting them integrating an intercultural, intergenerational and multi-lingual perspective. The Commission further recognizes the critical role played by rural women's civil society organizations, unions, enterprises and cooperatives in gathering and uniting rural women, supporting their voice, agency and representation in the political and economic spheres. .

### *Specific populations*

#### **43. (5.14 merged with 5.15 and 5.16)**

The Commission recognizes that indigenous women and girls living in rural and remote areas face different realities, and often experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination that can result in higher rates of poverty and violence, as well as poor access to health care services, information and communication technologies (ICT), infrastructure, education and employment, while also recognizing the cultural, social, economic, political, environmental contributions and traditional and ancestral knowledge of indigenous women and girls, including in the conservation and sustainable use of traditional crops and biodiversity.

#### **44. (5.12 merged with 5.13)**

The Commission expresses concern that women and girls with disabilities, particularly those living in rural and remote areas, are subject to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, which limit their enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with others, particularly with regard to the equal access to education and employment, access to health-care services, including for sexual and reproductive health, access to justice and equal recognition before the law, the ability to participate in political and public life, live independently and be included in the community and have the freedom to make their own choices. These challenges may be compounded for those living in rural and remote areas through the lack of affordable, inclusive and quality services in rural areas, including water, sanitation, electricity, health-care services, and education. The Commission expresses further concern that stereotypes, stigmatization and discrimination of women and girls with disabilities in rural and remote areas heightens the risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, including sexual violence and abuse compared to rural women and girls without disabilities, as well as men and boys with disabilities.

**45. (5.18 merged with 5.17, elements in e.7)**

**The Commission recognizes the important contribution of rural women and girls of African descent to the development of societies and the promotion of mutual understanding and multiculturalism, bearing in mind the programme of activities for the implementation of the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015-2024).**

**46. (5.19 merged with 5.20)**

**The Commission recognizes that the positive contribution of rural women migrant workers has the potential to foster inclusive growth and sustainable development in countries of origin, transit and destination, underlines the value and dignity of their labour, in all sectors, including in care and domestic work, and encourages efforts to improve public perceptions of migrants and migration. The Commission also recalls the need to address the special situation and vulnerability of rural migrant women and girls, particularly those who are employed in the informal economy and in less skilled work, and underlines in this regard the obligation of States to protect the human rights of migrants so as to prevent and address abuse and exploitation.**

**47. (10.9)**

**The Commission recognizes the contributions of older rural women to the family and the community, especially in cases where they are left behind by migrating adults or as a result of other socio-economic factors to assume childcare, household and agricultural responsibility.**

***National machineries***

**48. (4.4, 10.4, 11.6)**

**The Commission acknowledges the important role of national mechanisms for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, the relevant contribution of national human rights institutions, where they exist, and the important role of civil society in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls, in promoting the economic empowerment of rural women and their full and productive employment and decent work, as well as in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.**

***Civil society and women human rights defenders***

**49. (11.5)**

**The Commission welcomes the major contributions made by civil society, including women's, girls' and community-based organizations, feminist groups, women human rights defenders and girls' and youth-led organizations, in placing the interests, needs and visions of rural 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 civil society in the implementation of measures to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.**

**50. (8.1)**

The Commission expresses profound concern on the shrinking space for women's and civil society organizations and independent media, both online and offline, and increasing threats to women human rights defenders, women journalists and other media workers that is hampering progress on the rights of rural women and girls.

**51. (7.14, 8.2 and gg.8)**

The Commission expresses concern about systemic and structural discrimination and increasing violence faced by women human rights defenders of all ages in rural [ and remote] areas, including those engaged on issues relating to environment, land and natural resources.

***Financing***

**52. (11.alt.1, 11.alt.2, 11.1 and 11.4 and 11)**

The Commission reaffirms the importance of significantly increased investments to close resource gaps for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including rural women and girls, through, inter alia, 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 combating illicit financial flows, so as to build on progress achieved and strengthen international cooperation, including 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.

**53. (11.2 and 11.3)**

The Commission recognizes the importance of a conducive external environment in support of national efforts towards the economic empowerment of women, which includes the mobilization of adequate financial resources, capacity-building and the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, which in turn would enhance the use of enabling technologies to promote women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment.

***Men and boys***

**54. (11.11)**

The Commission recognizes the importance of fully engaging men and boys, as agents and beneficiaries of change, for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those in rural areas.

**Chapeau**

**55. (12)**

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 gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda], urges Governments [.] **[and] [at all levels and as appropriate, with]** the relevant entities of the United Nations system [and] [, **including its**] international and regional organizations, **[within their respective mandates and bearing in mind national priorities,] [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 other civil society] and community-based organizations, **[women human rights defenders]** and especially rural women's civil society organizations and cooperatives, [feminist groups] **[women and civil society organizations]**, **[girl- and]** youth-led organizations, faith-based organizations, the private sector, employer organizations, trade unions, **[producer and agricultural organizations]** the media and other relevant actors, **[women, men, girls and boys]** as applicable, to take the following actions [, **as appropriate**]:

**55 alt. (12.alt.1 and 12.alt.2)**

**[The Commission 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, the private sector, [rural women's civil society organizations and cooperatives,] [employer organizations and trade unions, as applicable,] to take the following actions:**

**OP Section 1**

*Strengthening] [normative [and] legal [and policy] frameworks [and eliminate laws and policies [and practices] that discriminate against rural women and girls [on any grounds or status]*

**a. (a)** Take action on existing commitments and obligations with respect to the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of **[all]** rural women and girls **[in all their diversity]** and the full **and equal** enjoyment of all their human rights **and fundamental freedoms**, which constitute an integrated framework that leaves no rural women or girls behind **and is aimed at improving the lives, livelihoods and wellbeing of all rural women and girls;**

***International normative frameworks***

**b. (a.supra.1)**

**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;**

***National normative and legal frameworks – human rights***

c. (a supra 2 with d.4, d.5, d. 6)

**Design and implement national policies and legal frameworks that promote and protect the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by [all] rural women and girls, and create an environment that does not tolerate violations or abuses of their rights, including domestic violence, sexual violence and all other forms of gender-based violence and discrimination;**

*National normative and legal frameworks – economic and productive resources*

d. (a alt.1 merged with e alt.1 and elements of e, e.alt.2, e.alt.3, e.4, 7.6)

**Enact legislation and undertake reforms to realize the equal rights of women and men, regardless of their marital status, and where applicable girls and boys, to land and land tenure security, including in plural legal systems, and ensure their equal access to and control over economic and productive resources and assets, property and inheritance rights, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including credit, banking and microfinance, as well as equal access to justice and legal assistance in this regard, and ensure rural women’s legal capacity and equal rights with men to conclude contracts;**

e. (e.2 merged with elements of e.1, v.7 and 7.16)

**Promote rural women's land registration and land title certification, regardless of their marital status, and address practices and stereotypes that undermine the land rights of women in rural areas, including in the context of customary and traditional systems, which often govern land management, administration and transfer in rural areas, which could help to reduce violence against women;**

*Addressing discriminatory laws*

f. (b alt. 1 merged with b and v.7 and elements of c.2)

**Eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls in rural areas through the development, where needed, adoption and accelerated and effective implementation and monitoring of laws and comprehensive policy measures, and the removal 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 and ensure that the provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, commitments and principles, including the principle of non-discrimination;**

g. (c) **Implement targeted measures [, as appropriate] to address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization of all rural women and girls face [in all their diversity] throughout their life cycle as young women and girls, mothers, widows, older women, heads of households, indigenous women, afro-descendent women, women living in poverty, women and girls affected by HIV/AIDS and other diseases, women with disabilities and migrants, refugees and or internally-displaced persons, climate change and disaster/environment affected persons, trafficked persons and based on age,**

household and relationship status, marital status, race, colour, caste, ethnic or social origin, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, immigration status, citizenship, health, socioeconomic status, employment, belonging to a minority, property, birth, income, location, albinism, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, sex characteristics, or any other grounds

***Eliminating violence against rural women and girls***

**h. (d.alt.1, d alt.2, d.1 merged with elements of d and d.10)**

**Eliminate, prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence against rural women and girls in public and private spaces through multisectoral and coordinated approaches; investigate, prosecute and punish the perpetrators of violence against rural women and girls and end impunity, provide protection as well as equal access to comprehensive and inclusive social, health and legal services for all victims and survivors to support their full recovery and reintegration into society, including by providing access to psychosocial support and rehabilitation, as well as access to appropriate civil remedies and redress; and bearing in mind the importance of all rural women and girls living free from violence, such as intimate partner violence and domestic violence, sexual violence, gender-related killings, including femicide, elder abuse, violence and harassment in the world of work and in schools, forced or coerced medical procedures, as well as of addressing the structural and underlying causes of gender-based violence against women and girls through enhanced prevention measures, research and strengthened coordination and monitoring and evaluation, promoting changes in behavior and encouraging awareness-raising activities and work with local communities;**

**i. (aa.2)**

**Eliminate harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage, by empowering all women and girls to make decisions about their lives, working with local communities to combat negative social norms and gender stereotypes, empowering parents and communities to abandon harmful practices, and raising the status of women and girls in rural communities;**

**j. (d.12)**

**Pursue, by effective means, a policy of preventing and eliminating sexual harassment in rural areas, with an emphasis on effective legal, preventive and protective measures for women who are victims of sexual harassment or who are at risk of sexual harassment;**

***Institutional arrangements / coordination***

**k. (g merged with b.1 and element of b)**

**Strengthen coordination between national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and other governmental institutions and collaboration with the private sector, relevant non-governmental and civil society organizations and national human rights institutions, where they exist, to integrate a gender perspective into the design, implementation and evaluation of and follow-up to development policies, plans and programmes, including budget policies, where lacking and to enhance gender-responsive rural development policies, ensuring that rural**

women and girls benefit from policies and programmes adopted in all spheres and that the disproportionate number of rural women living in poverty is reduced;

*Access to justice*

**l. (h merged with h.3, h.5 and elements of h.2, e.6, h.4 and b.2)**

Ensure equal access by [all] rural women and girls, including indigenous women and girls, to justice, legal remedies and legal support by, inter alia, providing accessible, affordable, and culturally sensitive services, taking into account local languages, and by increasing rural women and girls' legal literacy, including on the existence of multiple legal systems, where they exist, providing free public legal assistance, and gender-responsive training for police and security forces, prosecutors, judges and lawyers, as well as other relevant authorities and officials in rural areas, and mainstreaming a gender perspective into criminal justice systems to ensure the equal protection of the law for rural women and girls;

*Birth registration*

**m. (cc.7 with elements of f.5, q.5 and d.9)**

Guarantee the universal registration of all births in rural areas and ensure the timely registration of all marriages for individuals living in rural areas, by identifying and removing physical, administrative, procedural and any other barriers that impede registration and by providing, where lacking, mechanisms for the registration of customary and religious marriages;

**OP Section 2**

*Implement [implementing] economic and social policies for the empowerment of [all] rural women and girls*

*Macroeconomic and public policies*

**n. (i merged with elements of i.alt.1)**

Pursue [macro-] economic policies that support diverse economic activities, including smallholder agricultural production and the food security and nutrition of [all] rural women and girls and their communities by fostering the positive and mitigating the negative impact of international investment and trade rules;

**o. (j)**

Design and implement economic and social policies to eradicate rural poverty and combat feminization of poverty and support rural women's decent work and income security, climate-resilient agricultural and sustainable fisheries production and food security and nutrition;

**p. (j.4, m.7, w.9 merged with j.1)**

Increase access for rural women [in all their diversity] to development and poverty eradication programmes and policies, access to credit and social protection to promote



**their economic empowerment, ensuring their full and equal participation in the development, implementation and follow-up of development policies and programmes and poverty eradication strategies;**

**q. (j supra.1, j.supra.2 merged with elements of e.5, gg.14 and i.alt.1)**

**Emphasize the need for transnational corporations and business enterprises and trade and investment agreements to identify, prevent, mitigate and account for adverse human rights impacts of their operations, products or services on the wellbeing of women and girls in rural areas and, where appropriate, take measures for their remediation;**

**r. (k)**

**Design and implement fiscal policies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of [all] rural women and girls, inter alia, by providing credit and other financial and business services to a greater number of women in rural areas, in particular female heads of households;**

**s. (j.10)**

**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;**

### ***Agriculture***

**t. (f.3 merged with elements of 15.4)**

**Integrate a gender perspective and include sustainable agricultural development in national agricultural and rural development policies, strategies, plans and programmes, enabling rural women to act and be visible as stakeholders, decision makers and beneficiaries, in line with the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security and the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small-Scale Fisheries in the Context of Food Security and Poverty Eradication;**

**u. (i.1 merged with i supra.1, i supra.2, j.5 and elements of 15.4, 9.6 and 11.8)**

**Strengthen and support the critical role and contributions of rural women and women farmers, including indigenous women, to enhancing agricultural and rural development, eradicating poverty, improving food security and nutrition and the economic well-being of their families and communities, and ensure their equal access to agricultural technologies, through investment, and research and development of technology that is affordable, durable and sustainable and that can be easily used by and disseminated to smallholder women farmers, including older women farmers, and science and innovation in small-scale agricultural production and distribution, supported by integrated and multisectoral policies that improve their productive**

capacity, incomes and resilience, and address the existing gaps in and barriers to trading their agricultural products in local, national and international markets;

v. (k.1, i.2 merged with i.3, i alt.2)

**Strengthen national, regional and international efforts to enhance the capacity of developing countries to support rural women smallholder farmers, including those in subsistence farming, to increase the production and nutritional quality of food crops and food security, including through appropriate mechanization in agriculture, sustainable agricultural practices, and public and private investment in rural women to close the gender gap in agriculture and facilitate their access to extension and financial services, agricultural inputs, land, water and irrigation;**

w. (j.2 merged with i.5, j.3, l.2)

**Strengthen sustainable production and consumption patterns, including family agriculture, respecting and protecting rural women's traditional and ancestral knowledge and practices, in particular the preservation, production, use and exchange of endemic and native seeds, and supporting alternatives to the heavy use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides harmful to the health of rural women and girls;**

### ***Food Security and Nutrition***

x. (j.8 merged with j.7 and l.1)

**Invest in and strengthen efforts to empower rural women to address their own food security and nutrition and that of their families, including through sustainable access to and use of critical rural infrastructure, land, water and natural resources, and local, regional and global markets;**

y. (j.6 and part of w.11)

**Ensure integrated food and nutritional support with the goal that rural women and girls, including pregnant and lactating women, have access at all times to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food requirements for an active and healthy life;**

z. (w.7, cc.9)

**Value and support the critical role and contribution of rural women, including indigenous women in rural areas, in the conservation and sustainable use of traditional crops and biodiversity for present and future generations as an essential contribution to food security and nutrition;**

### ***Physical Infrastructure (ICT, energy, transport, water and sanitation)***

aa. (l merged with elements of l alt, r.1)

**Invest in essential infrastructure and time- and labour-saving technologies, ICT, sustainable energy, sustainable transport and safe and affordable drinking water and sanitation, including through appropriate technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, to improve the lives, livelihoods and wellbeing of all rural women and girls;**

**bb. (j.9)**

**Promote women's leadership and their full, effective and equal participation in decision-making on water and sanitation and household energy management and to ensure that a gender-based approach is adopted in relation to water and sanitation and energy programmes, through measures, inter alia, to reduce the time spent by women and girls in collecting household water and fuel, and to address the negative impact of inadequate water and sanitation and energy services on the access of girls to education as well as to protect women and girls from being physically threatened or assaulted and, from sexual violence, while collecting household water and fuel and when accessing sanitation facilities outside of their home or practising open defecation;**

**cc. (l.3 with elements of h.1)**

**Commit to encourage urban-rural interactions and connectivity and eliminate geographic and territorial inequalities by strengthening sustainable and affordable transport and mobility, technology and communication networks and infrastructure, underpinned by planning instruments based on an integrated urban and territorial approach that maximizes the potential of these sectors for enhanced productivity, social, economic, and territorial cohesion, as well as safety and environmental sustainability;**

***Social Protection***

**dd. (n merged with n alt and n.2)**

**Optimize fiscal expenditures to extend social protection coverage to all rural women and girls and establish social protection floors to ensure access to social protection for all, without discrimination of any kind, and take measures to ensure sustainable, long-term financial support for social protection systems and make information on social protection measures and benefits widely available and accessible to all rural women;**

***Economic Empowerment and Decent Work***

**ee. (w.5)**

**Promote the economic empowerment of rural women, including through entrepreneurship training, and adopt gender-responsive and climate-sensitive rural development strategies and agricultural production, including budget frameworks and relevant assessment measures;**

**ff. (o merged with elements of o.1)**

**Ensure the right to work and rights at work of all rural women in the informal and formal economies, and that all rural women workers are equally protected by international labour standards and national labour laws, including by setting wages that allow for an adequate standard of living and taking measures to address unsafe and unhealthy working conditions;**

**gg. (p merged with p alt and o.2)**

**Implement and enforce laws and regulations that uphold the principles of decent work and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value in agricultural and non-agricultural**

employment, **including fishing, forestry, and livestock sectors**, in rural areas **and recognize that gender-based discrimination and occupational segregation perpetuate the gender pay gap and inhibit mobility for rural women;**

**hh. (t merged with s.2 and elements of m.2 and m.4)**

Facilitate the entry **and re-entry** of [all] rural women, especially young women, into the labour force **and the transition of rural women from the informal to the formal economy** by improving their skills, **productivity and employment opportunities through technical, agricultural, and vocational training**, including their financial and digital literacy;

***Entrepreneurship and Procurement***

**ii. (i.4, u.1 merged with parts of o.1, o.4, o.5, w.6)**

Encourage and facilitate rural women's entrepreneurship and expand opportunities for their micro-, small and medium-sized enterprises, cooperatives and self-help groups, to diversify and increase production by engaging in commercial farming, fisheries, aquaculture, and other areas of economic activity, and improving access to financing and investment, tools of trade, business development and training, and high-value markets;

**jj. (u merged with t alt, u alt and parts of u.2)**

Increase the share of trade and procurement from rural women's enterprises and cooperatives by **building the capacities and skills of rural women, especially young women, to benefit from public and private sector procurement processes, including public food programmes**, and fostering their access to local, national and international **value chains and markets;**

***Financial Inclusion and services***

**kk. (n.1 merged with t.7, part of t.8, t.2)**

Promote the financial inclusion of all rural women and their equal access to formal financial services, including timely and affordable credit, loans, savings, insurance, and remittance transfer schemes, adopt or review financial inclusion strategies in consultation with relevant stakeholders, consider financial inclusion as a policy objective in financial regulations, in accordance with national priorities and legislations, encourage commercial banking systems, microfinance institutions, development banks, agricultural banks, mobile network operators, agent networks, cooperatives, postal banks and saving banks to serve all rural women, including those who currently face barriers to accessing financial services and information, and encourage the use of innovative tools, including mobile banking, payment platforms and digitalized payments, and the expansion of peer learning and experience sharing among countries and regions;

**ll. (t.1 merged with s.1, t.9)**

Develop specific assistance programmes and advisory services to promote economic skills of rural women in banking, modern trading and financial procedures, including fiscal and financial literacy, and provide microcredit and other financial and business

services to a greater number of women in rural areas, in particular female heads of households and rural women migrant workers, for their economic empowerment;

*Unpaid care and domestic work*

**mm. (r merged with r alt, q.2, q.3, q.4)**

Undertake targeted measures to recognize and measure unpaid **on-farm and off-farm** work performed by rural women and girls and **recognize**, reduce and redistribute their disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work **within households and between households and the State by promoting policies and initiatives supporting the reconciliation of work and family life**, the equal sharing of responsibilities with rural men and boys and the provision of infrastructure, such as **safe, affordable and** sustainable energy, transport and **drinking** water and sanitation, technology and public services, including accessible, **affordable** and quality childcare and care facilities for other dependents, **including older persons and those with disabilities**;

**nn. (k.4 merged with elements of y.4)**

**Design, strengthen, implement and promote family-responsive legislation, policies and services to recognize, reduce and redistribute rural women's and girls' disproportionate share of unpaid care and domestic work by promoting policies and initiatives supporting the reconciliation of work and family life and the equal sharing of responsibilities between all family members and by challenging gender stereotypes and negative social norms and promoting men's participation and responsibilities as fathers and caregivers, which create an enabling environment for the empowerment of all rural women and girls**

**oo. (s merged with s alt)**

Systematically measure and incorporate the value of unpaid work performed by **[all]** rural women **of all ages**, including unpaid care and domestic work, in the calculation of gross domestic product and the formulation of **gender-responsive** economic and social policies, **for example through periodic time-use surveys and published national statistics**;

*Family*

**pp. (i supra.3)**

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

**qq. (k.2)**

**Ensure that all social and economic development policies are fully responsive to the diverse and changing needs and to the rights of rural families and their individual members, including rural women and girls, and provide necessary support and**

protection, particularly to the most vulnerable families and the most vulnerable family members;

**rr. (k.3)**

**Strengthen family-oriented policies that recognize and respond to the changing needs of all family members in rural areas throughout life; address the imbalances, risks and barriers that individual family members face in enjoying their rights and in accessing economic resources; aim to ensure substantive equality among all family members, including by providing affirmative action measures; protect all family members against any form of violence; ensure the effective and meaningful participation of all members in family decision-making; and recognize the interdependency and indivisibility of all human rights;**

**ss. (m.1)**

**Invest in a variety of family-oriented policies and programmes in rural areas, as important tools for, inter alia, fighting poverty, social exclusion and inequality, promoting work-family balance and gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls and advancing social integration and intergenerational solidarity, to support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;**

**tt. (dd.3)**

**Reiterate that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community, particularly in rural areas;**

### ***Education***

**uu. (bb alt.2, bb alt.1, bb.1 merged with (bb, bb.14, d.14, parts of bb.16)**

**Promote and respect rural women's and girls' right to education throughout the life cycle at all levels, especially for those who have been left furthest behind, by providing universal access to quality education and free and compulsory primary education, ensuring inclusive, equal and non-discriminatory quality education that is intercultural and multilingual, as appropriate, foster lifelong learning opportunities for all and the elimination of female illiteracy, and ensure the completion of primary, secondary, vocational and technical education by rural women and girls;**

**vv. (bb alt.3, bb.2 merged with m alt.1, m alt.3, m.3, m alt.2 and elements of m.5)**

**Eliminate gender disparities and commit to scale up investments to fulfill the right to education for rural women and girls by addressing gender-based discrimination and negative stereotypes in the education system, including in curricula, textbooks and teaching methodologies; combat gender norms that devalue girls' education and prevent women and girls from accessing education, including stigmatization of girls regarding menstruation; provide inclusive, safe, non-violent and accessible schools with gender- and disability- sensitive infrastructure, including for menstrual hygiene management, and safe and affordable transportation to schools; ensure quality teachers**

**in rural areas through training, recruitment and retention of teachers, especially women teachers where they are underrepresented; support rural women and girls with disabilities at all levels of education and training; ensure that rural women and girls have equal access to career development, training, scholarships and fellowships, and facilitate an effective transition from education or unemployment to decent work;**

**ww. (bb.3, bb.10)**

**Ensure viable education alternatives and institutional support for girls in rural areas who are already married, pregnant or parenting, with an emphasis on keeping girls in school through post-primary education, and design, implement and revise educational policies to allow them to remain in and return to school, providing them with access to health-care and social services and support, including childcare and breastfeeding facilities and crèches, and to education programmes with accessible locations, flexible schedules and distance education;**

**xx. (bb.4 merged with bb.15)**

**Take accelerated measures to prevent violence and sexual harassment against girls at, and on the way to, school, including by implementing violence prevention activities in schools and communities targeting men and boys, educating children from a young age regarding the importance of treating all people with dignity and respect, designing educational programmes and teaching materials that support gender equality, respectful relationships and non-violent behaviour, and improving infrastructure such as transportation, separate and adequate sanitation facilities and lighting;**

**yy. (bb.9)**

**Develop and introduce age-appropriate, evidence-based, scientifically accurate mandatory curricula at all levels of education covering comprehensive information on sexual and reproductive health and rights, responsible sexual behavior, prevention of early pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases;**

### ***Digital education and ICTs***

**zz. (cc.5 merged with (bb.6, bb.16, b.8, cc.6) and elements of d.10)**

**Eliminate digital gender gaps, which disproportionately affect rural women and girls, and ensure their access to ICT and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) to help develop skills, information and knowledge that they urgently need for to support their labour market entry, livelihoods, well-being and resilience; expand the scope of ICT-enabled mobile learning and literacy training; and detect and address online violence and abuse, including cyber bullying and cyber stalking, so that rural women and girls can explore the online world with confidence and in safety;**

### ***Health***

**aaa. (m.6, m.8 merged with x/y/z alt and y/z/aa alt)**

**Strengthen measures, including resource generation, to improve women's health, including maternal health, by addressing the specific health, nutrition and basic needs of rural women and taking concrete measures to enhance and provide access to the**

**highest attainable standards of physical and mental health for women of all ages in rural areas, as well as quality, affordable and universally accessible primary health care and support services;**

**bbb. (x merged with x supra, z alt)**

**Increase efforts to achieve universal health coverage with universal and equitable access to quality health services and quality, essential, affordable and effective medicines for all rural women and girls by increasing financial investments in quality, affordable and accessible health-care systems and facilities and support services for [all] rural women and girls over the life course;**

**ccc. (z.1 merged with x.2, x.4 and y.2)**

**Increase investments in a more effective and socially accountable health workforce and address the shortage and inequitable distribution of doctors, surgeons, midwives, nurses and other healthcare workers in rural areas, by promoting decent work with adequate remuneration, enabling safe working environments and conditions, effective retention and equitable and broad distribution of the health workforce, expanding rural and community-based health education and training in human rights and multiculturalism, and promoting community-based solutions, including mobile health programs and community health workers, to secure the presence in rural and remote areas of qualified health-care professionals;**

**ddd. (y merged with (y alt, y.3, x.3 and x.4, y.2)**

**Take measures to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity rates in rural areas and increase access to quality health care before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth to all rural women and girls through mobile clinics and interventions such as training and equipping community health workers, nurses, midwives, to provide basic pre- and post-natal care and emergency obstetric care; addressing early pregnancies in girls and adolescents and providing support services for adolescent mothers; and empowering women and communities to identify risk factors and complications of pregnancy and childbirth and facilitate access to health facilities, respecting traditional knowledge and ancestral practices;**

**eee. (z merged with y.1)**

**Ensure universal access by [all] rural women and girls to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights, 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, 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, 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, free of coercion, discrimination and violence;**

**fff. (d.7, d.8)**

**Promote tailored laws, policies and programs that provide all rural women and girls with the support, resources and opportunities they require in order to manage their own sexual and reproductive health and exercise their sexual and reproductive rights, including the right to decide freely and responsibly on the number, spacing and timing of children and to enter into marriage only with free and informed consent, and to have the information and means to do so, including through the provision of comprehensive sexuality education, and amend or repeal any laws or policies that violate women and girls' reproductive rights, including third party authorization laws and policies that allow the administration of forced medical procedures;**

**ggg. (aa merged with aa.1 and r.2)**

**Strengthen efforts to improve public health and increase access to modern health facilities in order to prevent and treat diseases, such as cholera, malaria, dengue and tuberculosis, in rural areas;**

**hhh. (aa- new para)**

**Strengthen HIV prevention, treatment, care and support and address the specific needs and concerns of [all] rural women and girls living with, at risk of, or affected by HIV/AIDS, without any stigma or discrimination, and ensure the active and meaningful participation, contribution and leadership of women and girls living with HIV in rural and remote areas in HIV responses;**

**iii (aa.3)**

**Pursue and promote gender-based approaches for the prevention and control of non-communicable diseases based on data disaggregated by sex and age in an effort to address the critical differences in the risks of morbidity and mortality from non-communicable diseases for women and men, and strengthen the prevention, treatment and care of non-communicable diseases in rural areas, including access to diagnostic services and long-term treatment for women and girls in rural areas;**

***Forced Labour and Trafficking***

**jjj. (q merged with q alt, q alt.2, q.1, d.2, d.3, m.9, m.10)**

**Eliminate policies and practices that condone forced labour, trafficked labour and child labour in rural areas, take appropriate measures to raise public awareness among rural women and girls about the risks of trafficking in persons, including the factors that make rural women and girls vulnerable to trafficking, and discouraging, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation and forced labour, and also with a view to eliminating the exploitation of rural women and girls, and ensure that integrated gender-sensitive services, including medical, psychosocial and legal services, reception and reintegration assistance and**

access to justice, are available and accessible to rural women and girls who are victims of trafficking in persons;

### *Resilience*

kkk. (v merged with w, v.4, v.2 and elements of l alt, r.1)

Strengthen the capacity **and resilience** of [all] rural women and girls to respond to **and recover from** economic, political, **environmental** and social shocks, conflicts, humanitarian emergencies and natural disasters by providing essential **humanitarian relief**, infrastructure, **early warning systems**, **financing**, services, **technologies**, decent work and social protection;

lll. (w alt.1, w alt.2, w.1, w.13, w.2 merged with w.12)

Develop and adopt strategies to support the resilience and adaptive capacities of women and girls to respond to the adverse effects of climate change, through, inter alia, the promotion of their health and well-being, ~~as well as~~ access to sustainable livelihoods, ~~and~~ the provision of adequate resources to ensure women's full participation in decision-making at all levels on environmental issues, in particular on strategies and policies related to the impacts of climate change, such as desertification, deforestation, sand and dust storms and natural disasters, persistent drought, extreme weather events, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification and loss of biodiversity, ~~on the lives of rural women and girls~~, and ensuring the integration of their specific needs into humanitarian responses to natural disasters, into the planning, delivery and monitoring of disaster risk reduction policies and into sustainable natural resources management, and implementing gender-responsive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change;

### *Specific Populations*

mmm. (o.3 merged with p.2)

Promote and protect the human rights of rural women and girls who are refugees, internally displaced persons, and migrants, regardless of migration status, by, inter alia, strengthening and incorporating gender perspectives into laws, policies, institutions and programmes to prevent discrimination and violence against these rural women and girls, and provide access to decent work, social protection, health care and access to justice;

nnn. (o.6, w.8, bb.13 merged with x alt, w.10, w.6, cc.10)

Respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of indigenous women and girls living in rural and remote areas by addressing the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, violence, and barriers they face, ensuring access to quality and inclusive education, health care, public services, infrastructure, economic resources, including land and natural resources, decent work, and climate change adaptation and mitigation, promoting meaningful participation in the economy, including through establishment of indigenous-owned businesses, and relevant decision-making processes at all levels and in all areas, while respecting and protecting their traditional and

**ancestral knowledge, including of genetic resources, seeds, medicines, fauna and flora, as well as their right to maintain, control, protect and develop their intellectual property over such cultural heritage and traditional knowledge, ensuring their free, prior and informed consent consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples before adopting and implementing any development programmes, especially infrastructure and extractive projects;**

**ooo. (y.5)**

**Promote and protect the rights of older women in rural areas by ensuring their equal access to social, legal, and financial services, infrastructure, health care, social protection, and economic resources and their full and equal participation in decision making;**

**ppp. (bb.12 merged with bb.11, cc.12)**

**Respect, protect and fulfill the rights of women and girls with disabilities in rural areas, including by ensuring access on an equal basis to productive employment and decent work, economic and financial resources and disability-sensitive and accessible social infrastructure, transportation and services, in particular in relation to health and education, as well as by ensuring that their priorities and needs are fully incorporated into policies and programmes through, inter alia, their participation in decision-making processes;**

**qqq. (e.7 merged with elements of 5.18)**

**Adopt measures and strategies to recognize, protect and guarantee the rights of Afro-descendant rural women and girls, including to their lands and territories, mainstream a gender perspective when designing and monitoring public policies, taking into account the specific needs and realities of rural women and girls of African descent;**

### ***National Statistics Capacity/Data***

**rrr. (cc alt.2 merged with cc supra, cc, cc alt.1. cc.2, cc alt.3, cc alt.4)**

**Strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices and other relevant government institutions to collect, analyse and disseminate data, disaggregated by sex and age, and gender statistics on time use, unpaid work, land tenure, energy, water and sanitation, among other things, to support policies and actions to improve the situation of rural women and girls, and to monitor and track the implementation of such policies and actions and the Sustainable Development Goals;**

### ***ODA and South-South cooperation***

**sss. (t.3, cc.3)**

**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 to accelerate the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls;

ttt. (t.4 merged with t.5)

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 the 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 the empowerment of rural women and girls;

uuu. (t.6)

Strengthen international cooperation, including 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 invite 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 rural women and girls;

### **OP Section 3**

*Strengthen [-ing rural women's] [ the] collective voice, leadership and decision-making [of rural women and girls]*

#### ***Participation in decision-making***

vvv. (dd alt.2 merged with dd and f with elements of b.2, dd.alt.1, dd.2, f.4)

Ensure that the perspectives of all rural women and girls are taken into account and that they fully and equally participate in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and activities that affect their livelihoods, well-being and resilience and that all rural women and girls and their organizations are fully and safely and actively able to participate in the decision-making, policies and institutions at all levels, including by promoting and protecting the right to vote and to be elected, and the right to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly and association, as well as to participate in political parties and in local and self-governing bodies such as community and village councils;

www. (cc.8 with elements of f and v.7)

**Mainstream a gender perspective in decision-making processes and the governance of natural resources, including in land, forestry, fishery and water governance bodies, as well as in planning relating to rural infrastructure and services, transportation and energy, leveraging the participation and influence of women in managing the sustainable use of natural resources, and enhancing the capacities of Governments, civil society and development partners to better understand and address gender issues in the management and governance of natural resources, including in traditional structures;**

***Freedom of association and collective bargaining***

**xxx. (ee alt.1 with elements of ee)**

**Protect and promote the rights to freedom of association, peaceful assembly and collective bargaining so as to enable rural women workers, entrepreneurs and informal, seasonal and migrant workers to organize and join unions, cooperatives and business associations, while recognizing that those legal entities are created, modified and dissolved in accordance with national law and taking into account each State's international legal obligations;**

***Participation in conflict prevention***

**yyy. (v.6 merged with w.4, gg.2 and with elements of dd.1, gg.3 and f.1, f.2, v.1, and v.3)**

**Ensure that the perspectives of rural women and girls are taken into account and that rural women fully and equally participate in the design, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies and activities related to conflict prevention, the mitigation of post-conflict situations, peace mediation, post-conflict recovery initiatives, the adverse impacts of climate change and emergencies, including natural disasters, humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction, and taking appropriate measures to eliminate all forms of violence and discrimination against rural women and girls in this regard;**

***Participation and leadership in women's organizations, cooperatives***

**zzz. (ff merged with gg and elements of cc.11, dd.supra.2, f.4 and gg.1)**

**Support the effective participation, decision-making and leadership of [all] rural women in enterprises, farmer and fisher organizations, producer cooperatives, trade unions, civil society and other relevant organizations and provide support for those organizations, including by investing in programs that provide opportunities for rural women and girls to exercise their voice, agency and leadership;**

***Participation and access to media, ICT and online spaces***

**aaaa. (dd supra.1 merged with gg.12 and gg.13 with elements of g.1)**

**Develop and implement policies and strategies that promote rural women's participation in and access to the media and information and communications technologies (ICTs), including by promoting the digital literacy of rural women and girls to increase their access to information and to amplify their voices, and protect the same rights online that people have offline;**

**bbbb. (bb.7 with elements of g.1)**

**Recognize the important role the media can play in the achievement of gender equality, including through non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive coverage, both online and offline, and by eliminating gender stereotypes, including those perpetuated by commercial advertisements, and encourage training for those who work in the media and the development and strengthening of self-regulatory mechanisms to promote balanced and non-stereotypical portrayals of rural women and girls, which contribute to the empowerment of all rural women and girls;**

### ***Women human rights defenders***

**cccc. (gg.8 merged with gg.9, gg.10 with elements of gg.4, gg.5, gg.6, gg.7, gg.11, w.7)**

**Support the important role of women human rights defenders in promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms of rural women, in particular those related to the access to natural resources; prevent violations and abuses against women human rights defenders in rural areas, including through practical consultative steps to prevent threats, harassment and violence; and combat impunity by taking steps to ensure that those responsible for violations or abuses, including all forms of gender-based violence and threats against rural human rights defenders, committed by State, non-State or private actors, are promptly and impartially investigated and held accountable and brought to justice through impartial investigations;**

### ***Men and Boys***

**dddd. (cc.4 merged with d.11 with elements of 13, 13.alt, 13.2)**

**Fully engage men and boys to take an active part in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including those in rural areas, and the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls both in 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 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;**

### **Closing Paragraphs**

**56. (13.1)**

**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.**

**57. (14. alt.1, 14.alt.2, with elements of g.supra and 14)**

**The Commission calls upon Governments to strengthen, as appropriate, the authority and capacity of national mechanisms for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, at all levels, which should be placed at the highest possible level of government, with sufficient funding and human resources, and for mainstreaming a gender perspective across all relevant national and local institutions, including labour, economic and financial government agencies, in order to ensure that national planning, decision-making, policy formulation and implementation, budgeting processes and institutional structures contribute to achieving gender equality, full and equal enjoyment of human rights and the empowerment of rural women and girls, recognizing that this requires both targeted action and mainstreaming gender perspectives into all efforts.**

**58. (15. merged with 15.1)**

**The Commission calls upon the United Nations system entities, and especially the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Food Programme, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Climate Change Secretariat, the United Nations Environmental Programme, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and regional commissions within their respective mandates, and other international organizations, including international financial institutions and multi-stakeholder platforms such as the Committee on World Food Security, to work collaboratively to support Member States, upon their request, in the implementation, measurement and monitoring of the present Agreed Conclusions and of the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, in their efforts to achieve gender equality and empower rural women and girls.**

**59. (14. 1)**

**The Commission encourages the international community to enhance international cooperation and to devote resources to developing rural ~~and urban~~ areas and sustainable agriculture and fisheries and to supporting smallholder farmers, especially women farmers, herders and fishers in developing countries, particularly in the least developed countries.**

**60. (15.3)**

**The Commission calls upon Governments to heed the urgent United Nations humanitarian appeal to assist countries facing drought, starvation and famine with emergency aid and urgent funding, and underlines that, if no immediate response is received, an estimated 20 million people, most of whom are women and children, risk losing their lives.**

**61. (15.2)**

**The Commission recalls General Assembly resolution 72/181, notes with appreciation the opportunities afforded to national human rights institutions to contribute to the Commission's work, and encourages the secretariat to further enhance the participation of national human rights institutions compliant with the Paris Principles at the sessions of the Commission, in compliance with the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Council, including at the sixty-third session of the Commission.**

**62. (16.)**

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 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 towards **achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.**