

**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] [recognizes]** 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]]** 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/ **including those living in rural areas [and the full enjoyment of their human rights]**.

International commitments, conferences

4.

The Commission reaffirms the commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls made at relevant United Nations summits and conferences, including the International Conference on Population and Development and its Programme of Action and the outcome documents of its reviews. It recognizes that 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 contribute to the improvement of the situation of rural women and girls. The Commission also recalls the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

5.

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.

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 women, including those in rural areas, and recalls the decent work agenda of the International Labour Organization and the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and notes the importance of their effective implementation in rural areas.

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 those in rural areas.

8.

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 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. It acknowledges 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.

The Commission emphasizes that achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls and the full realization of their human rights, including the right to development, which are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated, 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, including their right to an adequate standard of living, to a life free of violence, and to land, water, food and work.

10.

The Commission recognizes that women's equal enjoyment of economic rights, independence and economic empowerment, including by women living in rural areas, is essential to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda. It underlines the importance of undertaking legislative and other reforms to realize the equal rights of women and men, as well as girls and boys where applicable, to access economic and productive resources, including land and natural resources, property and inheritance rights, appropriate new technology and/or use of existing technology in new ways, financial products and 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, in both agricultural and nonagricultural activities in rural areas.

National policy space

11.

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.

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.

The Commission recognizes that progress in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, in particular in rural areas, 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 and inequalities and disadvantages in access to, ownership and control over resources, growing gaps in equality of opportunity, including in comprehensive health services and secondary and post-secondary education, gender-based violence, discriminatory laws, policies, social norms, attitudes, harmful customary and contemporary practices and gender stereotypes, unequal sharing of paid or unpaid work and limited access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights. It stresses the urgency of eliminating these structural barriers to realize gender equality and empower rural women and girls.

14.

The Commission acknowledges that rural women and girls in all their diversity face multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and challenges, including as girls, young

women, older women, mothers and widows, [and on the basis of birth, sex, age, marital status, household and relationship status, heads of households, women and girls with disabilities, indigeneity, indigenous women and girls, race, women and girls of African descent, colour, ethnicity, social origin, language, religion or belief, political or other opinion, belonging to a minority, women migrants, refugees and internally-displaced persons, health, women and girls affected by HIV and AIDS and other infectious and non-communicable diseases and chronic conditions, 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, victims of trafficking in persons and other factors, which heightens their risk of violence, exploitation and abuse, and poverty, and represents significant obstacles in the enjoyment of their human rights and in contributing to sustainable development]. It also acknowledges that different groups of rural women and girls have the same rights but have particular needs, capacities, and priorities, warranting tailored legislative, policy, and institutional responses at all levels.

Poverty

15.

The Commission expresses concern that 1.6 billion people still live in multidimensional poverty and that nearly 80 per cent of the extreme poor live in rural areas. It acknowledges that progress in the eradication of poverty has been uneven and that inequality has increased. It expresses concern that poverty is a serious impediment to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those living in rural areas and that the feminization of poverty persists. It emphasizes that the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, including extreme poverty, is an indispensable requirement for sustainable development. It acknowledges the mutually reinforcing links between the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls and the eradication of poverty. It stresses the urgency of support for countries in their efforts to eradicate poverty in all its forms and dimensions.

16.

Merged into 15

17.

The Commission expresses concern that many rural women continue to be economically and socially disadvantaged because of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and violence, and their limited, or lack of, access to economic resources and opportunities, financial inclusion, quality education, public health, including health-care services, justice, land, social protection, 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. It 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.

The Commission recognizes the crucial role and contribution of rural women, and girls where applicable, as critical agents in poverty eradication and hunger reduction, enhancing sustainable agricultural and rural development and improving food security and nutrition. It underlines that meaningful progress in these areas necessitates, inter alia, closing the gender gap, introducing gender-responsive policies, interventions and innovations in agriculture and fisheries, and women's equal access to agricultural and fisheries technologies, technical assistance, productive resources, land tenure security and access to and control over land, forests, water and marine resources, and to participation in local, regional and international markets.

19.

The Commission recognizes the crucial role and contributions of rural women to local and national economies and to food production and food security and nutrition as well as to the well-being of their families and communities, including through work on family farms and women headed farm enterprises. It 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 and disproportionate share of unpaid work, including care and domestic work. 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.

The Commission stresses the importance of investing in accessible and sustainable infrastructure and technology, including in rural areas, such as safe drinking water and water for irrigation, sanitation, energy, transport and information and communications technology, and other physical infrastructure for public services.

21.

The Commission reiterates the importance of safe, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport and transit corridors in facilitating transport linkages on domestic routes and promoting urban-rural connectivity to empower women and girls and to boost economic growth at the local and regional levels, promote interconnections among cities and villages, peoples and resources and facilitate intraregional and interregional trade.

Education

22.

The Commission reaffirms the right to education and stresses that equal access to high quality and inclusive education contributes to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls including those in rural areas. 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 technical and vocational training and lifelong learning opportunities. It recognizes that new technologies are, inter alia, changing the structure of labour markets and provide new and different

employment opportunities that require skills ranging from basic digital fluency to advanced technical skills in science, technology, engineering and mathematics and in information and communications technology, and in this regard, emphasizes the importance of all rural women and girls having the opportunity to acquire them.

23.

The Commission recognizes that, despite gains in providing access to education, rural girls are still more likely than other children to remain excluded from education, and recognizes also that among gender-specific barriers to girls' equal enjoyment of their right to education are the feminization of poverty, child labour that girls undertake, child, early and forced marriage, female genital mutilation, early and repeat pregnancies, all forms of gender-based violence in and outside of school, including sexual violence and harassment on the way to and from and at school, the lack of safe and adequate sanitation facilities, 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.

The Commission reaffirms the right of every human being to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, without distinction of any kind, 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 all women and girls, including in rural areas. It recognizes that eliminating gender inequality, discrimination, stigma and violence in health care, including the unequal and limited access to public health services is important for all women and girls, including in rural areas, especially those who are in situations of vulnerability.

25.

The Commission emphasizes the need to accelerate progress towards the goal of universal health coverage that comprises universal and equitable access to gender-responsive, quality health services and quality, essential, affordable and effective medicines for all, including for rural women and girls, and that it is critical to promote 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. It stresses the importance of strengthening health systems in terms of availability, accessibility, acceptability and quality in order to better respond to the needs of all women and girls, including in rural areas, and enabling rural women's active participation in the design and implementation of health systems.

26.

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 experience significant disparities in reproductive health outcomes, such as higher rates of maternal mortality and morbidity, obstetric fistula and limited options for

modern contraception, than women in urban areas. It expresses further concern that these disparities are exacerbated by multiple and intersecting forms of inequalities and discrimination.

Violence, including sexual harassment

27.

The Commission strongly condemns all forms of violence against all women and girls, which is rooted in historical and structural inequality and unequal power relations between men and women. It reiterates that violence against women and girls in all its forms and manifestations in public and private spheres, including sexual and gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation, is pervasive, underrecognized and underreported, particularly at the community level, which reflects discriminatory laws, norms and policies that reinforce stereotypes and gender inequality. It 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 justice, effective legal remedies and services, including protection, psychosocial, rehabilitation, reintegration and care services, and employment opportunities, and the corresponding impunity and lack of accountability. It reemphasizes that violence against women and girls is a major impediment to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, including those living in rural areas, and violates and impairs or nullifies their full enjoyment of all human rights, and reiterates the need to intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls.

28.

Merged with 27.

29.

The Commission reaffirms that women play a vital role as agents of change and have a transformative and multiplier effect on sustainable development and recognizes, in this context, that sexual harassment is a form of violence and a violation and abuse of human rights and impedes the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including those living in rural areas.

Harmful practices

30.

Merged with 31.

31.

The Commission is deeply concerned that, despite the increase in national, regional and international efforts focused on their elimination, harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation continue to persist in all regions of the world and that in many countries, women and girls in rural areas may be disproportionately affected. It is concerned that long-term effects on girls and women may include lack of decision-making power over their lives, health and bodies may increase

complications from early pregnancy and childbearing, and increase vulnerability to violence and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.

Family

32.

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.

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.

(Note: Deletions and additions proposed by delegations are reflected in brackets; proposals to use previous agreed language have not been added to the text)

The Commission recognizes that [transforming gender roles at the household and community levels to ensure the sharing of domestic and unpaid care work] the [equal] sharing of family responsibilities [between all family members] [that] [with the family and the household as appropriate] creates an enabling environment for the empowerment of all rural women and girls, that women and [men] [girls of all ages] 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 [the unequal sharing of] 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.

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,][with chronic and infectious diseases] 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] [and facilitate] the equal sharing of responsibilities between [all family members] [women and men] [within the family and the household as appropriate] and by prioritizing, inter alia, social protection policies and infrastructure development.

36.

The Commission stresses the need to undertake [all] appropriate measures to recognize, [reduce and redistribute][and mitigate the burden of] unpaid care work [by prioritizing] [inter alia through enhancing]social protection policies, including accessible and [affordable] quality social services, and [early childhood education and] care services for children, persons with disabilities, older persons, persons living with HIV and AIDS and all others in need of care, [paternal leave, availability of affordable, accessible and high-quality childcare][and promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men]. [Proposal to merge w/ above]

Global context

37.

The Commission expresses deep concern about the remaining effects of the world financial and economic crises, slow or stagnant economic growth and development, the rising inequalities within and among countries, volatile food and energy prices, continuing food and energy insecurity, water scarcity, epidemics, demographic changes, unplanned and rapid urbanization of populations, insufficient investment in sustainable rural development, unsustainable fisheries practices and use of marine resources, natural hazards, natural disasters and environmental degradation, the increasing challenges caused by humanitarian emergencies and armed conflicts and the adverse impacts of climate change, all of which are exacerbating disadvantages, vulnerabilities and inequalities that rural women and men, girls and boys and their families face.

38.

The Commission recognizes that globalization presents both challenges and opportunities for women's economic empowerment, including rural women. It also recognizes that there is a need to make broad and sustained efforts to create a shared future, based upon our common humanity and to achieve peace and security, human rights and sustainable development so as 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.

Merged with 60.

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 predominantly armed conflicts and also poverty, drought and the volatility of commodity prices are among the factors causing or exacerbating famine, starvation and severe food insecurity. It notes that additional efforts, including international support, are urgently needed to respond to, prevent and prepare for increasing global food insecurity, including in response to urgent United Nations humanitarian appeals with emergency aid and urgent funding.

Climate change

40.

The Commission is deeply concerned that climate change poses challenges to poverty eradication and the achievement of sustainable development, and that owing to gender inequalities, rural women and girls, especially in developing countries, including SIDS, are often disproportionately affected by the adverse impacts of climate change, extreme weather events and natural disasters and other environmental issues, including land degradation, desertification, deforestation, sand and dust storms, persistent drought, sea level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification. It recalls the Paris Agreement, in which the Parties acknowledge in the preamble that countries should, when taking action to address climate change, respect, promote and consider gender equality, the empowerment of women and intergenerational equity, and in this context, also recalls the adoption of the Gender Action Plan by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its 23rd session.

Armed conflict

41.

The Commission recognizes the impact of armed conflict on rural women and girls, and the crucial role of women in the prevention and resolution of armed conflicts and in peace-building and the construction of sustainable peace, and in this regard, stresses the importance of their full, equal and effective participation, including by increasing their role in decision-making as well as in efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security, and reiterates the important engagement by men and boys as partners in promoting this participation.

Participation

42.

The Commission also stresses the importance of strengthening rural women's, and as appropriate girls', voice, agency and leadership and their full, equal and effective participation at all levels of decision-making. It recognizes the critical role played by rural women's civil society organizations, trade unions, enterprises and cooperatives in gathering and uniting rural women and supporting them in the political and economic spheres.

Specific populations

43.

The Commission recognizes that indigenous women and girls living in rural and remote areas, regardless of age, 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 limited access to physical and mental health care services, information and communication technologies (ICT), infrastructure, education and employment, while also recognizing the cultural, social, economic, political and 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.

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. These are compounded by the lack of affordable, accessible, inclusive and quality services in rural areas, including water, sanitation, electricity, education, health-care services, sustainable transportation, ICT for persons with disabilities. It 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. It is also concerned that access to justice and equal recognition before the law, opportunities for productive employment and decent work, and 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 are limited for women and girls with disabilities living in rural areas.

45.

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.

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. It 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 [regardless of their migratory status].

47.

The Commission recognizes the contributions of older rural women to households and communities, 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 responsibilities.

National machineries

48.

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 all women and girls, including those living in rural areas, 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.**

The Commission welcomes the major contributions made by civil society, including women's and community-based organizations, feminist groups, women human rights defenders, girls' and youth-led organizations and trade unions in placing the interests, needs and visions of women and girls, including those living in rural areas, 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 women and girls.

50.

Merged with 51.

51.

The Commission expresses concern about systemic and structural discrimination and increasing violence and threats faced by women human rights defenders of all ages in rural and remote areas, including those engaged on issues relating to labour rights, environment, land and natural resources, as well as by women journalists and other media workers. It expresses profound concern on the shrinking space for women's and civil society organizations and independent media, both online and offline.

Financing**52.**

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.

The Commission recognizes the importance of a conducive external environment in support of national efforts towards the economic empowerment of women, through promoting the control, ownership, management and participation of women living in rural areas in all sectors and levels of the economy, 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.**

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.

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.

[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

Strengthen normative, legal and policy frameworks

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 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.

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.

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

National normative and legal frameworks – economic and productive resources

d.

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 access economic and productive resources, natural resources, appropriate new technology and financial services, including credit, banking and finance, including microfinance, as well as equal access to justice and legal assistance in this regard, and ensure women's legal capacity and equal rights with men to conclude contracts; and work to ensure that the land rights, including in plural legal systems where they exist, of rural women encompass ownership, lease, inheritance, control, access and use of land and its resources in diverse land tenure systems, including community, customary, collective, joint and individual tenure;

e.

Enact legislation to 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 and enhance gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in rural areas;

Addressing discriminatory laws

f.

Eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls, including 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, where they exist, of discriminatory provisions in legal frameworks, including punitive provisions, and setting up legal, policy, administrative and other comprehensive measures, including temporary special measures as appropriate, to ensure women's and girls' equal and effective access to justice and accountability for violations of the human rights of women and girls and ensure that the provisions of multiple legal systems, where they exist, comply with international human rights obligations, and are consistent with human rights commitments as well as the principle of non-discrimination;

g.

Implement targeted measures to address the multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and marginalization of all rural women and girls in all their diversity;

Eliminating violence against rural women and girls

h.

Eliminate, prevent and respond to all forms of gender-based violence against all women and girls, including those living in rural areas, 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 care 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 justice, appropriate civil remedies and redress; and bearing in mind the importance of all rural women and girls living free from violence, such as domestic violence, including intimate partner violence and 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, emerging forms of violence, such as cyber bullying, cyber stalking and cyber child pornography, as well as of addressing the structural and underlying causes of gender-based violence against women and girls in rural areas through improved data and enhanced prevention measures, research and strengthened coordination and monitoring and evaluation, promoting changes in behavior and encouraging awareness-raising activities, work with local communities and demonstrating the cost of violence against women and girls;

i.

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

j.

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

Institutional arrangements / coordination

k.

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, enhance gender-responsive rural development policies, ensuring coordination between line ministries, gender policymakers, gender machineries and other relevant government organizations and institutions with gender expertise, and collaboration with the private sector, non-governmental and civil society organizations and national human rights institutions, where they exist, and paying increased attention to the needs of rural

women and girls to ensure that they 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.

Eliminate barriers and afford equal and effective access by all rural women and girls to justice, legal remedies and legal support by, inter alia, providing accessible and affordable services, increasing rural women's and girls' legal literacy, such as awareness of and information about their legal rights, including on the existence of multiple legal systems, where they exist, access to judicial remedies, mechanisms to ensure accountability, providing public legal assistance, 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 justice systems at all levels to ensure the equal protection of the law for rural women and girls, and considering the specific needs of rural women drug offenders when imprisoned, in line with the UN rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the Bangkok Rules);

Birth registration

m.

Guarantee the universal registration of all births, including in rural areas, and ensure the timely registration of all marriages for individuals living in rural areas by removing physical, administrative, procedural and any other barriers that impede access to registration and by providing, where lacking, mechanisms for the registration of customary and religious marriages, recalling the vital importance of birth registration for securing inheritance and property rights, particularly for women and within families;

OP Section 2

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

Macroeconomic and public policies

n.

Design, implement and pursue gender-responsive economic and social policies that aim to, inter alia, eradicate poverty, including in rural areas, and combat feminization of poverty, ensure the full and equal participation of rural women in the development, implementation and follow-up of development policies and programmes and poverty eradication strategies, support increased rural employment and decent work, and promote the participation of women at all levels and sectors of the rural economy and in diverse on-farm and off-farm economic activities, including sustainable agricultural and fisheries production;

o.

Merged with n

p.

Merged with n

q.
Emphasize the need for transnational corporations and other 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 take measures for their remediation, in line with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights;

r.
Design and implement and follow up on fiscal policies that promote gender equality and the empowerment of [all] rural women and girls, inter alia, by facilitating greater access to social protection and financial and business services, including credit, for women in rural areas, in particular women heads of households;

s.
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.
Integrate and mainstream a gender perspective and include sustainable agricultural and fisheries 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, taking into account 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.
Strengthen and support the critical role and contributions of rural women, including women farmers and farm workers, to enhancing sustainable agricultural and rural development, eradicating poverty, improving food security and nutrition and the economic well-being of their families and communities; ensure their equal access to agricultural technologies that are affordable, durable, sustainable and accessible to women farmers, through investment, the transfer of technology on mutually agreed terms, and research and development of technology; and support integrated and multisectoral policies to improve their productive capacity and incomes, strengthen their resilience, and address the existing gaps in and barriers to trading their agricultural products in national, regional and international markets;

v.
Strengthen national, regional and international efforts, as appropriate, to enhance the capacity of developing countries to support rural women smallholder farmers, including those in subsistence farming, to increase food security and nutrition, including through appropriate mechanization in agriculture, sustainable agricultural practices, and public

and private investment to close the gender gap in agriculture and facilitate rural women's access to extension and financial services, agricultural inputs, land, water and irrigation;

w.

Strengthen sustainable production and consumption patterns, including family farming, respecting and protecting traditional and ancestral knowledge and practices of rural women, including indigenous women, 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 and their communities;

Food Security and Nutrition

x.

Invest in and strengthen efforts to empower rural women as central actors in food security and nutrition, including by supporting rural women's participation in all areas of economic activity, including commercial and artisan fisheries and aquaculture, promoting an adequate standard of living, decent working conditions and personal security, facilitating sustainable access to and use of critical rural infrastructure, land, water and natural resources, and local, regional and global markets, and valuing rural women's, including indigenous women's, traditional and ancestral knowledge and contributions to the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial and marine biodiversity, for present and future generations;

y.

Ensure integrated food and nutritional support for rural women and girls, including those who are pregnant and breast-feeding, and their 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.

Merged with x

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

aa.

Invest in quality and resilient infrastructure and time- and labour-saving technologies, information and communication technologies (ICTs), sustainable, accessible and affordable energy, transport and safe drinking water and sanitation, including through technology transfer on mutually agreed terms, to improve the lives, livelihoods and wellbeing of all rural women and girls;

bb.

Promote women's, and girls' where appropriate, 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.

Commit to encourage urban-rural interactions and connectivity and eliminate geographic and territorial inequalities by strengthening gender-responsive sustainable and affordable transport and mobility, technology and communication networks and infrastructure, underpinned by planning instruments based on an integrated urban and territorial approach with a gender perspective 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.

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 and girls bearing in mind that social protection policies also play a critical role in reducing poverty and inequality and supporting inclusive growth and gender equality;

Economic Empowerment and Decent Work

ee.

Merged with ii

ff.

Protect and promote the right to work and rights at work of all rural women in the informal and formal economies in both agricultural and non-agricultural employment, in line with international labour standards and national labour laws, including by ensuring an adequate standard of living, implementing policies and enforcing regulations that uphold the principles of decent work and equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, and taking measures to address gender-based discrimination, occupational segregation, the gender pay gap and unsafe and unhealthy working conditions;

gg.

Merged with ff

hh.

Promote the economic empowerment of rural women 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 and facilitate the entry and re-entry of [all] rural women, especially young women, into the labour force;

Entrepreneurship and Procurement**ii.**

Encourage and facilitate rural women's entrepreneurship and expand opportunities for their enterprises, cooperatives and self-help groups, to diversify and increase their productivity by engaging in sustainable agriculture, fisheries, aquaculture, including mariculture, cultural and creative industries and other areas of economic activity, and improving access to financing and investment, technology and infrastructure, such as improved and safe marketplace infrastructure, training, and high-value markets;

jj.

Increase trade and procurement from rural women's enterprises, cooperatives and women-owned businesses, by developing 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.**

Promote the financial inclusion and financial literacy of rural women and ensure their equal access to formal financial services, including timely and affordable credit, loans, savings, insurance, and remittance transfer schemes, integrate a gender perspective in finance sector policy and regulations, in accordance with national priorities and legislation, encourage financial institutions, such as commercial banks, development banks, agricultural banks, micro-finance institutions, mobile network operators, agent networks, cooperatives, postal banks and saving banks, to provide access to financial services and information to rural women, and encourage the use of innovative tools and platforms, including online and mobile banking;

ll.

Merged with kk

Unpaid care and domestic work**mm.**

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 [between women and men] [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, water and sanitation, technology and public services, including accessible, affordable and quality childcare and care facilities;

nn.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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

vv.

Eliminate gender disparities and commit to scale up financing and investments in public education systems to fulfill the right to education for women and girls in rural areas by addressing gender-based discrimination, negative social norms and gender stereotypes in education systems, including in curricula, textbooks and teaching methodologies; combat gender norms that devalue girls' education and prevent women and girls from accessing education; provide inclusive, safe, non-violent and accessible schools with gender- and disability-sensitive infrastructure and lighting, and safe, accessible and affordable transportation to school; maintain separate and adequate sanitation facilities; train, recruit and retain quality teachers in rural areas, 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 promote an effective transition from education or unemployment to decent work and active participation in public life;

vv.bis

Take steps, in collaboration with civil society and other relevant actors, to promote educational and health practices in order to foster a culture in which menstruation is recognized as healthy and natural, and girls are not stigmatised on this basis, recognising that girls' attendance at school can be affected by negative perceptions of menstruation and lack of means to maintain safe personal hygiene, such as water, sanitation and hygiene facilities in schools that meet the needs of girls;

ww.

Ensure that pregnant adolescents and young mothers, as well as single mothers, can continue and complete their education, and in this regard, design, implement and, where applicable, 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, including e-learning, and bearing in mind the important role and responsibilities of, and challenges faced by, fathers, including young fathers, in this regard;

xx.

Intensify efforts to prevent and eliminate violence and sexual harassment against girls at, and on the way to, school, including by implementing effective violence prevention and response activities in schools and communities, engaging 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;

yy.

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.

Address the digital divide, which disproportionately affect rural women and girls, by facilitating their access to ICT and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education to promote their empowerment and to develop skills, information and knowledge that they urgently need to support their labour market entry, livelihoods, well-being and resilience and expand the scope of ICT-enabled mobile learning and literacy training;

Health

aaa.

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, available and universally accessible primary health care and support services;

bbb.

Increase financial investments in quality, affordable and accessible health-care systems and facilities and quality, essential, affordable and effective medicines and health technologies, including through community outreach and private sector engagement, and with the support of the international community, towards achieving universal health coverage for [all] rural women and girls;

ccc.

Promote and 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 and incentives to secure the presence in rural and remote areas of qualified health-care professionals, enabling safe working environments and conditions, and expanding rural and community-based health education and training and strengthening education for health professionals;

ddd.

Take measures to reduce maternal mortality and morbidity, as well as neonatal, infant and child mortality and morbidity, in rural areas and increase access to quality health care before, during and after pregnancy and childbirth to all rural women and girls through interventions such as training and equipping community health workers, nurses, midwives, to provide basic pre- and post-natal care and emergency obstetric care and empowering women and communities to identify risk factors and complications of pregnancy and childbirth and facilitate access to health facilities;

eee.

Ensure universal access 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, including as a contribution to the fulfilment of their economic rights, independence and empowerment;

fff.

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 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 means to do so, including through the provision of education and information, 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.

Strengthen national and international efforts to improve public health and increase access to modern health facilities and health care workers for the prevention, treatment and care of non-communicable and communicable diseases, as well as neglected tropical diseases, by

integrating gender-based approaches for the prevention and control of diseases based on data disaggregated by sex, age and other characteristics relevant in national contexts;

hhh.

Strengthen prevention, treatment, care of HIV and AIDS, as well as co-infections and other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and support and address the specific needs and concerns of [all] rural women and girls living with, at risk of, or affected by HIV and AIDS, without stigma or discrimination, and promote the active and meaningful participation, contribution and leadership of women and girls living with HIV in rural and remote areas in HIV responses;

iii.

Merged into ggg

Forced Labour and Trafficking

jjj.

Devise, strengthen and implement comprehensive anti-trafficking strategies that integrate a human rights and sustainable development perspective, and enforce, as appropriate, legal frameworks, in a gender- and age-sensitive manner, to combat and eliminate all forms of trafficking in persons, raise public awareness of the issue of trafficking in persons, in particular women and girls, take measures to reduce the vulnerability of women and girls to modern slavery and sexual exploitation, and enhance international cooperation, inter alia, to counter, with a view to eliminating, the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation, including sexual exploitation and forced labour;

Resilience

kkk.

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

lll.

Merged into kkk

Specific Populations

mmm.

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 [ensure adequate protection and assistance for internally displaced women and girls, including those living in rural areas];

nnn.

Respect, protect and fulfil the human rights of indigenous women and girls regardless of age 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, [physical and mental] 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.

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

ppp.

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 [justice mechanisms] and services, in particular in relation to health and education, as well as by ensuring [that their priorities and [needs][rights] are fully incorporated into policies and programmes] [the protection and promotion of the HR of persons with disabilities in all policies and programmes][through, inter alia, their participation in] [and actively involve them in]decision-making processes];

qqq.

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.

Strengthen the capacity of national statistical offices and other relevant government institutions to collect, analyse and disseminate data, disaggregated by sex, age, and other characteristics relevant in national contexts, and gender statistics, 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 enhance partnerships and the mobilization, from all sources, of financial and technical assistance to enable developing

countries to systematically design, collect and ensure access to high-quality, reliable and timely disaggregated data and gender statistics;

ODA and South-South cooperation

sss.

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.

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.

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 the collective voice, leadership and decision-making of rural women and girls

Participation in decision-making

vvv.

Ensure that the perspectives of all rural women, and girls as appropriate, 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 they 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, as citizens, 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.

Mainstream a gender perspective in decision-making processes and the governance of natural resources, inter alia, in land, forestry, fisheries 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;

Freedom of association and collective bargaining

xxx.

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.

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, the 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.

Support the effective participation, decision-making and leadership of rural women in enterprises, farmer and fisher organizations, producer cooperatives, trade unions, civil society and other relevant organizations ensuring a safe and enabling environment, 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.

Develop and implement policies and strategies that promote rural women's and girls' participation in and access to the media and information and communications technologies (ICTs), including by increasing their digital literacy and access to information, taking into account that the rights people have offline must also be protected online, including the right to privacy;

bbbb.

Recognize the important role the media can play in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls, including through non-discriminatory and gender-sensitive coverage 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 women and girls, which contribute to the empowerment of women and girls and the elimination of discrimination against and exploitation of women and girls;

Women human rights defenders

cccc.

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; take appropriate, robust and practical steps to protect women human rights defenders and to integrate a gender perspective into their efforts to create a safe and enabling environment for the defense of human rights; 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.

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.

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.

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, and the empowerment of women and girls, including in rural areas.

58.

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, 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 of the present Agreed Conclusions and in the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda, including towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls.

59.

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.

Merged with 39

61.

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, where they exist 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.

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