

Informal briefing on 63rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women

Key points | Geneva, 28 January 2019

1. CSW 63

The sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women will take place from 11-22 March 2019 at UN Headquarters in NY. Please visit the dedicated website (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw63-2019>) to easily access more information on the session, its organization of work (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw63-2019/official-meetings>, and also attached), and related documentation (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw63-2019/official-documents>). The documentation for the session includes reports by the Secretary-General on the priority and review themes, which are already available. There will also be a discussion guide for the ministerial roundtables, and discussion notes will support the other interactive events.

Priority theme

The priority theme of CSW 63 is “Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.” In assessing the progress, gaps, and challenges in women’s and girls’ access to social protection, public services, and sustainable infrastructure, it will build on the work from previous sessions, including CSW 61 on women in the changing world of work and CSW 62 on rural women and girls.

Review theme

This year’s review theme evaluates progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions adopted at the 60th session in 2016, on “Women’s empowerment and the link to sustainable development.” These agreed conclusions contain a detailed roadmap on how to implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in a gender-responsive manner that leaves no one, above all women and girls, behind.

Preparations for CSW 63

UN Women, together with partners, is organizing several informal regional and other preparatory meetings to support governments and other stakeholders in their preparations:

- 11-12 December 2018, regional preparatory meeting for the Latin American and Caribbean region took place in Buenos Aires;
- 5-6 February 2019, regional preparatory meeting for the Africa region in Cairo;
- February 2019: regional preparatory meetings for or the Arab States, in collaboration with League of Arab States, in Cairo, and for the Asia-Pacific Region in Bangkok.

UN Women will also (co-)convene regional civil society consultations in preparation of CSW 63 in Asia-Pacific (Bangkok), Arab States, and Africa (both in Cairo). Delegations will be kept informed through the Bureau and the CSW 63 website. Outcomes of these meetings will be posted on the CSW website.

Agreed Conclusions

The Commission will adopt a negotiated outcome of the discussion on the priority theme in the form of Agreed Conclusions, negotiated by all Member States. The Bureau will present a draft Agreed Conclusions

around 5 February, at which time the facilitator (H.E. Koki Muli Grignon, Ambassador, Deputy Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Kenya to the United Nations in New York) will convene a first meeting to present the text to Member States. Member States will have 10 days to submit comments, by 15 February. A first reading of the text of the draft Agreed Conclusions will take place prior to the session and then resume on Thursday 14 March, in the first week of the session.

Civil society

CSW plans to hold a town hall meeting with the Secretary-General and civil society on the margins of the CSW session, most likely on 13 March lunchtime—as have been done in previous years. The NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW/NY) compiled a set of ‘ZeroDraft Initial Inputs’ from civil society, for sharing with the CSW Bureau and Permanent Missions.

Regarding practical arrangements: Online registration for NGOs in consultative status with ECOSOC closed on 27 January 2019. As of late last week, there were 8082 registrations. On-site registration in order to obtain a UN grounds pass will take place in the usual manner during CSW, and there will be opportunity to pick up accreditation on the weekend before the session. UN Women strongly encourages to express interest in speaking during the General Discussion and/or interactive dialogues and expert panels. The only sign up forms are available on the CSW 63 website (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/ngo-participation/written-and-oral-statements>). The deadline for sign up is 18 February. The deadline to submit written statements from NGOs, and to register side-events have already passed. Last week, UN Women dispatched a joint letter from the CSW Chair and UN-Women Executive Director encouraging Member States to include youth, as well as CSOs on national delegations.

Youth dialogue

UN Women is organizing three youth-focused events:

- 9 March 2019: UN Women, in collaboration with the UN Secretary-General’s Envoy on Youth and youth-led and youth serving networks and organizations, is once again organizing a youth dialogue in New York prior to the session. This pre-CSW consultation will offer an opportunity for young people to understand what social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure mean for young women and girls. The outcome of the discussions will contribute to the development of action-oriented recommendations that Member States, civil society and youth-led and serving organizations can adopt in ensuring the effective delivery of social protection.
- 13 March 2019: UN Women is also convening a High Level Intergenerational Dialogue where young people will engage in an interactive, intergenerational dialogue with various stakeholders. Under the spotlight, senior Government and UN Leaders will take the “hot seat” and respond to questions on critical issues of achieving social protection, accessible public services and sustainable infrastructure for young people, by young people.
- 15 March 2019: A third event will focus on “Youth Mobilization spaces”. Young people will develop mobilizing strategies that include of intersectional feminist approached that can foster and strengthen youth led movements on gender equality across the globe.

Member States are encouraged to include youth in their delegations so that they can participate in the youth dialogue as well as side-events.

2. Beijing+25 anniversary, reviews, and celebrations

The 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing, was one of the largest-ever gatherings of gender equality advocates and proved to be a critical turning point for the realization of gender equality and women's empowerment. 2020 will be marking the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Conference. Along with the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Conference on Women, 2020 will also mark the 20th anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and the 5th anniversary of the Sustainable Development Goals. As part of this anniversary, States are called upon to undertake comprehensive national-level reviews of the progress made and challenges encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly.

Please find below a timeline with key events leading up to 2020:

- 1 May 2019: Deadline for submission of national reports to the UN Regional Commissions, to inform the preparation of the regional analysis. UN Women with the Regional Commissions have prepared a "Guidance note for comprehensive national-level reviews" (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw64-2020/preparations>) for this purpose;
- October 2019-early 2020: Regional Commissions will be holding regional intergovernmental meetings, in late October and November 2019 and in early 2020. Information will be posted on the CSW 64 website as soon as it becomes available. The regional meeting for the UNECE region (<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=51017>) will be held in Geneva on 29-30 October;
- March 2020, CSW 64: At CSW 62 in 2018, the decision was taken to conduct a review and appraisal of the implementation of the Platform for Action during CSW 64 (<http://www.unwomen.org/en/csw/csw64-2020>). The main focus of the session will be on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcomes of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly. The review will include an assessment of current challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and its contribution towards the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Summer 2020: In order to further galvanize public accountability for gender equality and women's rights and empowerment, UN Women, together with one or more champion states, and in partnership with civil society, is planning to organize a global forum in June 2020. The forum will build on the national reviews, draw attention to the challenges of implementation, and ensure that the voices of civil society and the women's movement and particularly young people, are at the center and drive the gender equality agenda forward;
- September 2020: ECOSOC also recommended that the General Assembly convene a high-level meeting in September 2020 to celebrate the anniversary.