

Economic and Social Council  
Management Segment  
21 July 2020  
Item 19: Social and human rights questions  
(a) Advancement of women

**Outcome of the sixty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women  
Presentation by the Chair of the Commission**

His Excellency Ambassador Mher Margaryan  
Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations  
Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women

Vice-President of the Economic and Social Council, Excellencies, Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to present the outcome of the sixty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women, which I was privileged to chair.

In accordance with ECOSOC resolution 2018/8, the Commission undertook a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, on the occasion of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women.

In preparation for the session, all stakeholders – governments, civil society, the UN system and other actors – undertook extensive preparations at national and regional levels. 173 Governments submitted national reports. The five regional commissions held regional reviews, as encouraged by the Council. Civil society representatives and youth contributed extensively to national and regional reviews processes. The Secretary-General prepared a comprehensive report.

The sixty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women was scheduled for 9 to 20 March 2020 and was expected to receive hundreds of Ministers and government delegates and thousands of representatives of civil society, the UN system and youth.

However, given the rapidly evolving situation of COVID-19 and its implications for intergovernmental meetings at United Nations Headquarters, the session had to be scaled down and shortened. The Commission did not hold a general discussion, and the ministerial round tables and interactive dialogues planned for the session could not take place. All side events planned by Member States and United Nations entities in conjunction with the session were also cancelled, and capital-based Government representatives, civil society and other stakeholders refrained from traveling to UNHQ.

Instead, the Commission held a scaled down meeting on 9 March, to hear opening and introductory statements, and adopted the Political Declaration on the occasion of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women. Remaining decisions and resolutions were adopted through silence procedure.

In the Political Declaration, Ministers and representatives of Governments welcomed progress made, but also recognized that:

- No country had fully achieved gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls, and that overall, progress had not been fast or deep enough.
- Major gaps remained and new challenges had emerged which require intensified efforts in the implementation of the Platform for Action and its 12 critical areas of concern.

Governments reaffirmed the primary responsibility of the Commission for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. They also reaffirmed the Commission's catalytic role in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, in promoting and monitoring gender mainstreaming within the United Nations system, and in coordinating the implementation and monitoring of the Platform for Action.

I am also pleased to report that the Commission agreed to a multi-year programme of work which the Council adopted through silence procedure in the absence of in-person meetings. The multi-year programme of work sets out the priority and review themes for 2021 to 2024. With regard to the priority theme, the Commission will consider:

- "Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls" during the sixty-fifth session in 2021;
- "Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls in the context of climate change, environmental and disaster risk reduction policies and programmes" for the sixty-sixth session in 2022;
- "Innovation and technological change, and education in the digital age for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls" for the sixty-seventh session in 2023;
- "Accelerating the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender perspective" for the sixty-eighth session in 2024.

In addition to the consensus adoption of the Political Declaration and multi-year programme of work, the Commission decided to take note of the report of its Working Group on Communications and to include it in the present report in its entirety. The Commission also adopted a resolution entitled "Women, the girl child and HIV and AIDS" and a resolution entitled "Release of women and children taken hostage, including those subsequently imprisoned, in armed conflicts". On 14 July the Commission concluded its 64<sup>th</sup> session in a virtual meeting.

We will be preparing for the sixty-fifth session within the evolving context of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on intergovernmental processes, as well as its disproportionate impact on the lives and livelihoods of women and girls. I look forward to working with the Bureau and UN-Women, the Commission's substantive Secretariat, to ensure that CSW will continue to build synergies for the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls.

I thank you for your attention.