



2011 SUBSTANTIVE SESSION COORDINATION SEGMENT

Panel II

“Countering gender discrimination and negative gender stereotypes: effective policy responses”

Wednesday, 13 July, 3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

CONCEPT NOTE

Background and context

Gender stereotypes are increasingly identified as a significant constraint to the achievement of the goals of gender equality and the empowerment of women in all areas. Stereotypical assumptions about appropriate gender roles perpetuate unequal power relations between men and women, resulting in unequal sharing of responsibilities and inequalities in access to resources and decision-making, and limit both women and men in achieving their full potential. Gender stereotypes are reflected in social and cultural norms and in the law, political structures and social and economic policies.

The 2010 Ministerial Declaration outlined a series of gender-related policy measures that are considered essential to achieving the internationally agreed development goals. Discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes which perpetuate discrimination against women and stereotypical roles of men and women was highlighted in the Declaration as one of several cross-cutting issues that need to be addressed for the achievement of the goals of gender equality and women’s empowerment.

Objective and proposed focus of the panel

A panel discussion could be held during the 2011 Coordination segment of ECOSOC to address the issue of gender stereotypes, given their role in hindering the implementation of all the critical areas of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. Member States have raised the question of the impact of discriminatory and stereotypical attitudes and practices and the need to explicitly address them. Discussion could focus on the efforts that are in place, by different stakeholders, to address gender stereotypes, in a range of areas, and what should be done to strengthen such efforts at the global, regional and national levels so that policy recommendations are more effectively implemented.

Some possible questions could include:

●How can intergovernmental bodies contribute in a more coordinated manner to identifying and addressing gender stereotypes, which constrain progress in achieving the goals established in the Platform for Action?

●In what ways can the United Nations system better support Governments and other stakeholders in implementing a range of strategies at the national level, including awareness-raising campaigns aimed at challenging gender stereotypes and discriminatory attitudes? How can different stakeholders be encouraged to ensure that men and boys are increasingly targeted in efforts to tackle discrimination against women and to promote gender equality?

●What steps can be taken to effectively strengthen partnerships between Governments, the international community, civil society, including non-governmental organizations and the private sector, and academia, aimed at eliminating gender stereotypes?

●What measures should be taken by the international community to further support country-led efforts to implement comprehensive approaches to dispelling stereotypes on women's capacity to assume leadership roles and participate fully in political and economic processes at all levels? What other areas should receive priority attention?

Panelists:

H.E. Mr. Abulkalam Abdul Momen, Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, New York (Chair)

Ms. Lakshmi Puri, ASG for Intergovernmental Support and Strategic Partnerships, UN Women (panelist and Moderator)

H.E. Ms. Sagufta Yasmin, MP, Bangladesh

Ms. Sarah Cook, Director, UNRISD

Ms. Jane Hodges, Director, Bureau for Gender Equality, ILO

Ms. Jane Connors, Chief, Special Procedures Branch, OHCHR

Ms. Dorcas Coker-Appiah, Executive Director of Gender Studies and Human Rights Documentation Centre, Ghana