

Commission on the Status of Women

Sixty-first session

13 – 24 March 2017

Women's Economic Empowerment in the Changing World of Work

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. **(CSW 60 AC, para 1)**

2. The Commission reaffirms that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto as well as other relevant conventions and treaties provide an international legal framework and a comprehensive set of measures for realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms by all women and girls throughout their life cycle. **(Based on CSW60 AC, para 2)** The Commission confirms the importance of relevant International Labour Organization (ILO) conventions for the realization of women's and girls' right to work and rights at work. **The Commission also confirms the importance of governments as duty bearers to uphold girls' rights to freedom of a childhood, fair wages, and reasonable work. The Commission recognizes the threats to women's and girls' rights to safety and fair labor, including but not limited to a lack of regulations regarding child labor, lack of safety when traveling to and from work, and harassment in the workforce. The Commission reaffirms the vitality of the full completion of primary, secondary and tertiary education of girls, which should be prioritized. Girls should be protected in the workforce; however, they should also not be forced to work because of economic or familial necessity. (Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 1)**

3. The Commission reaffirms the commitments to gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls made at relevant United Nations summits and

conferences. **(Based on CSW60 AC, para 4)** The Commission welcomes the contribution of the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Women's Economic Empowerment. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 4)**

4. The Commission emphasizes that women's and girls' economic and social empowerment is essential for 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. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 2, 46)**

5. The Commission emphasizes that women's economic empowerment including women's right to decent work and full and productive employment is a critical means of implementation of SDG 5 on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls. **The Commission also recognizes the importance of social empowerment of girls, enforcing that girls access to and completion of primary, secondary, and tertiary education ensures their economic empowerment. (Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 2)**

6. The Commission affirms that the achievement of SDG 5 targets, namely: end all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere; eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation; eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation; recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate; ensure women's and girls' full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life; and ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights as agreed 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; are all vital enablers of women's and girls' economic, familial, and social empowerment in the changing world of work. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 2, and SDG 5)**

7. The Commission recognizes that worldwide, gender inequalities in labour markets and the world of work persist. It also recognizes that the pace and scale of transformation towards realizing women's and girls' economic and social empowerment in a changing world of work has been unacceptably slow and has impeded the realization of women's and girls' full potential and their human rights. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 9, 46 and 47)**

8. The Commission expresses its concern especially about the continuance of significant gender gaps in labour force participation and leadership, wages and income, pensions, as well as occupational segregation, social norms and workplace culture, unequal working conditions and women's and girls' burden of unpaid domestic and care work, gaps in social protection, and the growing informality and precarious nature of women's and girls' employment and the effect this has on girls in the household. When mothers are forced to work, girls assume the role of the mother and are pulled away from their education. The Commission emphasizes the importance of girls' education versus the current assumption and practice that girls will step into the role of the mother in order to ensure their mother's economic empowerment. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 6, 9, 15)**

9. The Commission also recognizes that structural barriers to women's and girls' economic and social empowerment can be compounded by multiple and intersecting forms of inequalities and discrimination in the private and public spheres, and that these barriers are exacerbated in conflict and post-conflict, refugee and humanitarian settings, as well as disability. Women and girls who are displaced are often left to look after the family instead of girls receiving the education they need to help ensure the fulfilment of their economic, social, and political rights. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 9 and 10)**

10. The Commission also affirms that the acceleration of the transformation of the world of work and significantly enhancing the enabling environment for women's and girls' economic and social empowerment will help achieve exponential economic growth, end poverty in all its forms everywhere and ensure the wellbeing of all, leaving no woman or girl behind in the changing world of work and technology. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 46 and 47)**

11. The Commission recalls its consideration of "the empowerment of indigenous women" as its focus area at its sixty-first session. It also recalls its Multi-year programme of work for 2016-2019 according to which it will consider "Challenges and opportunities in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls" as its priority theme at its sixty-second session, as indigenous and rural women and girls are often excluded and underrepresented. **(Based on E/RES/2016/3)**

12. The Commission, in order to transform the world of work for women and girls, considers it essential to: strengthen normative and legal frameworks for full employment and decent work for all women; implement economic and social policies for women's and girls' economic empowerment; address the growing informality of work and mobility of women and girl workers; manage technological and digital

change for women's **and girls'** economic empowerment; strengthen women's **and girls'** collective voice **as they are the only ones who truly understand their situations**, leadership and decision-making; and strengthen private sector role in women's economic empowerment. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 47, and headers in para 49)**

13. The Commission urges governments, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, international and regional organizations, women's **and girls'** and other civil society organizations, and the private sector, to take the following actions at the national, regional, and global levels:

Strengthening normative and legal frameworks for full employment and decent work for all women

(a) Achieve universal ratification without reservations and full implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and relevant ILO conventions and recommendations; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (a))**

(b) Strengthen laws and regulatory frameworks that prohibit discrimination against women **and girls** regarding entry into the labour market and terms and conditions of employment, and provide means of redress in cases of non-compliance; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (c))**

(c) Strengthen and enforce laws and workplace policies that prohibit discrimination in the recruitment, retention and promotion of women **and girls** in the public and private sectors, and provide means of redress in cases of non-compliance; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (d))**

(d) Undertake legislative and administrative reforms to ensure **girls' and** women's equal access to and ownership and control over productive resources and assets, such as land and other forms of property, financial resources, inheritance, natural resources and information and communications technologies; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (f))**

(e) Eliminate occupational segregation by addressing discriminatory social norms and promoting women's **and girls'** equal participation in labour markets, education and training **from primary school through a woman's work life-cycle**, and encourage women **and girls** to diversify their occupational choices and enter jobs in emerging fields and growing economic sectors; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (e))**

(f) Enact and enforce laws and regulations that uphold the principle of equal pay for work of equal value, in compliance with international labour standards, such as ILO Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951, (No. 100), and provide means of redress; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (m))**

(g) Ratify and implement ILO Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), and enact and enforce laws and regulations that give effect to ILO Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) and Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156), and other relevant ILO Conventions for the realization of women's **and girls'** right to work and women's **and girls'** right at work; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 1, 49 (p) and para 49 (t))**

(h) Strengthen and enforce laws and policies to eliminate violence and harassment against women **and girls** in the workplace and support the development of an ILO instrument that provides an international standard to address violence and harassment against women **and** in the world of work; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (g))**

(i) Take special measures to ensure that women **and girls** who experience multiple and intersecting forms of inequalities, discrimination and marginalization have equal opportunities for decent, good quality work in the public and private sectors; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (h)) Provide additional trainings and opportunities to said women and girls, allowing for a higher rate of success and inclusion.**

(j) Create an international standard for decent, good work that is not demoralizing, dehumanizing, abusive, or forced, so that all nations will be held to the same standards of rights and inclusion.

(k) Girls should not be forced into the workforce because of familial poverty and other economic constraints. However, girls should be as equally encouraged as boys to join the workforce as adults and nurtured to do so. Emphasis should be placed on equality of opportunities for women and men in the workforce.>

(l) Create a space for girls and women to learn important skills that will make them valuable in the workforce.

Implementing economic and social policies for women's economic empowerment

(j) Implement and monitor the impact of macroeconomic policies and reforms for job creation and the promotion of women's full, **safe**, equal and productive employment and decent work; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (i))**

(k) Create decent, good quality jobs for women in the care economy in the public and private sectors **as well as promote girls education so they are not subjected to the labor force; (Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (k))**

(l) Expand and reprioritize fiscal expenditures for social protection and care infrastructure, such as early childhood education and health care, as a means of addressing the motherhood pay penalty; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (l))**

(m) Establish universal social protection floors, in line with ILO Social Protection Floors recommendation, 2012 (No. 202), as part of national social protection systems to ensure access to social protection for all, including workers outside the formal economy, and progressively achieve higher levels of protection in line with ILO social security standards **and these inalienable rights should not be compromised especially for women and girls; (Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (o))**

(n) Ensure that both women and men have access to maternity or parental leave allowances and are not discriminated against when availing themselves of such benefits; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49**

(p))

(o) Undertake targeted measures to recognize, reduce and redistribute women's disproportionate burden of unpaid care and domestic work, through flexibility in working arrangements without reductions in labour and social protections, and the provision of infrastructure, technology and public services, such as accessible and quality childcare and care facilities for children and other dependents, **ensure girls are considered in such measures and are not additionally impacted by the burden of unpaid work which already shapes their educational and economic mobility; there should be no disparity in terms of pay due to gender and workforces should provide flexibility for women workers; (E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (q))**

(p) Systematically measure and incorporate the value of unpaid care and domestic work in the calculation of GDP and the formulation of economic and social policies; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (r))**

(q) Prioritize the entry into and advancement in labour markets of **girls** by ensuring access to education and technical and vocational skills training and eliminating the barriers **girls face in completing primary and secondary school as well as the barriers** girls and women face in the transition from school to work, **education should**

be of utmost importance for girls as well as professional schools which would teach worldly skills; (E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (s))

Addressing the growing informality of work and mobility of women workers

(r) Make women's informal employment in domestic work, home-based work and small and medium-sized enterprises, as well as other own-account and part-time work more economically viable by extending social protection and minimum living wages, and promoting the transition to formal employment in line with ILO Transition from the Informal to the Formal Economy Recommendation, 2015 (No. 204); **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (t))**

(s) Adopt national migration policies that are gender responsive, protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for women migrant workers, regulate the role of private intermediaries and labour brokers in migration, and enforce laws against trafficking **and laws promoting girls education**; (E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (u))

(t) Strengthen synergies between international migration and development by ensuring safe, orderly and regular migration policies that uphold women's **and girls'** human rights in the context

of implementation of the New York Declaration for Refugees and Migrants (General Assembly resolution 71/1) **so they are no longer subjected to the poor conditions that refugees must endure**; (E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (v))

(u) Improve collection and analysis of data on the informal economy, disaggregated by sex, income, age, race, ethnicity, migratory status, disability, geographic location and other relevant factors, using the ILO definition of informality **as tracking this data will allow for the understanding of the causes and eradication of it all together**; (E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (w))

Managing technological and digital change for women's economic empowerment

(v) Support women's, particularly young women's **and girls'**, access to skills and **quality** training in new and emerging fields, especially science, technology,

engineering and mathematical education and digital fluency, by expanding the **access and** scope of education and training opportunities **as well as by ensuring that girls have equal access, training and encouragement to these fields in primary, secondary education and tertiary education;** (E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (x))

(w) Ensure universal access to skills, knowledge, information and communications technologies that are economically, geographically, linguistically and virtually accessible to women **and girl** workers, as well as increased broadband and mobile phone access for women **and girls, and encourage and promote girls' education in computer and information technology to increase girls' presence and participation in the technology sector;** (E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (y))

(x) Encourage **and promote** productive technological change in support of decent, good quality public and private sector jobs for women **and girls** in the green economy, especially in the area of climate change mitigation and adaptation, **while recognizing that issues like climate change disproportionately affect women and girls and that they are thus key stakeholders in its mitigation;**(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (z))

Strengthening women's collective voice, leadership and decision-making

(y) Enact policies and special measures to ensure equal representation and leadership of women in economic decision-making structures and institutions, as well as in enterprises and on corporate boards; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (n))**

(z) Protect the rights to freedom of association and collective bargaining to enable women **and girl** workers, including informal and migrant workers, to organize and join unions and participate in economic decision-making and design of policies for the world of work; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (aa))**

(aa) Support tripartite collaboration among Governments, employers and women **and girl** workers and their organizations to prevent and redress gender inequalities in the world of work; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (bb))**

(bb) Encourage and support women's **and girls'** leadership in trade unions and workers' organizations and urge all trade union leaders to effectively represent the interests of women **and girl** workers; **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (cc))**

Strengthening private sector role in women's economic empowerment

(cc) Establish and strengthen compliance mechanisms that hold the private sector accountable for advancing gender equality and women's **and girls'** economic empowerment as articulated in the Women's Empowerment Principles established by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Global Compact; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (dd), CSW60 AC, para (h))**

(dd) Increase the share of trade and procurement from women's enterprises, cooperatives and self-help groups in both the public and private sectors; **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (ee))**

(ee) Systematically undertake gender-sensitive value chain analyses to inform the design and implementation of policies that promote and protect women's **and girls'** rights and decent work in global value chains. **(E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (ff))**

14. The Commission calls upon Governments to integrate these actions for women's **and girls'** economic empowerment in the changing world of work into national sustainable development, poverty eradication and sectoral strategies, policies and action plans at all levels. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (b), CSW 60 AC, para 25)**

15. The Commission calls upon Governments to strengthen the capacity, resources and the authority of national gender equality mechanisms so that they can support and monitor the implementation of these actions and work effectively with all relevant national and local institutions including labour related institutions in their implementation. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (b), CSW 60 AC, para 24 and 25)**

16. The Commission calls upon Governments and all other stakeholders to significantly increase and maximize targeted financing to accelerate the achievement of women's **and girls'** economic empowerment in the changing world of work at all levels through all sources of funding, public and private, domestic resources and official development assistance. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 49 (j))**

17. The Commission encourages men and boys to take an active part in, and to engage fully as agents and beneficiaries of change in the realization of women's **and girls'** economic empowerment in the changing world of work. **(Based on CSW(AC) para 22)**

18. The Commission calls upon the United Nations system, and especially UN-Women and the International Labour Organization within their respective mandates, to support the implementation of the present Agreed Conclusions and of the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda. It 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 Member States, upon their request, in coordinating the United Nations system and in mobilizing civil society, the private sector 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 2030 Agenda. **(Based on E/CN.6/2017/3, para 48, and CSW60 AC, para 28)**

19. The Commission calls on all stakeholders to make extraordinary, strong and unrelenting efforts and investments and take special measures to accelerate the realization of, and make measurable progress on **girls' education and women's and girls' economic empowerment**, their right to work and their rights at work and to full and productive employment by 2020 as a milestone on the way to the gender-responsive realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and to mark the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women