

**Commission on the Status of Women
Seventieth session
9-19 March 2026**

Ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including by promoting inclusive and equitable legal systems, eliminating discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and addressing structural barriers

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of its subsequent reviews and commits to further strengthening their implementation.
2. The Commission reiterates that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, human rights conventions, treaties and declarations, including 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 the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome documents of its reviews, 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 their human rights and fundamental freedoms throughout their life course.
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 and that their follow-up processes will make a crucial contribution to a gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.
4. The Commission expresses deep concern that women and girls globally continue to face barriers to justice, resulting in persistent disadvantage in accessing remedies and protection. It notes that access to justice challenges persist where justice systems do not fully reflect the lived realities of women and girls, including discriminatory laws, implementation gaps and other structural barriers affecting the realization of rights in law and in practice. The Commission acknowledges that ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls across the life cycle, is fundamental for the achievement of 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.
5. 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, inter alia, women's organizations, youth-led organizations, feminist groups, faith-based organizations, the private sector and national human rights institutions, where they exist to take the following urgent actions to strengthen access to justice for all women and girls by 2030:

Transformative law reform:

- a) Ratify or accede to, as soon as possible, all international human rights instruments and their optional protocols, in particular, CEDAW and review all reservations to those treaties with a view to withdrawing them or narrowing their scope;
- b) Accelerate compliance with Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.1.1 as well as SDG Targets 16.3 and 16.b by strengthening legal frameworks to promote, enforce and monitor equality and non-discrimination, including by eliminating and replacing discriminatory nationality laws and addressing gaps in legislation regarding gender-based violence;
- c) Undertake comprehensive legislative reviews of national legal frameworks to identify and repeal gender discriminatory provisions inconsistent with international legal norms and standards;

- d) Strengthen the capacity of relevant government entities, including legislative bodies, to systematically integrate a gender equality approach across all stages of the legislative process;
- e) Institutionalize gender-impact assessments and post-enactment evaluations for all new laws and regulations;
- f) Ensure that all new laws related to the achievement of gender equality are costed and that sufficient resources are allocated to ensure their effective implementation;
- g) Ensure that legislative processes are participatory and inclusive by engaging with civil society, including feminist groups and women's rights organizations;
- h) Adopt laws and other time-bound targeted policies in order to achieve gender parity in decision-making positions at all levels of public administration and the judiciary, including through temporary special measures, where appropriate;
- i) Ensure the meaningful and balanced participation of gender experts in national delegations to UN intergovernmental processes, including in the negotiations for a convention on crimes against humanity;

Coordination:

- j) Adopt accountable, whole-of-government justice strategies that integrate and coordinate all relevant ministries and entities involved in the administration of justice for women and girls;
- k) Establish effective pathways to link the police, courts, prosecution services, legal aid, child protection services, health and social service providers so as to enable timely and beneficial responses;
- l) Integrate justice and gender indicators into economic, peace and development frameworks at the global, regional and national levels in order to promote policy coherence and accountability;
- m) Enhance coordination with and strengthen regional and international human rights mechanisms, gender commissions and special procedure mandate holders;

Prevention:

- n) Ensure that all justice systems are guided by the lived realities, needs and rights of women and girls, focusing on institutions that are accessible, timely, affordable and solution oriented;
- o) Reaffirm Member State obligations in accordance with international law to exercise due diligence to prevent acts of violence against all women and girls, investigate such acts, prosecute perpetrators, punish those responsible, and to ensure victims' access to reparations;
- p) Ensure the accessibility of justice mechanisms to prevent and remedy violations of sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights;
- q) Ensure that administrative mechanisms and mediation services for justice delivery are gender-responsive and human rights-compliant;
- r) Reaffirm the role of national machineries for gender equality and national human rights institutions, where they exist, for addressing discrimination and preventing further violations;
- s) Ensure the provision of continuous professional development for justice system actors in order to close substantive knowledge gaps and mitigate gender bias, including on credibility assessments;
- t) Conduct continuous training and put in place oversight systems to ensure that officers and staff in the justice sector uphold gender-equality standards and foster a culture of accountability;
- u) Integrate public legal education into national curricula and community learning programs to promote awareness of human rights, gender equality and non-discrimination standards;

Funding:

- v) Increase domestic allocations for a gender-responsive justice sector and track funding, per SDG Indicator 5.c.1;
- w) Resource traditional justice mechanisms that are compliant with international human rights obligations and standards;
- x) Provide resources to institutions that provide trauma-informed and survivor-centred justice and social services, including shelters for victim-survivors of violence;
- y) Establish funding mechanisms such as a dedicated reparations fund for victim-survivors of violence, including targeted support for marginalized populations;
- z) Ensure funding for institutional justice facilities and services for women and girls with disabilities, such as universally accessible physical infrastructure and removal of language barriers;
- aa) Integrate dedicated funding for women's and girls' access to justice through gender-responsive foreign policy frameworks;

Justice mechanisms:

- bb) Ensure accountability for the most serious crimes under international law, especially those that disproportionately affect women and girls, including through international justice mechanisms.
- cc) Ensure that transitional and international justice mechanisms are gender-responsive in their design and implementation, including through the provision of adequate resources to comprehensively address gender-based violations and crimes, including sexual and reproductive violence, in a survivor-centred manner;
- dd) Undertake gender-responsive administrative reparations programmes to address the volume of need, without prejudicing avenues for judicial remedy;
- ee) Guarantee the meaningful participation of women, including women's organizations and organizations of victim-survivors, in all stages of justice processes, including in leadership positions;
- ff) Ensure that traditional justice mechanisms are gender-responsive in their design and implementation;

Autonomous feminist movements and civil society:

- gg) Recognize and engage with broad-based and intergenerational feminist groups, women's rights organizations and civil society organizations as essential partners in advancing access to justice as part of a whole-of-society approach tackling structural barriers;
- hh) Ensure an enabling environment for the work of women's rights organizations, including the protection of civic space and women human rights defenders;
- ii) Sustain core, predictable, flexible and multi-year funding for feminist groups, women's rights organizations and civil society organizations engaged in access to justice initiatives for women and girls;

Legal aid and legal empowerment:

- jj) Ensure that effective legal aid services are accessible for all women and girls, including the availability of specialized lawyers and staff with expertise in responding to violence against women, as well as legal aid provision for marginalized groups, such as women in detention;

kk) Waive fees to facilitate women's access to the formal justice system, as well as simplifying legal procedures where possible;

ll) Formally recognize, within national frameworks, non-lawyer community justice workers or paralegals, and ensure that they are subject to professional oversight and safeguards, in order to reach women and girls seeking to resolve justice problems;

Technology and digital innovations:

mm) Harness technology to scale-up access to justice for women and girls, while maintaining offline alternatives;

nn) Address the gender digital divide for online justice services and information by investing in connectivity, digital literacy and access to devices;

oo) Develop and enforce human-rights-based frameworks for digital justice, including data protection, transparency and algorithmic accountability;

pp) Encourage collaboration between Governments, technology providers and civil society to promote responsible innovation in the justice field and intentional design that enhances fairness and inclusion and that includes diverse teams to develop justice-related artificial intelligence tools;

Research, data and evidence:

qq) Invest in national statistical systems and justice-sector data collection, ensuring that data are gender disaggregated as well as by other characteristics relevant in national contexts for comprehensive metrics;

rr) Establish partnerships among governments, national human rights institutions, where they exist, academia and civil society to identify gaps and challenges and generate research for gender-responsive justice systems *inter alia* to co-create research agendas;

ss) Institutionalize evidence use in policy formulation and invest in data systems as a bulwark against misinformation and to track rights protection, including on sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights;

tt) Expand global and regional repositories of gender-justice data, including a focus on femicide, accessible to policymakers, researchers and advocates for comparative analysis and accountability.

6. The Commission reaffirms its primary role in the follow-up to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and underscores the need to integrate gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls throughout national, regional, and global reviews of the 2030 Agenda, and ensuring strong synergies between both frameworks.

7. The Commission calls upon United Nations system entities, within their respective mandates, to support Member States, upon request, in ensuring and strengthening access to justice for all women and girls, including through the promotion of inclusive and equitable legal systems, the elimination of discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, and the addressing of structural barriers, and further calls upon UN Women to continue to play a central role in this effort by promoting gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls through support to Governments and national gender equality mechanisms, coordination of the United Nations system, and mobilization of relevant stakeholders, including civil society, legal aid providers, public administration, and the judiciary 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.