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Stakeholder Forum-Commission on the Status of Women
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Panel 4

Participation and leadership of women's organizations and gender equality advocates in the monitoring and implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

Thanks to the moderator for giving me the floor and for UN Women for having me here. We feel that the stakeholder forum has in the last years proven itself as an effective tool in preparing us for our discussions at CSW so are very pleased to be able to contribute to the discussion here.

This year it is particularly relevant as we are grappling with some very key institutional question on how to effectively follow up on and monitor the implementation of the new framework. This is not a question only for gender equality but for the agenda as a whole. And this is not only a global question but also a very important one at the national level.

But as with most challenges it also includes an opportunity.

I say this as I think it is important that we challenge the premise, the fundamental way we are working, particularly on gender equality. Because lets be frank. Our success in many other fields has been greater than what we have seen on gender equality.

In our view one of the reasons for this is that gender equality is not central or integrated into our considerations of other issues. It is seen as an objective in of itself but not a fundamental and underlying issue across our work.

One of the key successes of Agenda 2030 is that it moves us away from this silo approach. We are no longer dealing with questions of the economy and labor market in one corner and the environment in the other. And gender equality as a side note. We have recognized the integrated and interdependent nature of all these issues.

So we have to make sure that we don't fall into the same silo way of working that we have so far in our implementation and follow up.

So in the same way that gender equality is integrated through the agenda we have to do the same with our work with civil society that works on gender equality. In addition to ensuring consultations between gender machineries and civil society working on gender equality we have to make sure that those bodies working on energy, consumption, education and oceans consult them as well. Otherwise we will not be able to truly deliver at the national level.

At the global level we feel that the successful way that the consultations in the open working group and on Agenda 2030 were examples of how we can capitalize on the wealth of experience and knowledge not only civil society but academia and other experts brought to the table.

To not have them involved in the follow up to the outcome seems counterproductive to us. One of the key benefits of Agenda 2030 is that its not only owned by governments but by everyone. To maintain this ownership we need to ensure that civil society is included in a systematic way in our follow up at the global level.

The Commission plays a key role here. It provides us with the opportunity to examine the framework from a gender perspective and in an in depth way that other forums will not provide. The increased focus that we decided last year to give to implementation of our commitments at CSW is crucial. Iceland would be supportive of moving even further in that direction. We need to maximize the benefit we can derive of bringing together all these experts from governments and civil society in as unique of a forum as CSW is.

But in the same way that we can not leave this to the gender machineries at the national level, we can not pat ourselves on the back and say "CSW will take care of it". Civil society working on gender equality needs to be involved across the system in supporting the follow up on the framework as a whole. Otherwise we will not be able to fulfill our commitment of a truly global agenda that leaves no one behind.