



Interactive dialogue on the priority theme

Building alliances for women's full and effective participation in public life

Wednesday, 17 March 2021, 4.00 – 6.00 p.m., Informal virtual meeting

Overview

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action recognizes that all people have the equal right to participate in their country's government through public office and informal leadership, calls for power-sharing between men and women, and highlights women's equal access to and full participation in decision-making as critical for achieving gender equality. The Commission on the Status of Women has reaffirmed the commitments made in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development and emphasized the mutually reinforcing relationship between the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Platform for Action and the gender-responsive implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Despite women's increased engagement in public life, women remain significantly underrepresented in all aspects of decision-making. The feminization of poverty and women's limited access to finance and greater share of care duties limit their full participation. The Platform for Action commits States to take actions to ensure women's equal access to and full participation in all spheres of public life, and highlights gender balance in decision-making as critical for achieving gender equality. It promotes building alliances across generations and with women's groups, networks and community-based organizations to attain transformative change for women and girls around the world.

Collaboration and alliance building between women in political office, women's groups in civil society and other stakeholders, has been crucial for gender equality gains. Non-governmental actors, especially women's organizations, have advocated to advance legislation and public policies, and their funding and implementation. Other actors, such as the media, academia, trade unions and the private sector also contribute to this common goal. As allies of women's

movements, men have demonstrated how their involvement in achieving gender equality can go a long way in contributing to changing social norms and enable women's participation in decision-making.

The interactive dialogue will bring together a broad range of stakeholders that will include parliamentarians, representatives of national human rights institutions, the UN system, civil society, men's organizations, functional commissions, the private sector, sports and the media, to highlight their contributions to strengthening women's voice, agency, participation and leadership from the perspective of their institutional background.

Format and participation

The interactive dialogue will be chaired by [TBC by the Bureau], Vice-Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women. A moderator will support the Chair to direct the dialogue and ensure its interactive nature using a set of guiding questions. Panelists are expected to share examples of steps taken in different national contexts to build impactful alliances to support women's participation and leadership in different fields.

The floor will then be open for contributions and comments from Member States, as well as other stakeholders, in an interactive dialogue. The moderator will wrap up and the chair will close the meeting.

Leading questions

Participating stakeholders in the interactive dialogue are invited to address the following questions:

- What are concrete examples of alliances built to enhance women's participation and leadership and to tackle structural barriers such as the feminization of poverty? As a result of such organizing and mobilization, what policies and programmes have been developed and implemented by different actors?
- What has been the impact of alliances and what results have been achieved? How did stakeholders work together to sustain results and continued engagement?
- Which alliances can be built to overcome inequalities within and among countries, including developmental disparities, to promote women's participation everywhere?
- How did stakeholders ensure that trust, dedication and mutual interests within alliances have been taken on board and that no one is left behind?

Outcome

The outcome of the interactive dialogue will be in the form of a Chair's summary, prepared in consultation with the regional groups through the members of the Bureau.