



## SLOVENIA

*Check against delivery!*

**Statement by H.E. Martina VUK, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Family  
Social Affairs and Equal Opportunity**

**at the 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

**14 March 2018**

Madam Chair,  
Distinguished delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Slovenia's aligns itself with the statement delivered by Bulgaria on behalf of the European Union.

Almost four decades have passed since the CEDAW Convention has been adopted and it has been more than two decades since the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. All these important documents, together with other milestones, such as 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, placed gender equality and empowerment of women and girls firmly at the centre of the human rights discussions. Therefore, they remain a powerful source of guidance and inspiration on the long road towards gender equality worldwide, no matter how many years have passed.

In the era of global movements with strong supporters and clear agenda, such as #metoo or #time's up, it is important to build alliances with relevant stakeholders and open new opportunities to reconnect, regenerate commitment and charge up political will. These movements are a loud and strong reminder that our work is far from finished; we need to collectively use their momentum and accelerate our efforts to achieve concrete results.

I welcome various panel discussions and debates of this 62nd session of the CSW on the priority theme which was in the centre of our attention 5 years ago: gender equality and the empowerment of rural women and girls. Indeed, to accomplish the common goal set in several documents and to diminish gender-based inequalities, it is necessary to pay attention again to this particular group of women and girls, to their specific situations and discriminations in order to fulfil our common pledge of leaving no one behind.

Madam Chair,

Slovenia remains deeply committed to the high international, EU and national standards of gender equality, which are set up and operationalised in our gender equality national programme as well as in Slovenia's Development Strategy by 2030.

Slovenia tends to rate high in various gender equality indexes. However, there is always room for improvement. While we can track significant progress in certain areas, such as political decision-making, employment and work-life balance, many challenges remain. Fully eliminating obstacles preventing rural women and girls to reach their full potential and opportunities is one of them.

Madam Chair,

Empowering women economically is a precondition for gender equality. Thus equal economic independence is one of the priorities for Slovenia's gender equality policy. Despite certain positive trends regarding the situation of rural women in Slovenia, the majority of land and farm owners are still men; the highest positions in agriculture chambers and organisations are held by men in vast majority; in contrast, women do majority of invisible/reproductive work, including taking care for children and elderly, that is not recognized and adequately rewarded; rural women are at a higher risk of poverty and social exclusion; traditional gender roles and stereotypes hinder and limit women's and girls' life choices and opportunities.

Therefore, Slovenia devotes special attention to rural women, as one of the groups at higher risk for social exclusion. Specific programmes and projects are carried out to improve the quality of life, working conditions and economic independence of rural women, for example: (1) to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against all women, (2) to improve access to health-care services, including sexual and reproductive health care and services, (3) to encourage participation in political and public life, and (4) to overcome gender stereotypes and traditional gender roles. Several local administrations have adopted gender equality action plans, considering specific position and role of rural women and women on farms. Rural women in Slovenia are organised under the umbrella civil society organisation called "Association of Rural Women", supporting various activities of and for women on farms and rural women at local levels. In cooperation with the Association and the Government, the regional conference on rural women and girls will be held in Slovenia this April, presenting and discussing good practices in several Central and Eastern European countries. Further policy development regarding rural women will be informed also by results of a special survey on everyday work and life of rural women in Slovenia, carried out by my ministry this year.

Madam Chair,

let me conclude by saying that we are here to build on the progress achieved, identify challenges ahead and take actions towards meeting gender equality goals for all women and girls. This must be a matter of joint responsibility and mutual accountability - a task of both, women and men, working together, leaving no one behind.

Thank you.