



SLOVENIA

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Statement by

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at the 63rd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

13th March 2019

Madam Chair,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honor for me to be here and address the Commission today. I welcome the priority theme for this year's session which gives us opportunity to address a wide spectrum of issues of crucial importance for the empowerment of all women and girls.

Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and its member states and the statement delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends of Older Persons.

Madam Chair,

We gather here annually to address existing challenges and look for joint solutions to achieve our common goal – the full realization of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. But it is equally important to showcase good practices, celebrate successes and recognize courageous women and women of impact.

We are proud that Slovenia continues to be one of the highest-ranked countries in the world when it comes to gender equality, women's involvement and participation in all aspects of society.

Providing enabling environment for equal economic independence is one of the priorities for Slovenia's gender equality policy. This includes also maternity protection and parental policies that allow women to stay protected during the whole time of maternity and parental leave until they return to work. Slovenia offers generous maternity and parental leave, amounting to 365 days and the benefit paid is 100% of previous earnings. Mothers and fathers can equally share parental leave and additionally, a non-transferrable full paid paternity leave of 30 days is offered to the father.

Data shows that pay equality in Slovenia is among the highest in the EU. Furthermore, Slovenia has a high rate of employment of women, especially those with children. This is enabled and

supported by a well-developed system of public childcare and support services. Public, affordable and available childcare as well as after school daycare and subsidized school meals are provided which is an important factor in enabling women to participate full time in the labor market. As we have heard and repeated many times - empowering women economically is a precondition for gender equality everywhere.

Balanced representation in decision-making processes also remains priority area of equality policy and is addressed in the Resolution on the National Programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men 2015–2021.

Achieving gender equality and empowerment of women is not a priority only at home but also in our foreign policy, international development cooperation as well as in security and efforts to build and preserve peace

Equal opportunities, with special focus on gender equality, were set as a thematic priority of development cooperation in the Resolution on International Development Cooperation of Slovenia. Special attention is given to economic empowerment and economic and social rights, women in decision making, sexual and reproductive health and rights, and preventing and eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls. In 2019, Slovenia is financing 11 bilateral development projects, focused on empowering women and girls in the Western Balkans and Africa.

In November 2018 the Government of Slovenia adopted the second National Action Plan (NAP) for the implementation of the UNSC resolution on women, peace and security (for the period 2018-2020). Second NAP reinforces and stresses our commitment to and the importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security.

Madam Chair,

In Slovenia we can be proud about good social protection system that guarantees women access to public services. But we do not lack challenges as well and we actively work towards addressing them. Some of those areas include unequal division of care and household tasks, higher risk of poverty for older women, intimate partnership violence, etc.

Slovenia adopted several measures to address poverty and social exclusion of women, in particular women in single-parent families and older women in single households. Among others increasing the amount of the lowest pensions which in most cases are received by women and granting higher child benefits received by women in single-parent families.

As a result of intimate partner violence, women victims of violence often require tailored support of social protection programmes. Therefore, Slovenia is strengthening its capacities for sheltering victims of intimate partner violence with ensuring better access to facilities and services. Uneven access to support services across the country remains one of challenges, as shelters run by women's NGOs are concentrated in central Slovenia. Funds are provided to NGO programs, shelters, maternity homes and crisis centers.

Madam Chair,

Another important aspect that I wish to highlight today is women and girls access to sexual reproductive health and rights services. Slovenia has a long tradition of reliable and well organized reproductive healthcare. Available and free contraception is a part of public health service together with family-planning counselling. In connection with awareness raising and educational activities this results in very low rate of teenage pregnancies.

Organized cancer screening for women is also in place in the framework of the National Cancer Control programme and includes screening for breast and cervical cancer on a national scale.

As realization of sexual and reproductive health and rights is among cornerstones of gender equality, allow me to express full support of my country for all endeavours to ensure that women everywhere have the right and can decide freely on matters relating to their bodies and sexuality.

Madam Chair,

In conclusion - this and next year we will celebrate two important anniversaries. 40th anniversary of CEDAW presents an excellent opportunity to renew and increase our joint efforts for gender equality. We therefore encourage all states to fully implement this key instrument for ensuring full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms for all women and girls.

In 2020 we will celebrate the 25th anniversary of our joint commitment to accelerate the progress towards our common goals set up in the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. 2020 will also mark fifth year since the adoption of the 2030 Agenda where we, the member states jointly pledged to leave no women and girl behind. Now is the time to make good on our promises.

We have heard about bigger and smaller achievements but challenges concerning gender equality remain and must be adequately considered. I hope and I wish that we will be able to close this session with a sense of satisfaction and achievement at having taken another important step towards our common goal – the full realization of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

Thank you.