

Trade Union priorities for the CSW60 Draft Agreed Conclusions (March 15 version)

Overarching Comments

- The trade union delegation agrees with the consistent use of the phrase “realizing gender equality, human rights and empowerment of all women and girls” throughout the Agreed Conclusions. The aim of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is to achieve the full realization of women’s and girls’ human rights, in addition to their equality and empowerment. The three concepts are indivisible and should be reflected as such throughout the document. (See BPfA, para 2).
- The phrase “all women and girls” should be used throughout the document to ensure that no specific groups are left behind. Likewise, we agree with retaining references to multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination where they occur in the current draft.
- We seek the recognition of trade unions as distinct voices among civil society and, therefore, have recommended references to trade unions as stakeholders in a number of paragraphs (PP21, OP2, sub3, sub40, sub45, sub50, OP4, OP7)
- We disagree with proposed language that takes into account different national realities. Rights should be universally applicable – we would like PP18 to be deleted.
- We support strong language on Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, comprehensive sexuality education and language on sexual orientation and gender identity.

Education

Ensure the intention and spirit of the language in SDG4 on education is maintained: SDG 4 calls on States to ‘ensure inclusive and equitable quality education’, and target 4.1 is for girls and boys to ‘complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes’.

Also very important to underline the intrinsic value in educating girls, and that girls access and equitably participate in a full cycle of education (primary and secondary levels) in line with Strategic Objective 12 of the BPfA. Also reference language from CSW55 AC (para 6 states that education is a human right).

PP9. The Commission reaffirms that the realization of the right to education, especially for girls, **is a goal in itself**, contributes to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women, human rights, and sustainable development, and therefore women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education at all levels – early childhood, primary, secondary, tertiary, technical and vocational training.

sub18. Promote and protect women’s and girls’ right to education throughout their life cycle at all levels, especially for those most left behind, by providing universal access to **quality** basic education, ensuring inclusive, equitable and non-discriminatory quality education, and promoting learning opportunities for all, ensuring completion of primary **and secondary** education and eliminating gender disparities in access to all areas of **primary**, secondary and tertiary education, promoting financial literacy, ensuring that women and girls have equal access to **quality** career development, training, scholarships and fellowships, and by adopting positive action to build women’s and girls’ leadership skills and influence;

Economic Empowerment and Decent Work

SDG 8 commits states to “Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”. These agreed conclusions to make a clear link between women’s economic empowerment and access to safe, decent work. Language on recognizing and redistributing the burden of household responsibilities and unpaid care work must reinforce the need for public services such as education, child care, health care, water and sanitation, energy and transportation.

“Decent work” has been referenced in multiple CSW agreed conclusions (55, 57, 58). We note in particular AC 58 A (k) which addresses a number of key concepts.

PP10. The Commission recognizes that women’s economic rights, economic empowerment and independence are central to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It underlines the importance of undertaking legislative and administrative reforms to give women equal rights and access to economic and productive resources, including property and inheritance rights and equal opportunities with men and boys for **full and effective employment, safe and decent work.**

Language on pay equity is “equal pay for work of equal value”, as per SDG target 8.5; this concept includes equal pay for equal work, we do not accept that there should be a choice between the two, so we suggest using “and” rather than “or” in sub7.

sub7. Promote women’s **and girls’** economic rights and independence, women’s **and girls’** right to work and rights at work through gender-responsive policies and programmes that promote women’s economic empowerment, including **equal access to full employment** and decent work for all; promote equal pay for equal work **and** ~~or~~ work of equal value; invest in and empower women in productive sectors in the economy by **supporting universal public services, and supporting** women-led businesses, including by tailoring a range of approaches and instruments which facilitate access to finance, markets and trade;

sub8. Undertake legislation and administrative reforms to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work by prioritizing social protection policies **and significantly increase investment in care services**, including accessible and affordable **quality public** social services, ~~and~~ care services for children, persons with disabilities, older persons and persons living with HIV and AIDS, and all others in need of care, and promote the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men;

sub9. [Encourage the **public and** private sectors] to contribute to advancing gender equality, **and human rights** and the empowerment of **all** women and girls through striving to ensure women’s full and productive employment and decent work, equal pay for work of equal value and equal opportunities **and outcomes, healthy and safe workplaces, and equal access to power and decision-making**, respecting the right to organize in the work place and social dialogue as well as protecting ~~them~~ **women and girls** against discrimination, **violence** and abuse in the workplace;]

sub30. [[Ensure] that **all economic, social [and environmental]** policies contribute to **the achievement of** gender equality, **the empowerment of women and girls and [their human rights]** by eradicating poverty, promoting full and productive employment and decent work, **ensuring equal pay for work of equal value, the right to organize and bargain collectively** in the workplace and access to productive resources such as land and credit. Mobilize **[national and international]** resources to finance **universal** social protection, **public** infrastructure and essential services, **including quality child care, public** education and health **services, including sexual and** reproductive health care services, to reduce inequalities **[based on [gender], [sex], age, income, race, ethnicity, indigenous status,** religion, migration **and refugee** status, geographical location,

marital status, sexual orientation and gender identity, HIV/AIDS or health status, and disability, **among others or other status, particularly for the most marginalized women and girls**];

Public Services and Social Protection

Access to safe drinking water and hygiene is a critical part of SDG 6

*PP8 must retain reference to “universal social protection systems”. We also note a number of paragraphs, which contain references to core services (such as health services) or infrastructure – we strongly urge governments to include the term “public” to recognize that essential services must be publicly financed and delivered. We recommend including “public” in sub 15 (“strengthening of **public** health systems that make universally accessible and available quality comprehensive sexual and reproductive health-care services”), sub 20 (“and access to appropriate **public social services**,”)*

sub11. Urges governments to provide **universal and equitable** access to **adequate** and **equitable safe drinking water, sanitation and hygiene**, in particular in public facilities and buildings, paying special attention to the specific needs of women and girls; **to ensure the public provision of water and sanitation services**; to improve water management and wastewater treatment; [and to conduct awareness-raising campaigns to help break the taboo surrounding menstruation, which would enable women and girls to participate more actively in society];

sub45. Assess **Ensure that all** [~~and enhance where appropriate,~~] the effectiveness of public-private partnerships **undergo independent ex-ante and post assessments of their fiscal, environmental and social risks and impacts, including on gender equality, human rights and the empowerment of all women and girls. Establish an intergovernmental framework for partnership accountability and evaluation to ensure appropriate oversight.** in delivering [~~and take action to prevent~~] [~~or discriminatory impacts on~~] [~~discrimination against~~] women and girls; **Ensure that core public services including health and social care, education, water and sanitation, should be provided by governments with no public private partnership or blended finance involvement.**

Violence

Trade unions strongly support language that recognizes that gender-based violence occurs in all aspects of the lives of women and girls, including the workplace. Language should also make the link to the fact that violence is a major barrier to the realization of women's and girls' human rights.

PP13. The Commission strongly condemns all forms of violence against **all** women and girls. It expresses deep concern that discrimination and violence against women and girls continue to occur in all parts of the world, **across the life cycle, and in all spheres including the home, public spaces and the workplace;** and that all forms of violence against women and girls, including harmful practices [such as child, early, and forced marriage], **female genital mutilation, so-called honour crimes and femicide,** are impediments to the development of their full potential as equal partners with men and boys in all aspects of life, as well as obstacles to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals **and the full realization of all human rights of all women and girls..**

Include a reference to access to “public social services” in **sub 20.**

sub21. Design and implement national policies that aim to transform discriminatory social attitudes and harmful gender and cultural stereotypes and promote those which support gender equality, **in accordance with international human rights instruments;**

Labour Rights

Labour rights are human rights, and the agreed conclusion must recognize existing mechanisms for ensuring that public and private sector employers are accountable. At a minimum, these must include the ILO standards, in particular the Fundamental Principles & Rights at Work, the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, and relevant environmental and health standards. The Women's Empowerment Principles do not have the same force or mechanisms for accountability, nor were they developed in conjunction with governments and trade unions as are ILO standards.

sub43. [~~Promote~~]~~enable~~ **Ensure** a socially responsible and accountable private sector **through regulation based on** [~~that meets~~] [~~acts in line with~~] gender equality, and human rights [~~and labour, environmental and health~~] standards, [~~for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and the realization of their full and equal enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms,~~] including [, among others,] the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, **ex ante and periodic human rights impact assessment of trade and investment**

agreements and termination of investor-state dispute settlement clauses, the [labor standards] **and** [fundamental principles and rights at work] of the ILO and Women's Empowerment Principles, **through compliance with ILO conventions** [and other ongoing initiatives in this regard];

Financing and Taxation

PP15. Add “public” before “financial resources” to read “mobilization of public financial resources”

~~sub27. Work for a significant~~ **Significantly** increase in **public** investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality, **human rights** and the empowerment of **all** women **and girls** at the global, regional and national, **subnational and local** levels;

Trade unions support fair, progressive taxation that ensures that corporations, the financial sector, extractive industries and higher income groups pay their fair share. The majority of low-wage, precariously-employed and informal workers are women, who already pay a significant amount of their incomes on taxes on goods and services through, for example, value added taxes; they should not be a primary focus of efforts to expand the tax revenue base in the absence of efforts to reduce the already significant tax burden that they face

~~sub35. [Mobilize additional domestic public resources, supplemented by international assistance as appropriate which will be critical to realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls and achieving the sustainable development goals by enhancing~~ **progressive** revenue **collection** administration through ~~modernized,~~ **equitable**, progressive tax systems, **gender-responsive** improved tax policy and more efficient tax collection, as well as work to improve the fairness, transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of tax systems, including by broadening the tax base ~~and continuing efforts to integrate the informal sector into the formal economy in line with country circumstances and by ensuring that all companies, including multinationals,~~ **the financial sector and extractive industries,** pay **their fair share of** taxes to the Governments of countries where economic activity occurs and value is created, ~~in accordance with national and international laws and policies;]~~

Other issues

Sub23. on Indigenous Women – suggest including the language from Canada on violence against indigenous women and girls, as well as separating out rural women in order to keep this paragraph focused. Add reference to UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

sub24. Take all appropriate measures to adopt and implement disability-inclusive national development strategies and legislative, administrative, social, educational, **income security, employment** and other measures to protect and promote the rights of women and girls with disabilities, as persons with disabilities are more vulnerable to discrimination and violence;

Note: suggest a reference to UN Convention on the Rights of People With Disabilities in sub24 if possible.

Suggest deleting the paragraph titled “the family”.