

Concept Note

Side-event at the 64th session of the CSW

organized by

Ministry of Family, Labour and Social Services &

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Turkey to the United Nations

Date: 11 March 2020, 3:00 – 4:15 p.m.

Venue: UN Headquarters, Conference Room 8

***Addressing Challenges for All Women and Girls
in the 25th Anniversary of Beijing:
A Comprehensive Overview from Turkey***

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 as a comprehensive and visionary agenda for achieving gender equality, the empowerment of and girls. It contains a call for the removal of systematic and structural barriers that prevent women and girls from enjoying their human rights across social, economic, political and environmental domains, and policy actions to achieve the vision.¹

In anticipation of the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action during the Fourth World Conference on Women, regions reviewed their progress towards gender equality according to the Platform's 12 critical areas of concern, and its role in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development².

It is clear that despite the significant progress made in many areas, no country in the world has achieved gender equality yet. In some critical areas of concern the progress unfortunately remained slow and uneven. Moreover, the world is now facing with new and emerging challenges that also effect women in various as well unprecedented ways. The number of people forced to flee their homes across the world exceeded 65 million for the first time since the

¹ E/CN.6/2020/3

² The outcomes of each regional meeting will contribute to the global review of the Beijing Platform for Action taking place at the 64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

World War II. The vast majority of people affected by the armed conflicts and other emergency situations are composed of women and children. There are multifold obstacles for women to participate in labour force including violence and harassment. Environmental protection and climate change constitute the areas with the least advances across the world. Artificial intelligence is increasingly influencing the opinions and behavior of people in everyday life. However, the over-representation of men in design of these technologies poses a potential to quietly undo advances in women's rights.

In the light of the global existing and emerging challenges and remaining gaps in implementation, Turkey is taking concrete actions in many areas that are also cross-cutting the critical areas of Beijing. Substantial progress has been achieved in terms of legislation for empowerment of women and ensuring equal opportunities for men and women in Turkey; to the same end various institutional mechanisms have been established and programs have been implemented.

As an example; the rate of access to health-care services reached up to 99.7% as of 2018 by mainstreaming prenatal care services. Accordingly, the maternal mortality rate receded to 13.6 per hundred thousand live birth by 2018. To increase the rate of women's labour force participation, active labour market programmes have been implemented and vocational counselling and vocational guidance services have expanded since the early 2000s.

In this regard, the purposes of this side event are as follows:

- To create a framework of the good practices aiming at the effective implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in Turkey by bringing together many experts and professionals from various backgrounds.
- To set examples and provide insights to the countries that share similar social and economic conditions / backgrounds with Turkey.
- To reach a common sense on how to address the existing and emerging challenges effectively for all women and girls around the globe.
- To discuss the common challenges and the achievements of implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action across Europe.
- To search for new ways on how to improve the cooperation and solidarity among different sectors (governments, civil society, private sector, media etc.).

Side Event Schedule

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Keynote speaker:

H.E. Zehra Zümrüt Selçuk – The Republic of Turkey; Minister for Family, Labour and Social Services

Moderator:

- **Alia El-Yassir** – Regional Director of UN Women in Europe and Central Asia

Speakers:

Role of National Parliaments in the implementation of BPfA and empowerment of women and girls

- **Canan Kalsın** – Chair of the Committee on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey

New and existing policy tools of CoE that aim at advancing women's human rights

- **Charles Ramsden** – Chair of Gender Equality Commission; Council of Europe

The faces of refugee/migrant women and girls in 21st century

- **Doç. Dr. E. Sare Aydın Yılmaz** - Member of Parliament; Founding President of the International Migration and Refugee Association (IMRA)

A good practice: The Project of Visionary Goals for Girls

- **Prof. Dr. Aşkın ASAN** – Member of GREVIO; Manager of Woman and Family Research Center of Istanbul Commerce University

Women's entrepreneurship as a strong tool for empowerment

- **Emine Erdem** – President of the Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey (KAGIDER)

25.02.2020

Sustainable Employment Opportunities

- **Filiz Öztürk** – Board Member in OPET

Women as Agents of Change in Trade Unions

- **Merita Yıldız** - International Relations Specialist at HAK-IS Trade Union Confederation

How to eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work

- **Sıdıka Aydın** - Chair of the Women's Commission in Confederation of Public Servants Trade Unions (MEMUR-SEN)

RSVP: Due to limited room capacity please RSVP to “**addressing.challenges@gmail.com**” including your name, organization and position (if applicable). If you don't have a UN badge, please RSVP no later than – **5 March** 2020.