



United Nations 63rd Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

March 11-15, 2019

Report: S. Thomson, Delegate

Background

The priority theme for the 63rd CSW conference was "Social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. " The review theme was "Women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development."

"Social protection, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure are an integral part of the 2030 Agenda. This year's theme has particular relevance for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5.4 **..." as confirmed by H.E. Ambassador Geraldine Byrne Nason, CSW 63 Chair.

**SDG #5: Gender Equality

Conference Objective

My focus for this session: Human trafficking, unpaid work, equal pay, access to public services, infrastructure in general and how these issues present themselves in Ontario.

Conference Statistics

Number of Sessions Attended: #19

Meetings: #3

Notable meeting held with Minister M. Monsef at the Permanent Mission. My question: "How are the negotiations proceeding for a agreed conclusion document? I believe this is crucial to set the stage for Beijing 2020 and agreed conclusions give credibility to women's' organizations around the world. How, as an NGO, can we assist the Canadian Government in having input to bring the zero draft to an agreed conclusion document on protection systems and implement?"

Canadian NGOs Engaged:

Canadian Labour Congress (V. Smallman); Business Professional Women (L. Davis) - possible partners in an Ontario Human Trafficking Campaign;

- Faraday Law (F. Faraday) to review equal pay issues.

International NGO's Engaged:

Council of the International Bar Association (O. Oluyede, Nigeria);

GWI (Dr. J. Dantas, Australia);

United Nations Association of the National Capital Area (S. Moseley, Washington D.C.);

Equal Salary (V. Goy Veenhuys, Switzerland);

Soroptimist International of Grosse Pointe (Mary Ellen Burke, Michigan);

Marlene Capra, California, creator of a human trafficking school pilot project; Jewel McRae, Associate for Women's Leadership Development & Young Women's Ministries, Louisville, Kentucky.

New Words Learned:

Gender Mainstreaming - bringing gender into mainstream language, policies, etc., not as an addition, but in our consciousness when developing and planning infrastructure, services, etc.

Gender Blind - when gender is not included or women are not at the table.

Social Protection floors - the basis or foundation for improvements., i.e. taxation, investments.

Memorable Quotes

"NGOs have been influenced in shaping the current global policy framework on gender equality, including the seminal Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for sustainable Development. They continue to play an important role in holding international and national leaders accountable for their commitments to the achievement of gender equality," as stated by Lopa Banerjee, Director, Civil Society Division, UN Women.

Ms. Nason stated at Consultation Day, "...20% of government budgets to social protection...breaking new ground to design a new framework ...Dialogue has shifted in the last 12 months...need to break new ground for these 'bread and butter' issues." She further quoted Mary Wollstonecraft: "Looking for power over ourselves."

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Under Secretary-General of the United Nations and Executive Director of UN Women, "Women are trafficked because they don't exist."

Memorable Sessions

"International Cooperation for the Elimination of Sexual Harassment: an Overview"

-Clear link: gender inequality and violence against women; states must criminalize FEM, force marriage, etc.

- "Spotlight" - a program from EU and UN Women to address women's issues/consultations.

"Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking: Effective Responses for Women and Girls."

- Fastest growing form of organized crime garnering \$150 billion in revenue yearly.

- Need a global response

- root causes: gender base violence

- rate of convictions too low

- comprehensive services for the victims

- strengthen information/agreements among member states

- UN Security Council: criterion for sanctions

"Social Protection for Women's Rights-Enhancing Social Protection especially for Mothers"

- Space is shrinking in delivering to the most vulnerable

- In times of conflict, social protection funding gets cut.

"Creating Space for Canada Beijing 2020 - moderated by Senator Marilou McPhedran.

- "Women are guests in politics" and "politics need to change" Women are afraid of attacks.

"Unpaid Work: An Obstacle to Real Equality, Designing and Implementing new Policies to Offer Services, Social Protection and Basic Infrastructure to Achieve Real and Effective Equality."

- Where do we place caregiving?

- Where do we place unpaid work in the market..it becomes invisible.

- Need more time surveys

"On the Way to Biarritz: Women's Rights at the Heart of the G-7 Summit."

- Drive investment for gender equality and human rights

"Gender Mainstreaming in Infrastructure, Services, Social Protection: Global Legal Critique."

- Starting small within your sphere of influence.

** Wrote an article for the IAW newsletter on this session.)

Action Plan

The Ontario Council Advocacy Advisory Committee will be meeting on April 12 to formalize an action plan regarding Human Trafficking in Ontario, where the 401 corridor is infamous, negatively, for the illegal transport of women and girls.

We will be partnering with the Business Professional Women on a provincial project designed to the rehabilitation of trafficking women and girls.

The goal is to meet with government officials to embark on this campaign and engage the 51 clubs in Ontario.

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