



# Commission On The Status Of Women Revitalization

*An Advocacy Brief for National Women's  
Rights Organizations*

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*Drafted collaboratively by the Women's Rights Caucus (WRC),  
a global coalition of over 700 organizations, networks,  
and individuals working to advance  
women's rights at all levels.*

## KEY MESSAGES

*The summarized priority points to relay to national governments. These are expanded in the second page of this briefer.*

- **There is a risk that the current CSW revitalisation process** could weaken rather than strengthen the Commission's ability to effectively serve as a normative platform for global gender equality.
- **In the face of increasing pushback** and efforts to stall the process, Member States are encouraged to closely engage in the CSW revitalisation process to ensure that its potential to deliver significant improvements to the functioning of the CSW is realised.
- **Member States are asked to:**
  - Defend the mandate of the CSW and not permit any reduction in the mandate's scope. (Paragraph 1)
  - Advocate for the CSW to become a more inclusive, politically ambitious, accountable, and implementation-focused platform, capable of adapting to emerging trends and contexts and building synergies across the UN system. (Paragraph 1)
  - Defend against efforts to undermine and shrink civil society participation across the UN system, including at the CSW. (Paragraph 2)
  - Support the retention of the Agreed Conclusions as a normative framework reaffirming Member States' commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to advancing gender equality in national capacities. (Paragraph 3)

## BACKGROUND

*More information on what CSW revitalization is, why it's important, and where we are in the negotiation process.*

The WRC and allies welcome the intergovernmental process, led by Ambassador Robert Rae, President of ECOSOC, and co-facilitated by Ambassador Williams of St Kitts and Nevis and Ambassador Mythen of Ireland, to explore options to revitalize the [Commission on the Status of Women](#) (CSW). Mandated by the [Pact for the Future](#), this process holds promise for significant improvements to the functioning of CSW. The CSW serves as a vital normative platform for advocacy for global gender equality and women's and girls' movements. In order to actualize the Member States' commitments under the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) and the CSW Agreed Conclusions for a gender equal world, we need a CSW that is not only robust and effective but also truly representative and responsive to the diverse needs and voices of all women and girls. The revitalization process must therefore strengthen accountability, respond to emerging contexts, and expand civil society participation.

We see the CSW revitalization process as an opportunity to re-energize and strengthen the role of the Commission. In an increasingly polarized geopolitical landscape, we are particularly concerned by efforts to undermine and shrink civil society participation across the UN system, including at the CSW. We are equally concerned by the liquidity and austerity crisis faced by the UN system and its human rights mechanisms, including the [Committee on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women](#) (CEDAW), which risks devaluing the linkages between gender equality and human rights and weakening their importance in the multilateral space. We urge further strengthening the relationship between CSW and those processes.

We stress that any action or revitalization effort must not lead to the dilution or erosion of the CSW's mandate. Rather, the Commission's work should be revitalized as a more inclusive, politically ambitious, accountable, and implementation-focused platform, capable of adapting to emerging trends and contexts and building synergies across the UN system, not reduced to a consultative or symbolic space.

As we enter the final stages of negotiations on a draft resolution for revitalization, we hope this document serves as a resource for women's and girls' rights organizations and advocates to equip their [national gender machineries](#) and capital-level government with the necessary information to engage with CSW revitalization efforts, urging them to champion a process that genuinely strengthens the CSW and puts in place processes for its accountability.

## KEY PRIORITIES FOR CSW REVITALIZATION – IN DETAIL

*More information on what CSW revitalization is, why it's important, and where we are in the negotiation process.*

The WRC and allies welcome the intergovernmental process, led by Ambassador Robert Rae, President of ECOSO

### **1. Defend the mandate of the CSW and not permit any reduction in the mandate's scope / Advocate for the CSW to become a more inclusive, politically ambitious, accountable, and implementation-focused platform, capable of adapting to emerging trends and contexts and building synergies across the UN system.**

In light of the most recent version of CSW revitalization text (Rev.2), we urge all Member States to continue to push for inclusive language on achieving gender equality, expanding civic space, and reaffirming the mandate of CSW. We appreciate the text's references to the [importance of regional monitoring mechanisms, of national human rights institutions, and of strengthening accountability and the full, effective, and accelerated implementation](#) of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Agreed Conclusions.

We call for language in the CSW revitalization resolution that strengthens institutional connections between CSW, the Human Rights Council, and CEDAW, which are critical for enhancing accountability and ensuring a more action-oriented approach to the implementation of commitments on gender equality and human rights. We strongly [encourage reinserting the references to CSW's coherence with CEDAW and the Human Rights Council](#), as per the zero draft paragraph 12(b). This reinsertion aligns with the [CSW Working Methods](#) (2022) resolution, which recognizes that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and obligations under CEDAW are mutually reinforcing in the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and the realization of their human rights.

### **2. Defend against efforts to undermine and shrink civil society participation across the UN system, including at the CSW**

CSW engagement with civil society organisations (CSOs) is critical to ensuring that the Commission's deliberations and outcomes reflect the reality of women and girls' diverse lives. The CSW revitalisation process is an opportunity to both safeguard and strengthen the meaningful participation of CSOs. In particular, we ask Member States to support the establishment of effective, formal channels by which CSOs may contribute to the work of the Commission. We also encourage Member States to advocate for a [stronger intersectional approach to CSO participation](#) in CSW, including young women, indigenous women, Afro-descendants women, rural women, women with disabilities, elderly women and LGBTI+ people, among others.

We are deeply concerned about the potential limitation of CSO engagement in the Rev2 text. We appreciate and support the proposal of a regional rotation of CSW every five years. However, as currently drafted, there is a proposal to allow Member States to effectively veto the inclusion of CSO organisations without transparency or any avenue of appeal. The participation of non-governmental organizations in consultative status with ECOSOC must continue unhindered, in line with existing practices, across all CSW sessions held in and outside of New York.

### **3. Support the retention of the Agreed Conclusions as a normative framework reaffirming Member States' commitment to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to advancing gender equality in national capacities.**

The Agreed Conclusions of the CSW form the roadmap for implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. The Agreed Conclusions are also critical in reaffirming Member States' continued commitments to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and addressing emerging gender equality issues that may not have been sufficiently covered in the agenda. Achieving gender equality requires change in all political, economic, legal and social systems, and articulating the change required will necessarily be a complex process. We therefore call for a clear, measurable, actionable, comprehensive and politically ambitious Agreed Conclusions.

It is critical to protect the integrity and centrality of the Agreed Conclusions which are integral to CSW's ability to deliver tangible results. We encourage Member States to advocate for:

- Robust mechanisms for the implementation of Agreed Conclusions to translate commitments into action at the national level in partnership with women, girls and civil society.
- A thematic focus for each annual CSW which has been determined through a collaborative and transparent process that reflects current global challenges and emerging issues with more regular revisiting of priority themes.

## **RESOURCES**

*The following resources are encouraged for effective advocacy and explanation of the revitalization process's importance and its long-lasting effects on strengthening the role and abilities of the CSW.*

- [Women Rights Caucus Priorities Paper for CSW Revitalization](#)
- [Global Youth and Adolescent Recommendations for CSW Revitalization](#)
- [Baha'i International Community Recommendations](#)
- [NGO CSW NY Recommendations for CSW Revitalization](#)
- [Reimagining CSW: Civil Society Perspectives on Improving the CSW](#)