



## **Commission on the Status of Women**

The fifty-eighth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) will take place at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 10 to 21 March. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, and ECOSOC-accredited non-governmental organizations (NGOs) from all regions of the world attend the session. The priority theme for the 58<sup>th</sup> session of CSW is the challenges and achievements in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals for women and girls. To join the conversation on twitter follow #CSW58 and #CSW. To view the draft agreed conclusions click [here](#).

### **Side Events**

The program of side events provides an excellent opportunity for Member States, UN entities and NGOs to discuss themes of the Commission and other critical gender equality issues. A calendar of side events organized by Permanent Missions and UN entities is [available on the CSW website](#) and updated regularly. A calendar of parallel events organized by NGOs is posted on the website of the [NGO Committee on the Status of Women](#).

### **Side Events In Support of *Every Woman Every Child*:**

#### **Linking HIV, Gender Equality, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, as part of the post-2015 Social Justice Agenda**



*In efforts to address the complex linkages between violence and HIV, the Executive Director of UNAIDS Michel Sidibé has called on governments and communities to take concerted action on ending violence against women. Mr Sidibé made the call at a high-level panel on HIV, Gender Equality, and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights organized by UNAIDS during the 58th Commission on the Status of Women held in New York.*

Studies have shown that intimate partner violence can increase the risk of HIV infection by around 50% and that one in three women experience violence by their intimate partner during their lifetime. There is also evidence that violence, or the fear of violence undermines access to treatment, care and support services for women living with HIV.

In efforts to address the complex linkages between violence and HIV, in a statement, the United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called on the world to do more, “We must take action to end violence against women and girls and ensure that they have the sexual and reproductive health and rights that they

deserve. Violence has a drastic impact on the health of women and children and is inextricably linked to a higher prevalence of HIV. That is why I have made ending violence against women and girls a top priority for the United Nations.”

The Secretary-General’s call was amplified at the high-level panel *Linking HIV, gender equality and sexual and reproductive health and rights as part of the Every Women Every Child initiative, and the post-2015 social justice agenda* organized by UNAIDS during the 58th Commission on the Status of Women held in New York. “Not only is violence against women an extreme human rights violation, it also makes women more vulnerable to HIV infection,” said Michel Sidibé, Executive Director of UNAIDS. “Post-2015 is the opportunity to ensure all women and girls reach their full potential, without the threat of violence or risk of HIV infection.”

The event, chaired jointly by Mr Sidibé and the Executive Director of UN Women Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, encouraged dialogue around the critical need for women-centered efforts to end the AIDS epidemic; the advancement of sexual and reproductive health and rights for women; gender equality and women’s empowerment; and zero tolerance for gender-based violence. “The single most important strategy in dealing with HIV is empowering women and protecting their rights,” said Ms Mlambo-Ngcuka.

Panelists included HRH the Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, Ministers of Gender Equality from Ghana, Malawi, Brazil and a representative for young women living with and affected by HIV from Algeria. “In my region, discrimination is a societal phenomenon. We must continue to act to eliminate discrimination—it’s the key to the end of the AIDS epidemic,” said Fatima Bendida, El Hayet Network of People Living with HIV, Algeria.

The panelists also elaborated on the importance of addressing stigma and discrimination. They stressed the need to end violence against women for their own health, as well as to prevent new HIV infections. They also emphasized the particular focus needed on young women and girls to ensure they have access to comprehensive sexuality education that all women living with HIV have access to treatment, care and support, within a rights-based and social justice framework.

“It is essential that we achieve universal access to integrated sexual and reproductive health information, education and services, fully addressing HIV, based on gender equality and with zero-tolerance for gender-based violence,” said HRH Crown Princess Mary of Denmark, Patron of UNFPA and Member of the High Level Task Force for the International Conference on Population and Development.

The panelists also highlighted poverty as a driver of HIV and sexual and reproductive ill-health and recognized equity in access to services as a key focus for development for women. They also emphasized the continued need to secure funding for the most marginalized in societies.

Ms Nancy Mahon, Executive Director of the M·A·C AIDS Fund moderated the event at which Mr Sidibé launched a UNAIDS Advocacy Brief: *Unite with women unite against violence and HIV*. The brief outlines five core reasons to prevent violence against women; violence against women is a human rights

violation; women who experience violence are more likely to acquire HIV; women living with HIV are more likely to be subjected to violence; women most vulnerable to HIV are also most vulnerable to violence; and that violence undermines the HIV response by creating a barrier to accessing services.

The discussions at the panel event were an important milestone in the ongoing post-2015 debate, underlining the central role women living with HIV need to play in the discussions around the post-2015 debate.

To view additional photos from the event and to learn more click [here](#).

### **Investing in Girls and Women: Everybody Wins**



**New York, NY, 10 March 2014** — As world leaders congregate in New York for the 58th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, policymakers, advocates, and experts convened a high-level event to focus on the need for greater global investment in reproductive health, education, and equality for girls and women.

Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Mary of Denmark delivered opening remarks at the event, “**Invest in Girls and Women: Everybody Wins**,” co-hosted by Women Deliver, The Permanent Mission of Denmark to the UN, Plan International, the Nike Foundation, and the UN Foundation. The event was in support of *Every Woman Every Child*, an initiative launched by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon that aims to drastically improve the health of women and children around the world.

“There has never been a better time to raise our voices in support of the health and empowerment of girls and women, and to ensure they are a top priority in global development,” said Dame Billie Miller, former Deputy Prime Minister of Barbados and Women Deliver Board Member, who moderated the event. “We must strive to build a world where girls’ and women’s rights are recognized as human rights, access to sexual and reproductive health services is guaranteed to everyone, especially young people, and every pregnancy is planned.”

The Crown Princess was joined by Ib Petersen, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Denmark to the UN, and Manu Sareen, the Denmark Minister for Children, Gender Equality, Integration and Social Affairs. Other speakers included Amina Mohammed, UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Post-2015 Development Planning; Anne-Birgitte Albrechtsen, Assistant Secretary-General and Deputy

Executive Director (Management) at UNFPA; Sharon D'Agostino, Vice President of Corporate Citizenship at Johnson & Johnson; and Humaira, a representative of Plan International's Global Youth Speakers Network.

Together they saluted the significant progress that has been made for girls and women – maternal deaths have nearly halved in the past decades and more girls are attending primary and secondary schools than ever before. However, the speakers called for urgent action to accelerate progress and reach the ambitious Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set by governments in 2000.

"The global community recognizes that empowering women and girls is an imperative, not only because it is a human right, but also an indispensable tool for addressing the unfinished business of the MDGs and advancing sustainable development," said Ms. Mohammed.

As global decision makers assess progress on the Millennium Development Goals and begin to chart a path for the post-2015 agenda, the Commission on the Status of Women presents an important opportunity to prioritize the rights and needs of adolescent girls in particular. A key element of these conversations is the [Girl Declaration](#), a call to action to put adolescent girls at the heart of the post-2015 development agenda. Signed by more than 100 individual champions and leaders from non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and multilateral and international development agencies, the Girl Declaration recommends priority guiding principles, goals, and targets to embed adolescent girls in the design, content, implementation and monitoring of the post-2015 framework. Investment in adolescent girls' education, health, safety, economic security and citizenship are critical to accelerating progress on the current Millennium Development Goals, as well as advancing the future development agenda.

Plan International's Global Youth Speakers Network representative Humaira said, "Girls were not put on this earth to be invisible. I am here today to help ensure that the millions of girls living in poverty across the world are heard. The post-2015 framework must include the voices of both girls and boys. We have rights, needs and dreams and want these to be counted. This includes the right of every girl to complete a quality education and live free from violence. Don't forget us because we are poor and silenced. The world needs to wake up to our potential."

The event also featured the release of a new advocacy toolkit from Women Deliver, "[Invest in Girls and Women: Everybody Wins](#)," that pulls together infographics, data points, and key messages to make the case for investing in girls and women.

Minister Sareen closed the event saying, "We know that investing in girls and women is not only the right thing to do, it's also the smart thing to do."

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#### **About the organizations:**

**Women Deliver:** [www.womendeliver.org](http://www.womendeliver.org)

**Permanent Mission of Denmark to the UN:** [fnnewyork.um.dk/](http://fnnewyork.um.dk/); [um.dk/en/](http://um.dk/en/)

**Plan International:** [www.plan-international.org](http://www.plan-international.org)

**Nike Foundation:** [www.nikefoundation.org](http://www.nikefoundation.org)

**United Nations Foundation:** [www.unfoundation.org](http://www.unfoundation.org)

**Every Woman Every Child:** [www.everywomaneverychild.org](http://www.everywomaneverychild.org)

**The Girl Effect:** [www.girleffect.org](http://www.girleffect.org)

- [LEARN MORE](#) about the event
- Keep following #InvestInGirls during the Commission on the Status of Women (10-21 March)
- [CHECK OUT](#) the Storify of #InvestInGirls from the event

Check out the **Storify** of the event for tweets from co-hosts, speakers and partners.

Partner links:

- [The Girl Declaration](#)
- [Women Deliver Infographics](#)
- [Every Woman Every Child, UNICEF, and the UN Secretary-General's Global Initiative on Education Infographic](#)

