

**NGO Consultation  
CSW at 51: Making Girls Visible  
held at New York University (NYU)  
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**Presentation by Carolyn Hannan, Director  
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Madame Moderator  
Colleagues and friends

I take this opportunity to give all participants a warm advance welcome to the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW). I particularly welcome girls who are attending this session as

priority theme, rather than two as in the past, there will be an excellent opportunity for a thorough consideration of the theme of the girl child this year. The fact that the Commission will, from this session on, review implementation of the agreed conclusions adopted on a theme at a previous session means that in 2-3 years time the Commission will come back to the theme of the girl child to review progress and identify continuing gaps and challenges. This provides a tremendous opportunity which we should fully utilize.

There will be opportunities for raising critical issues related to the girl child in the review theme for this session, “The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality”, as well as in the emerging issue on violence against women.

### **Preparatory process for the Commission**

The Division supports the Co

discussion. A summary report is available on the Division's website. This process could be more effectively utilized to bring in the voices of individuals in civil society who will never be able to attend a CSW session. I would encourage you to check the DAW website to get information on the on-line discussion on the next theme of the CSW and spread information and encourage participation from among your constituencies.

These two important processes fed into the preparation of the two reports of the Secretary-General which are the formal basis for the discussions in the Commission, The Secretary-General's report on the elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child (E/CN.6/2007.2) and the Secretary-General's report on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluation of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme. (E/CN.6/2007/3)

### **Follow-up process**

Implementation of policy outcomes can, of course, only be accelerated at national level if these outcomes are well known and systematically and effectively used. The Division therefore encourages relevant UN entities and NGOs to engage their constituencies around the world in follow-up activities. Innovative approaches are needed to ensure that the outcome of the Commission on the priority theme is broadly disseminated and utilized at national level. It is our hope that UNICEF and other relevant UN entities, as well as the Working Group on Girls and other NGOs, will work systematically, effectively and creatively to promote and document active engagement of their constituencies in follow-up to the Commission and ensure that the policy recommendations on the girl child adopted by the Commission will accelerate the elimination of discrimination and violence. Because the theme has engaged a broad range of stakeholders at different levels in the preparatory process, there potential for developing good practice examples on how the outcome of the Commission can be used at different levels to make a real difference in the lives of girls.

Through the Inter-Agency Network on Women and Gender Equality, UN entities are also encouraged to make more systematic and effective use of the outcomes of the Commission. The new working methods of the Commission require the UN entities to report back to the ECOSOC and the General Assembly on the impact the outcomes of the Commission have on the work of their organizations.

I know that you will come back to this issue in the next session when you will discuss "Taking it all back home". I hope there will be further opportunities during the Commission to discuss with a broader group of stakeholder, including Member States and UN entities, how the outcomes can be used at different levels, and how progress can be most effectively assessed and documented when the Commission will review the implementation of the agreed conclusions on the girl child in 2-3 years time.

In conclusion, it is my hope that our work together can make a significant difference in the lives of girls around the world. The Commission's decision to focus on

the girl child was an important and timely one. The preparations for the Commission have shown clearly that girls continue to face discrimination and violence and neglect, often in hidden forms. National statistics in many situations mask serious discrimination and violence against groups of girls in high-risk situations at sub-national levels. The excellent policy and legal frameworks which protect the rights and girls are not effectively implemented and girls priorities and needs are not identified and addressed. It is our responsibility to the girls of today and to future generations to take bold steps to forcefully address this situation.

Thank you.