

EU statement after the adoption of the CSW 61 Agreed Conclusions

What seems like a long and arduous process has come to an end today. As the gavel went down a moment ago on the Chair's text we adopted a set of Agreed Conclusions that address a theme that for many of us goes right to the heart of advancing the human rights of all women and girls.

The EU approached this session with a high degree of ambition. We were ready to truly advance the way in which women's economic empowerment is considered and globally advance in this area. Many of the paragraphs that were agreed ad ref were the result of input from many delegations and truly serve as examples of constructive engagement. We fully support these elements and aim to do our utmost to take them forward in our internal and external policy making and implementation.

As much as we appreciate the hard work of the facilitator, the bureau and the Secretariat, we are disappointed that after the long days and nights spent in these negotiations, we have arrived at an outcome that to a large degree is an interpretation rather than a reflection of a negotiated outcome. As such there are many elements in the text that are far removed from the position of the EU, are not reflections of negotiated compromises and therefore cannot enjoy our full support moving forward.

In this respect, we wish to draw your attention to the following areas -

We are disappointed that the link between women's economic empowerment and SRHR could not be made stronger, for example by better reflecting the human rights components which are essential to gender equality;

The continued insistence for language on national policy space is another concern that unnecessarily aims to limit the ambition of the Commission;

References to civil society were limited and did not incorporate agreed language, including the mentioning of NGOs. In a world where civil society space is shrinking, this sends a worrying signal;

We are further troubled about language in the Agreed Conclusions that reinforces stereotypical and traditional roles of women and girls, and does not contribute to their economic empowerment and independence.

Despite this, we will continue to strive to work with our partners and build consensus on these and other issues and our commitment to gender equality, human rights of all women and girls and their empowerment is as strong as ever.

We thank everybody involved in this process for their effort and we look forward as always to engaging in a constructive manner with negotiations on CSW agreed conclusions in the future and we in particular look forward to working with partners to improve efficiency and effectiveness of this Commission next year.

Thank you.