



# UNCSW59

9-20 March 2015 - New York

## Realizing rights for women and girls

### A union perspective



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## A Trade Union Guide to the UNCSW

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Dear Sisters,

We very much welcome your active participation at CSW59! We are pleased to let you know that 109 women unionists from 34 countries are part of the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Education International (EI), Public Services International (PSI), International Domestic Workers Federation, Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI), International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) Global Union delegation this year. In preparation, please read this guide carefully,

as it contains all of the information you will need prior to arriving in New York and during the time you will be there.



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# PREPARING FOR THE UNCSW

## Get to Know the UNCSW

- Read up on the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW), what it is and what it does. The [UNCSW web page](#) is a good starting point.
- Annual UNCSW meetings are referred to as “sessions”. The 59<sup>th</sup> session of the UNCSW, or CSW59, is taking place from March 9-20, 2015. [Check out the web page for UNCSW59](#) and the [Journal of the United Nations](#).
- Browse through the [UN Women special campaign webpage on B+20](#) (in Eng/FR/ESP)

|| NB Many of the UN documents are only available in English. Links to reports with an \* are ones that are available in French and Spanish in addition to English.

## Get Familiar with the UNCSW59 Priority Theme

This year the UNCSW59 will look at current challenges preventing full implementation of the [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action \(BPfA\)](#). This is an opportunity to review progress on implementation of the BPfA over the last 20 years, to hold governments accountable and ensure they genuinely renew their commitments to securing its implementation.

Discussions at the 59<sup>th</sup> session of the UNCSW will also cover ‘the empowerment of women in the post-2015 development agenda’. Since the UN aims to adopt a new set of sustainable development goals (SDGs) by September 2015, it is crucial to secure a gender specific goal as well as gender equity-related targets and indicators for each of the other goals.

Usually, the CSW focuses on one priority theme and member states negotiate ‘Agreed Conclusions’; this year the process is different. A ‘Political Declaration’ is due to be adopted on the 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> day of CSW59. Negotiations between governments on the content of the political declaration have been taking place in the weeks leading up to CSW59. Negotiations concerning a document on the ‘Future organisation and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women’ will also have been completed before the UNCSW59 starts.

It is expected that a number of resolutions will be negotiated and tabled for adoption at CSW59, as during the Beijing +15 review five years ago (one of the resolutions adopted then focused on the economic empowerment of women).

## Browse through the UN preparatory work for CSW59

In the months leading up to the UNCSW, preparatory work took place at national and regional level on the B+20 review. Check the report of your region and government:

→ [National-level review of implementation:](#)

Did you prepare a response or a so called 'shadow' report with civil society groups? Please share it with us.

→ [Regional 20-year review processes:](#)

→ Report of the [Expert Group Meeting](#) (November 2014) – 'Envisioning women's rights in the post-2015 context' – UN Women convened a meeting of an expert group in order to take stock of current research and support the Commission in its deliberations. The aims of the meeting in relation to the BpfA were to:

- Identify the constraints and challenges that have held back progress towards gender equality;
- Identify the priorities and critical issues for advancing women's and girls' human rights; and
- Develop action-oriented recommendations to accelerate progress towards gender equality and the realisation of women's and girls' human rights in the post-2015 context

Clicking on the link above will take you to the UNWomen website where you will find the report of the Expert Group, as well as the background papers developed to support its work.

## Know which Issues our Delegation is Bringing to the Table

All accredited Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) are invited to submit a statement to the UNCSW each year. These statements form part of the official UNCSW documentation. The global union federations – the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC), Education International (EI) and Public Services International (PSI) typically submit a joint statement to the UNCSW, which outlines trade union perspectives on the B+20 review. [Read the global union statement on the priority theme here.](#)

## Build your Networks

- Identify your allies in your own country – unions, women's organisations, NGOs – that might be participating in the UNCSW meetings
- Make links with like-minded organisations – ones that are likely to have progressive and inclusive positions on women's rights and gender equality
- Get in touch with them early on - find out what priorities they will be advancing and what common ground we can work on together. Get hold of their statement to the UNCSW. Get their contact information so you can get in touch with them during the actual UNCSW meetings in NY.

## Lobby your Government

Governments, or 'Member States' are at the UNCSW to report on the progress made on the [implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](#) in their countries. Find out which government department in your country has the lead on preparing for the UNCSW

- Find out what positions they are taking concerning the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
- Ask for a briefing from your government during the UNCSW meetings.

## Know What You are up Against

Conservative organisations, some of which are religious, typically have a strong presence at the UNCSW. They tend to focus on lobbying against reproductive rights and protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation. They are highly organised and connected, but often attempt to go unnoticed within the NGO community. They have found allies in the Holy See and some Members States, such as Iran.

- Be prepared. Try to find out which organisations or individuals from your part of the world fit this profile. Be strategic. Find out as much as you can about them, what positions they are bringing forward and who their allies are.
- Compile a list of policies your government has already adopted that are related to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. That way you can hold them to account if and when they appear to be back-pedaling on positions they have already adopted in the past.

## ON THE GROUND AT THE UNCSW

### The Trade Union Delegation Orientation Session

Plan to attend the orientation session organised by our participating Global Union Federations – ITUC, EI, PSI, BWI, ITF and IDWF. This session takes place on Sunday March 8<sup>th</sup> 12.15-14.15 at the Church Center for the United Nations (CCUN), 2<sup>nd</sup> floor (or UN Church Center): 777 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue, where 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue meets 44<sup>th</sup> Street (see here on [google maps](#)).

- ✓ It will help you get oriented!
- ✓ We'll talk about our collective goals and how we can work together to accomplish them
- ✓ We'll walk you through a typical day at the UNCSW
- ✓ You will identify concrete contributions you can make to the work of the trade union delegation
- ✓ You will get to meet trade union sisters from around the world, with whom you will be working over the course of the UNCSW

### Get your UN Grounds Pass

You should be pre-registered by your labour organisation (ITUC, EI, PSI or affiliates with ECOSOC status, like the CLC and the CGIL Italy), which will receive a confirmation letter from the UN to this effect.

- To have access to the official UNCSW meetings and side-events, you will need a UN Grounds Pass, which you will receive once you have officially registered for the UNCSW at the UN Headquarters in New York City.
- Registration takes place at the NGO registration desk in the lobby of the UN Headquarters building (visitor's entrance at 1<sup>st</sup> Avenue and 46<sup>th</sup> street). Make sure you have a photo ID and your confirmation letter to get your Grounds Pass. You will receive your confirmation letter from your labour organisation by email before you get to New York City. The registration desk is usually open from the weekend before the official opening of the UNCSW. You will hear more about registering at the trade union orientation session on Sunday March 8 2015. [Download the time table for registration here](#)

Always remember to carry your Grounds Pass with you at all times. To have access to the main Conference rooms, the General Assembly Hall (UNGA), the Conference Building (CB), the North Lawn Building (NLB) and the side-events, you will need a UN Secondary Pass. Each accredited Global Union organisation has access to one Secondary Pass to attend the opening ceremony and for each panel of ministers. A pre-assigned "coordination team" will pick up the secondary passes and distribute them.



## On-site registration hours

Prior to the session	
Thursday, 5 March	12 - 6 p.m
Friday, 6 March	12 - 6 p.m
Saturday, 7 March	12 - 3 p.m.; 4.30 - 8 p.m.
Sunday, 8 March	10 - 2 p.m.; 4 - 8 p.m.
First week	
Monday, 9 March	8 a.m.-12.30 p.m.; 2 - 5 p.m.
Tuesday, 10 March	8 a.m.-12.30 p.m.; 2 - 5 p.m.
Wednesday, 11 March	10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.; 2 - 5 p.m.
Thursday, 12 March	10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.; 2 - 5 p.m.
Friday, 13 March	10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.
Second week	
Monday, 16 March	10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.; 2 - 5 p.m.
Tuesday, 17 March	10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.
Wednesday, 18 March	10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.
Thursday, 19 March	10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.
Friday, 20 March	10 a.m.-12.30 p.m.

## The Trade Union Delegation Briefings

The trade union delegation will have two morning briefing sessions during the first week of UNCSW59, which is when most of the delegations will be in New York City. The briefings will take place on Tuesday March 10 and Thursday March 12 at 08.00 – 09.00 on both days at the Roger Smith Hotel (501 Lexington Avenue, at 47<sup>th</sup> Street) – see google maps [here](#). Plan to be there!

## Proposing Amendments to Draft Resolutions

The joint ITUC-EI-PSI statement submitted to the UN describes the substantive goals of the trade union delegation - i.e. the priorities we want to advance. We use this statement as a starting point to draft concrete amendments to the draft resolutions. Our broad objectives are to strengthen the language on human and labour rights, including decent work and social protection, quality education and public services.

Members of the trade union delegation can chose to be part of the drafting group that develops the trade union delegation's proposed amendments based on the group's input. This task is done in the first two days of the UNCSW. After that, it's lobbying time!

## Lobbying

Once we have drafted the trade union delegation's proposed amendments, we use our document to lobby our own governments, other governments, government negotiators, like-minded NGOs, regional caucuses, and whoever we believe can influence the outcome of the negotiations. We get organised, plot out our lobbying targets, and get to it!

Our strength is our diversity: the fact that we have trade union delegates from around the world on the same team! We share information. We gather intelligence from our respective governments and others on the progress of the negotiations, who our allies are, who our opponents are, and what types of hurdles are developing. We stay focused on our issues and develop strategies and alliances to influence the outcomes.

Many government delegations offer briefings to NGOs on the status of negotiations. Find out about them and plan to attend (and report back on what you hear!). Ask around to get the most updated version of the negotiation text.

## Monitoring our Governments

Every Member State gets to make a statement in plenary on their progress on the priority theme of the UNCSW. We try to make sure one of our delegates is present during this 'General Discussion' (or listen to the live webcast on the internet), to find out who is making statements similar to ours, monitor what they say, and get a copy of their statement. The information in government statements is often revealing of the positions they will take during negotiations.

## Side/Parallel events

The UNCSW is arguably the biggest annual gathering of women's rights organisations and activists in the world. 1,100 organisations have registered 8,600 individuals to attend the CSW59. Outside of the official session there are hundreds of side or parallel events organised throughout the two weeks. There are two types of events and two separate schedules:

**Official Side Events** are sponsored by UN Permanent Missions and UN Entities. They usually take place at the North Lawn Building –a restricted area that can only be accessed by NGO delegates with Special Event Tags. Before you arrive, try to get information on the side events you want to attend and get registered in advance. They require a grounds pass AND an event pass. The schedule for the Side Events is [here](#).

**NGO Parallel Events** are organised by NGOs and take place off site close to the UN Headquarters. Many parallel events are held in the Church Centre for the United Nations (CCUN) for the UN across the street from the UN Headquarters - the parallel events schedule is published on the [website](#) of the NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW).

## Trade union-related events @ the UNCSW59

>Organised/co-sponsored by Global Unions    >Women trade unionists speaking

Parallel event	The labour rights of migrant women: from Beijing to Post-2015 GAATW and co-sponsored by Global Unions + speaker	Monday, 9 March, 12.30 – 14.00 V Hall, Armenian Convention Centre
Parallel event	Women and Sustainable Economy from a Human Rights Perspective Various groups, speaker from Global Unions	Monday, 9 March, 14.30 CCUN, Boss room
UNCSW program	Ministerial round table: Investing in gender equality and the empowerment of women Moderator from Global Unions	Tuesday, 10 March, 11.30 - 13.00 Conference room 4, UN building
Side event	Realising Gender Equality, Women's Rights and Women's Empowerment within and beyond the Post-2015 Development Agenda Sponsored by Argentina Mission, EI, Post 2015 Women's Coalition; Panelist from Global Unions	Tuesday, 10 March, 11.30 – 12.45 Conference Room 11-GA, UN Building
Parallel event	Shadow reports as gender advocacy tools: Beijing+20, CEDAW, UPR+ Sponsored by Pangea Foundation - Speaker from Global Unions	Tuesday, 10 March, 18.15 – 19:45 CCUN, Hardin room
Parallel event	Raising Wages and Ending Sexual Harassment in Corporate Supply Chains Sponsored by AFL-CIO, Global Unions, AWID	Wednesday, 11 March, 16.30 CCUN, Chapel room
Side event	Organising migrant women and Convention 189 on Decent Work for Domestic Workers Sponsored by German mission, UN Women - Speaker from Global Unions	Wednesday, 11 March, 13.15 – 14.45 871 United Nations Plaza, German House
Parallel event	Women's Labour Migration, Flawed Development Strategies, and the way Forward Sponsored by United Methodist Women, Global Unions and others	Thursday, 12 March, 10.30 – 12.00 CCUN, Second floor
UNCSW program	CSW 59 Intergenerational Dialogue: Session 1: Gender Equality 2030 / gender goal in the post 2015 UN Women/ CSW, Speaker from Global Unions	Friday, 13 March, 10.00 – 11.30 ECOSOC Chamber
Parallel event	Realising young women's rights to sexual and reproductive health and decent work in cities – challenges for the Post-2015 Agenda Sponsored by ActionAid, Global Unions	Friday, 13 March, 12.30 UN Church Centre, Hardin Room
	Meeting the Challenge of Globalisation to realise Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, Organised by Columbia University, Panelists from Global Unions	Friday, 13 March, whole day Columbia University

Parallel event	SDGs for Workers: Why Public-Private-Partnerships don't work: The many advantages of the public alternative Sponsored by Global Unions	Wednesday, 18 March, 10.30 CCUN, Room: Chapel
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## Be Social/Get Connected

The trade union delegation maintains a [blog](#) of our activities throughout the UNCSW. Be prepared to write stories and reports for this blog, and bring your cameras, so you can post pictures of what we are up to. You can also post comments, news and pictures on the trade union [Facebook Page](#) and [tweet](#) about what's happening at UNCSW58 when you're there.

Check out the progressive feminist organisations with a strong presence at past UNCSW meetings. Here are a few examples:

- [ActionAid International](#)
- [Asia Pacific on Women Law and Development](#) (APWLD)
- [Association for Women's Rights in Development](#) (AWID)
- [Center for Global Women's Leadership](#) (CWGL)
- [Center for Reproductive Rights](#)
- [European Women's Lobby](#) (EWL)
- [FEMNET](#) (The African Women's Development and Communication Network)
- [Women's Environment and Development Organisation](#) (WEDO)

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## A GLOSSARY OF SOME ABBREVIATIONS FOR UNCSW PARTICIPANTS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979)
BPfA	Beijing Platform for Action (2000)
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
DAW	Division for the Advancement of Women (at UN Women)
EI	Education International
EU	European Union
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FTT	Financial Transactions Tax
GUF	Global Union Federation
IFI	International Financial Institution
ITF	International Transport Workers' Federation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ILO	International Labour Organisation and International Labour Office (Geneva)
ILO Convention 87	Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise (1948)
ILO Convention 98	Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining (1949)
ILO Convention 100	Equal Remuneration (1951)
ILO Convention 102	Social Security (Minimum Standards) (1952)
ILO Convention 111	Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) (1958)
ILO Convention 128	Invalidity, Old-Age and Survivors' Benefits (1967)
ILO Convention 151	Labour Relations (Public Sector) 1978
ILO Convention 182	Worst forms of Child Labour (1999)
ILO Convention 189	Domestic Workers (2011)
ITUC	International Trade Union Confederation
LGBT	Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGOs	Non-Governmental Organisations
ODA	Overseas Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Post 2015	Millennium Development Goals beyond 2015
PSI	Public Services International
QPS	Quality Public Services
SC 1325	Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security
TUAC	Trade Union Advisory Committee (at the OECD)
UNCSW	United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
UNI	UNI Global Union
UN Women	United Nations entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
VAW	Violence Against Women
WHO	World Health Organisation