



65th Commission on the Status of Women

Eliminating violence against women in public life *Switzerland intervention from the floor*

Wednesday, 17 March 2021, 9.00 – 11.00 pm, Informal virtual meeting

Leading questions

Participating stakeholders in the interactive dialogue are invited to address the following questions:

- What are examples of policies, programmes and budget allocations that Member States have implemented to address violence against women in public life? What lessons can be learned from these and replicated?
- What are examples of good practices of coordination among Government and other stakeholders to pursue legal reforms and other specific measures to address violence against women in public life, both online and offline? What lessons can be learned from these and replicated?
- What are examples of awareness-raising efforts to combat violence against women in public life at national and international levels and their impact? What lessons can be learned to identify and address current and future priorities for ending such violence?

Mr Chair,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to speak to you today as the Youth Delegate of Switzerland.

Article 7 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women obliges state parties to take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in political and public life.

Over 40 years after the adoption of the Convention, the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in public life is still not guaranteed, and very often violated. This has detrimental consequences not only for women, but also for society as a whole. As a youth delegate, I am both shocked and worried by this fact. We cannot wait another 40 years.

Women are disproportionately targeted by humiliating and intimidating remarks while performing their duties in public life. In extreme cases, harassment can even lead to tragic deaths.

This gender-based violence discourages women from getting involved politically and is creating a democratic deficit. It is the responsibility of States to ensure that political institutions are inclusive and accessible to all. This requires stronger enforcement of fundamental constitutional principles and the adoption of legislation specifically prohibiting harassment against women in politics.

In other aspects of public life, such as civil society and the media, women are still underrepresented. Especially female journalists and women human rights defenders are disproportionately exposed to discrimination as well as psychological and physical violence.

It goes without saying, that any action taken to further protect women from violence in public life must follow an intersectional approach. Indeed, women of colour, indigenous women, and women in the LGBTQ+ community often suffer from multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination in all walks of life. To tackle the aforementioned issues in a sustainable manner, it is of utmost importance to deconstruct existing social stereotypes surrounding the role of women and men and strengthen the notion of gender equality among children already at a young age.

I thank you.