

ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION IN 2020

The United Nations (UN) will celebrate in 2020 the **25th Anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action**¹ (1995) which embed a strong agenda for equality and the empowerment of women. 2020 will mark the 20th anniversary of the UN Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security and the 10th anniversary of UN Women. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, NGOs from all over the regions of the world are invited to nurture the debates.

Twenty years later, the state of gender equality and the empowerment of women has evolved across the world. Yet, strong efforts still remain ahead and local governments are at the front line of shaping mindsets and policies.

Complying with its policy priority on Gender Equality and in particular promoting female participation in local decision making, UCLG will contribute to the Beijing+25 celebration process throughout the year.

This briefing aims at providing key information on what the process looks like, the key moment and opportunities for the local and regional government movements facilitated by UCLG to participate.

The following moments are worth highlighting:

1. The 64th session of the **Commission on the Status of Women (CSW64)**, 9-20 March 2020, New York, (USA)
2. The **Generation Equality Forum**, 7-8 May 2020, Mexico City (Mexico), and 7-10 July 2020, Paris, France
3. The 75th session of the **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA75)**. 15-30 September 2020, New York, (USA)

Historically, limited space has been dedicated to local and regional governments in these processes. Spaces need to be conquered in a highly populated space of NGOs and Women Groups. The UCLG strategy is to seek partnerships and to work in collaboration with some of the national governments where our memberships has a strong base.

Beijing Declaration and Action Platform

Adopted at the UN's Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing, China, 1995), the Beijing Declaration and Action Platform is still today one of the most important global agenda for equality and the empowerment of women. It embeds twelve critical areas of concerns for women globally and calls governments, the public sector, civil society and the private sphere to take action on them:

Women and poverty, Education and training of women, Women and health, Violence against women, Women and armed conflict, Women and the economy, Human rights of women, Women and the media, Women and the environment, The girl-child, **Women in power and decision-making, Institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women**

These last two have been the key focus of the work of our organization at global level.

¹ https://beijing20.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/csw/pfa_e_final_web.pdf

1. CSW64: the 64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

On 9-20 March 2020, the United Nations will hold the **64th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women** (CSW64) in New York. Representatives of Member States, UN entities, NGOs and other strategic partners from all over the regions of the world are invited to attend the session.

The main focus of the Session in March 2020 will be the **review of the appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration**, an assessment of the challenges that affect the implementation of the Platform for Action and the achievement of gender equality towards the full realization of equality, for a fair sustainable urban development for all.

Although the space dedicated to local and regional authorities remains limited, March 2020 will be a crucial step towards the achievement of gender equality as it is a critical opportunity for UCLG to **make the commitment of local and regional governments for equality and the empowerment of women visible on the international stage** in order to achieve sustainable, democratic and peaceful societies for all communities.

Committee on the Status of Women (CSW)

Established as a functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)², the Committee on the Status of Women (CSW) is known as "***the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women***". Established in 1947, its mandate was expanded in 1996, to "*taking a leading role in monitoring and reviewing progress and problems in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and in mainstreaming a gender perspective in UN activities.*"³

For action:

- UCLG will present a statement based on the texts adopted in Durban
- Formal speaking slot in general discussion will be requested.
- Local and Regional Development Day for Gender Equality will be organized on the localization of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.
- Join side-event(s) led by UCLG members and their governments:
 - SALAR, CEMR-SWEDEN side-event on the need to acknowledge the important role local and regional level play in achieving the goals set out in the Beijing Platform for Action and the SDG Agenda (10 January 2020, TBC).
 - CEMR side-event on Local solution to global gender equality challenges (12 January 2020).
 - Others to be confirmed.
- From March to May UCLG will gather blogs and stories from our membership highlighting efforts on Gender Equality. A tutorial on this initiative will be shared in January.

2. The Generation Equality Forum

The **Generation Equality Forum** will gather stakeholders from civil society, the public and private sectors, governments and all key actors interested and working on gender equality and the empowerment of women for the sustainable development of societies. It is seen as part and parcel of the Beijing+25 celebration. The **Generation Equality**

² See ECOSOC resolution 11(II) of 21 June 1946 [https://undocs.org/en/E/RES/11\(II\)](https://undocs.org/en/E/RES/11(II))

³ See ECOSOC resolution 1996/6 <https://undocs.org/en/E/1996/96>

Forum will be co-chaired by France and Mexico, with the leadership and partnership of civil society.

The Forum will kick-off in **Mexico City, Mexico**, on 7-8 May 2020, and culminate in **Paris, France**, on 7-10 July 2020. The Forum will build on the results of the 64th session of the CSW, and be informed by the Beijing+25 multi-stakeholder regional consultations which will have been organized prior to CSW64 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; Geneva, Switzerland; Bangkok, Thailand; Amman, Jordan, and Santiago de Chile, Chile.

UCLG World Secretariat is in contact with the focal points of the Fora in Mexico and France. Possible ways to **create spaces that promote the local perspective of local and regional governments on gender equality** are being explored.

Generation Equality Forum

The Generation Equality Forum is a “civil society-centred, multi-stakeholder, global gathering for gender equality, convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France.” It has been set up as a “**global public conversation for urgent action and accountability for gender equality** and will celebrate the power of women’s rights activism, feminist solidarity, and youth leadership to achieve transformative change. It will take stock of progress and set an agenda of concrete action to realize gender equality before 2030.”⁴

For action:

- Organize a Women in Local Government Event in the Mexico Forum.
- Organize a Local Governments for Equality event in Paris
- Development of partnerships with civil society in both fora

3. UNGA75: The 75th session of the UN General Assembly

In September 2020, the results of both the CSW64 and the Generation Equality Forum will be carried through to the high-level segment of the **75th session of the UN General Assembly**, when the United Nations will officially commemorate the 25th Anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It will further mark the 5th Anniversary of the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**⁵, which aims as one of its **Sustainable Development Goals** to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls (**SDG5**).

UCLG is exploring ways to highlight the role of local and regional governments in all of these agendas, building on the policy recommendations made in Durban.

For action:

- Explore possibilities for the organization of a local and regional governments hearing within the framework of the 75 years’ celebration.
- Organize an event on Local Governments and the Implementation Decade of the Global Agendas.

Next Steps

- Inform the World Secretariat if you are planning to participate in any of the events above.
- Request accreditation to the New York events through your national government.

⁴ See <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2019/7/announcer-generation-equality-forum>

⁵ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

- Contact your national governments to identify focal points for this processes and advocate for the local and regional government aspect to be taken into account.
- Inform the World Secretariat of any activity or opportunity that might be relevant.
- Identify initiatives that can mark the Beijing+25 celebration in your country.

Ideas welcome! Follow us to see new opportunities to highlight our commitment to equality and in particular gender equality. We are an equality driven movement!