



Geneva

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Statements on behalf of the EU

UNECE Beijing+25 Review Conference - Item 7. Education for Gender Equality

Thank you, Mme. Moderator,

On behalf of the European Union and its Member States, I would like to thank the panelists for this valuable discussion.

Quality education is a key element of empowerment. It is a crucial tool to tackle negative social norms and gender stereotypes. Quality education paves the way into work and independence, including economic independence, for all girls and boys, so that they can build their skills and knowledge including ICT-skills.

Quality education is key to empowering girls and fundamental to build one's own way in life. In 2020, through the Rights Equality and Citizenship programme, the EU will finance projects to tackle gender stereotypes in education. This programme will finance activities and projects aiming to promote non-discrimination; combat racism, xenophobia, homophobia and other forms of intolerance; promote rights of persons with disabilities; promote equality between women and men and gender mainstreaming; prevent violence against children, young people, women and other groups at risk, and others.

We acknowledge the importance of investment in education, especially human rights education, which contributes to protecting the dignity of all human beings and building societies where human rights are respected, targeting youth, especially girls and young women. Together with our partners, Governments, UN and civil society are aiming to achieve key objectives for gender equality in accessing knowledge and skills; developing skills for employment; and unlocking the potential offered by research, technology and innovation and the digital economy.

Girls are strongly affected and more likely to be out of school in crisis situations. The specific needs of girls need to be considered across the humanitarian-development nexus. Encouraging girls' education is a

crucial element also in development cooperation.

The EU is committed to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of all human rights and to the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the outcomes of their review conferences and remains committed to sexual and reproductive health and rights, in this context.. Having that in mind, the EU reaffirms its commitment to the promotion, protection and fulfilment of the right of every individual to have full control over, and decide freely and responsibly on matters related to their sexuality and sexual and reproductive health, free from discrimination, coercion and violence. The EU further stresses the need for universal access to quality and affordable comprehensive sexual and reproductive health information, education, including comprehensive sexuality education, and health-care services.

All this is key for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. It is also essential for keeping girls at school by helping understanding their specific needs, fighting gender-based stereotypes and engaging men and boys in gender equality.

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