

**AMNESTY
INTERNATIONAL**



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**The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60)
Sixtieth Session
14-24 March 2016**

Item 3: General Discussion – NGO Oral Statements¹

Your Excellences,

With the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals, UN Member States reaffirmed their commitments to gender equality, and the empowerment and human rights of all women and girls, including their sexual and reproductive rights. Making these a reality is of paramount importance.

Despite some progress, gender inequality remains entrenched in every society. Women and girls continue to experience gender discrimination and multiple human rights violations. These are compounded when a woman or girl is poor, young or belongs to a marginalised group, such as the LGBTI or Indigenous communities.

¹ See AI's full written statement here:
www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=E/CN.6/2016/NGO/93

High global rates of gender-based violence persist. Perpetrators of violence frequently enjoy impunity, while survivors struggle to access justice, remedies and support services. Refugee women and girls frequently lack protection. Women are left out of conflict resolution and peace building processes, without equal access to reparations and decision-making.

States are failing to provide access to health care information, goods and services needed by women and girls, such as safe abortion, emergency contraception, family planning, and crucially, comprehensive sexuality education for young women and girls.

To truly achieve equality, we urge Member States to take the following steps to implement their obligations:

- Dismantle gender stereotypes, which stop women and girls from fully exercising their rights, and ensure customs, traditions or religion are not used to justify discrimination or harmful practices.
- Reform discriminatory laws, policies and practices in line with States' obligations to respect, protect and fulfil women and girls' human rights.
- Ensure the Sustainable Development Goals, targets and indicators at national and regional level, as well as national implementation policies and programmes, are gender-sensitive, rights-based and inclusive.
- Ensure women and girls are able to effectively participate in the planning, implementation and monitoring of the Sustainable Development Goals, including by guaranteeing women-led civil society organisations and women

human rights defenders have the capacity, resources and mechanisms to meaningfully engage and be heard without fear of harassment, intimidation and violence.

- Allocate and acquire appropriate resources to implement the agenda, including by strengthening global partnerships, generating domestic resources, and holding the private sector to account in line with human rights obligations.
- Finally, ensure accountability at the national, regional and global levels and engage all relevant stakeholders, especially the most marginalized and discriminated against.

No more excuses and delays. It's now time to make gender equality, and the empowerment and human rights of all women and girls a reality.

I thank you for your attention.