"The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls: Why it matters for sustainable development"

When: Tuesday, 15 March 2016, 13.15-14.30
Venue: UN Headquarters, Conference Room 8

Speakers:
- Ms. Jet BUSSEMAKER, Minister for Education, Culture and Science of the Netherlands
- Ms. Gabriele HEINISCH-HOSEK, Minister for Education and Women's Affairs of Austria
- Ms. Bathabile DLAMINI, Minister for Social Development of South Africa
- Ms Věra JOUROVÁ, Commissioner for Justice, Consumer and Gender equality, European Union
- Ms. Alejandra NEGRETE, National Commissioner on Preventing and Eradicating Violence Against Women, Mexico
- Ms Iratxe GARCÍA PÉREZ, Chair of the Women’s rights and gender equality Committee of the European Parliament, European Union

Respondents:
- Ms Samira MERAI-FRIAA, Minister of Woman, Family and Childhood, Tunisia

Moderator:
- Ms. Lakshmi PURI, Deputy Executive Director of UN Women

"The elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls" - the review theme for this 60th session of the CSW - is closely linked to its priority theme of "Women’s empowerment and its link to sustainable development". Gender equality is pre-condition for sustainable development and both cannot be achieved as long as violence against women exists. For this reason, the EU and its partner countries decided to organise this side-event putting the spotlight on violence against women. The experience of Austria, Mexico, the Netherlands and Tunisia will be presented by the respective ministerial level representatives to share their different experiences and to learn from each other. The EU Commissioner for Justice, Citizenship and Gender equality and the chair of the Women’s Rights Committee of the European Parliament will also provide a European perspective on the phenomenon. The event will be introduced and moderated by the Deputy Executive Director UN Women who will frame the event in the broad context of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, which in its universality involves all countries in the world. The event will take the form of a dialogue between the speakers and the moderator and hereafter an interactive discussion with the public.
The protection and promotion of women’s and girls’ rights and gender equality are essential pre-conditions for equitable and inclusive sustainable development, and important values and objectives in themselves. They are also a pre-condition for peace and security worldwide and help to counter radicalisation and extremism, which denigrate women and violate their rights and dignity. Women’s and girls’ rights, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls are at the core of the UN’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, both as a stand-alone goal and as a cross-cutting issue integrated into the targets and indicators of all the sustainable development goals. The elimination of all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres, including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation is now a target of the new 2030 Agenda for sustainable development. Twenty years after the Beijing Platform for Action identified combating violence against women as one of the twelve areas of concerns, the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development finally also recognised that there cannot be sustainable development if violence against women persists.

Violence against women and girls is a violation of women’s rights to dignity and integrity and hinders them from enjoying a full life. It is a violation of human rights. Furthermore, violence against women and girls is one of the many manifestations of gender inequalities around the world, and at the same time it is also an impediment to achieving real equality in other fields. It limits women’s full and active participation in the labour market, in decision-making, and indeed in society in general.

Therefore, this side-event will explore the relation between violence against women and girls and other expressions of inequality, and above all, focus on the elimination of violence against women and girls in all its forms as an integral part of a larger push for equality between women and men in all spheres of life and for sustainable development in general.

So as to cover the topic from a broad range of angles, the participants could be asked to focus on a specific aspect of violence and women’s empowerment sharing their experience as regards effective implementation of national and international laws, effective policy measures, the work at regional level, tackling cultural norms through awareness-raising and other tools, violence against women and the links with economic independence and the economy, the challenge of under-reporting, data collection, monitoring and accountability, etc. The moderation by the Deputy Executive Director of UN Women will ensure the integration of these different aspects and dimensions into the broader framework of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development.

All are invited. For further information, please contact: Moana.GENEVEY@eeas.europa.eu
The event will be held in English. No interpretation will be provided.
A light lunch will be served.