Gender equality as a good of humanity

Tuesday, March 13, 2018, 6:30 p.m. to 7:45 p.m.
Conference Room D

Gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls is a goal of 193 countries in the world, approved in 2015 as the fifth Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) in the 2030 Agenda. In addition, all Member States of the General Assembly of the United Nations decided that this objective should be taken into account and made effective in each of the SDGs. This is clear evidence of how much progress has been made on the rights of women in the last 40 years.

Likewise, Latin America and the Caribbean have drafted the Montevideo Strategy, which contributes to making it possible in our region for the gender perspective to be mainstreamed in all the SDGs. In fact, both documents are framed in the multiple instruments of international and regional human rights law, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979) and the Inter-American Convention to Prevent, Punish and Eradicate Violence against Women (Convention of Belem do Pará, 1994).

The Agenda for Gender Equality is today a central part of the good in the world. It has an importance and consensus both regionally and internationally. It has been demonstrated that the discriminatory sexual division of labour and women’s lack of empowerment and poor representation in political and social life has been to the detriment of the global community as a whole.

But gender equality today faces a series of threats from different groups and sectors, communicated by different terms and means. Knowing that women’s rights are human rights and therefore progressive, it is essential to discourage and counteract these currents of thought, de facto powers, positions and expressions that, from a skewed religious, political or social perspective, attempt to dismantle the gains that women have made over the last few decades.

This roundtable seeks to reaffirm the value of gender equality and its concrete benefits for democracies, economies and societies. From a regional comparative perspective, the multiple anti-gender and anti-human rights movements and discourses will be analyzed, and response strategies will be shared with a view to consolidating efforts and reaffirming the global commitment to this objective.

Preliminary Agenda

18:30 Welcome and introduction of the panelists
- Carmen Moreno, Executive Secretary, Inter-American Commission of Women, OAS

18:35 Regional Panel
- Americas: Ana María Choquehuanca, President of the Inter-American Commission of Women, OAS and Minister for Women and Vulnerable Populations
- Europe: Vilija Blinkeviciute, President of the Commission on Women’s Rights and Gender Equality (FEMM), European Parliament
- Africa: Mmapaseka Steve Letsike, Chair, South African National AIDS Council

19:15 Commentators
Introduction: Gillian Kane, Senior Policy and Advocacy Advisor, Ipas
- Americas: Sandra Chaher, Director, Civil Association Comunicación para la Igualdad (Communication for Equality)
- Europe: Joanna Maycock, Director, European Women’s Lobby
- Africa: Teresa Omondi-Adeitan, Executive Director, FIDA-Kenya

19:45 Closing and conclusions