Core issues of the Women and Media agenda: Violence against women journalists, Gender mainstreaming in media and ICT policy and Violence against women in media and digital contents

CSW 2018 Side Event organized by the Mexican Government in partnership with the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG)

UN Headquarters, New York
March 14, 2018, 11.30 am, Conference Room 12

Presentation

The Beijing Platform for Action (1995) and Section J, “Women and Media”, laid the foundation for a global agenda on gender and communication. Subsequently, the 47th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women in 2003 adopted this as its core theme. This was followed by an increasing series of international initiatives that have shown the holistic nature of the agenda and the need to improve gender equality in and through the media – for example, the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG), launched by UNESCO and more than 500 organizations, the UNESCO UNITWIN on Gender, Media and ICTs, the UN Women Global Compact ‘Step it up for gender equality in the media’, the Council of Europe (CE) Recommendation CM/Rec(2013)1 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender equality and media adopted in July 2013, the Recommendation CM/Rec(2017)9 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on gender equality in the audiovisual sector, drafted by international experts from the CE member states and Mexico, and adopted in September 2017, and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal number 5 on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

The impetus provided by feminist scholars, activists and media workers has been significant. However, these initiatives have not been always accompanied by the coordinated action of governments or by the firm commitment of media and ICT industries to end discrimination against women. As a consequence, there has been little documented progress and, in some areas, even regression. Three areas are of particular concern: violence against women journalists, lack of gender mainstreaming in media and ICT policy, and violence against women in media and digital contents.

Evidence shows there has been a severe increase of violence against women journalists, both offline and online. This is happening in a number of countries, but mostly in conflict and post-conflict countries where the human rights of women journalists have become more precarious. On the other hand, despite the clear importance of policies to improve gender equality in media and telecommunication companies,
recommendations made by the above initiatives have been disregarded. Finally, although ending violence against women and girls in media content is fundamental to the BPfA Strategic Objective J.1, instead of decreasing, sexism and misogyny in media have risen dramatically. In addition the new digital environment has enhanced some existing problems and presents new challenges that need to be addressed – such as sex trafficking in social networks, easily accessible violent pornography, online intimidation and silencing of women, and more.

An urgent response from member states is needed, in coordination with UN agencies, universities, NGOs, regulatory bodies, unions, practitioners and media and ICT sectors. The purpose of this Side Event is to bring into CSW the debates around these three issues, and a set of guidelines that could serve as a catalyst for an international coordinated action.

**Key message**

As stated at the 47th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women Recommendation in 2003, States should take a lead advocacy role with respect to media and ICT and gender equality. To mark the occasion of Women and Media as the Review Theme for CSW 2018, the purpose of this Side Event promoted by the Mexican Government in partnership with the Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG), is to promote a review of the advances and challenges posed today by the recommendations made in 2003, and the development of an action plan for the 21st century. The aim is to open up a multistakeholder debate around three of the central issues of the agenda - violence against women journalists, gender mainstreaming in media and ICT policy and violence against women in media and digital contents - in order to devise an agreed international coordinated action to improve gender equality in and through the media and ICT.

**Format and participation**

The side event will bring together different stakeholders that will include Government representatives, the UN system, civil society, scholars, women’s and youth organizations and the media sector.

The debate will start with a 10 minutes presentation by panelists followed by an interactive dialogue among multiple stakeholders.

**Participants**

Lorena Cruz, National Institute of Women President

Aimée Vega Montiel, Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG) Chair / National Autonomous University of Mexico (UNAM) Researcher
Gülser Corat, UNESCO Director of the Division for Gender Equality
Oisika Chakrabarti, UN Women (tbc)
Liri Kopaçi-Di Michele, Council of Europe Head of the Equality Division
Maria Edström, Swedish Delegate to CSW / University of Gothenburg
Rosa Monteiro, Portugese Delegate to CSW/ Vice Minister of Citizenship and Equality
Moderator: Carolyn Byerly, Howard University Researcher

Language

English / Spanish (simultaneous translation)

This event will be streamed at UN.tv