



Statement by H.E. Bob Rae (Canada)

President of the Economic and Social Council

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(CSW69) - Interactive dialogue

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Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the co-facilitators, Fergel and Gladys, for allowing me to say a few words today and joining all of you in this good discussion.

As some of you may recall, I had the pleasure of participating in this dialogue on March 13, and I look forward to hearing more views on how to accelerate the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and suggestions on how to strengthen the role of the Commission on the Status of Women.

It's been a busy time the last week. I've had many occasions to give opening remarks and various words of warning and encouragement to people about the challenges we're facing. I want to be very clear with all of you, as I have been before, and say it one more time: gender equality is an essential aspect of the human dignity of each and every one of us, and none of us should be afraid to speak those words and to use those words to describe the vision and objective that we have.

Our goal is gender equality. Our goal is real, genuine, deep equality between all members of the human family, and to make it very clear that policies of inclusion and diversity and equity are central to the achievement of these goals. I think it's important that we emphasize that point all the time.



However, we must also admit that while there are advancements to celebrate, as the Chairman has pointed out—many hard-won gains, changes in policy in country after country after country that have made a significant difference in the participation of women and of people of all backgrounds and all aspects of life present in our midst, including members of the LGBTQI community—it's very important for us to continue, because unless we do, the 2030 Agenda and the vision of Beijing will remain out of reach. That is why today's dialogue is so important.

Yes, CSW has helped to shape the global debate, and CSW—bringing women together and men together and people of all backgrounds together, all nations together, nation states and civil society—the Commission has helped to build momentum for change at every level of government.

At the same time, we have to recognize that the success of CSW is not only in words. Sometimes we think that if we give just one more speech, that'll make a difference. Well, I'm in the business of making speeches, so I'd like to think it makes a difference. But I'm under no illusions. It is much more important for us to measure the actions that our nation states take. It is much more important for us to measure how well the UN itself is doing. And it's much more important for us to hold both nation states and the United Nations organizations accountable for what they do and what they don't do, and to use CSW as a vital tool to measure and to assess and to bring into action the quality of that assessment and that process of accountability.

So when we talk about reforming and revitalizing CSW, in my opinion, we're not just talking about a process. The UN lives and thrives on process. It loves process. Well, I think all of you—and certainly I do—I value outcomes and I value accountability just as much as I value the importance of a democratic and inclusive process.



And so we have a right, it seems to me, to focus on the question of how do we measure progress, how do we measure outcomes, and how do we ensure that those who are accountable are actually able to deliver on what they're supposed to deliver.

Accountability, data, and outcomes.

I look forward to hearing from you and your opinions. I've given you mine.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak with you today. Merci beaucoup.