

Open Letter to Delegates at the UN CSW 70

Regarding the U.S. DISMANTLING OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION

Honorable Delegates,

March 18, 2026

The European and North American NGO CSW Caucus, representing 27 EU countries, the US and Canada wishes to express its deepest concern regarding the United States' actions during negotiations at the 70th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. These actions risk undermining the long-standing commitments to women established under the Beijing Platform for Action, adopted at the Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995.

By moving to block consensus and casting a lone “No” vote against the global community, the United States has shifted from position of leadership it once held on women’s rights, to one of active obstruction and promoting regression of rights rather than progress. Fundamental human rights are not bargaining chips.

The eight amendments proposed by the United States were not simple clarifications; they represented a deliberate dilution of established human rights commitments towards women and girls. Efforts to strike references to “gender” and “reproductive health” weaken the legal language designed to protect women and girls. We reject attempts to reopen a 30-year international consensus for contemporary political signaling.

The attempt to separate “biological sex” from “gender” risks dividing the global women’s movement by creating a hierarchy of protection that leaves the most vulnerable—including trans women and other marginalized groups—without meaningful legal recourse. A right that is not universal becomes a privilege that can be withdrawn easily by partisan politics. If not everyone is guaranteed a right, then no one’s right is truly secure.

Further, the focus on technical court procedures, while removing references to structural barriers, undermines meaningful access to justice. There can be no genuine justice without addressing:

- **Bodily Autonomy:** Removing references to reproductive rights undermines justice for those who lack control over their own bodies.
- **Digital Safety:** Prioritizing technology-sector “free speech” arguments over the safety of women online enables and perpetuates technology-facilitated and unaccountable violence against women and girls.

A sole vote of one against 36 signals isolation of the US and rejection of proposals rather than constructive engagement. We call on the US to immediately cease efforts that weaken the foundations of the Beijing commitments and to uphold the integrity of international human rights forums for women and girls.

All governments must keep the Beijing Platform for Action as the floor—not the ceiling—of global commitments to women’s rights. And, make no mistake, women will not allow that floor to be lowered, ever.

Respectfully,



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