

***HIGH-LEVEL EVENT COMMEMORATING THE 25<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN AND ADOPTION OF THE BEIJING  
DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION (1995), JOINTLY ORGANIZED BY  
THE VIENNA-BASED FUNCTIONAL COMMISSIONS OF THE ECOSOC***

*12 June 2020 \* 15:00 - 17:00 hrs. \* Virtual*

A little bit more than 25 years ago and not very far from where we are today, the distinguished Mexican Ambassador Mrs Olga Pellicer spent a weekend with a small group at the Mexican Mission in Vienna, crafting what would become the draft of the Platform for Action adopted together with the Political Declaration, at the Beijing Conference of 1995.

Ambassador Pellicer and her group of bright and talented women understood at that time that, as important as it is, political will is just but the first step of a journey, that needs to be traced and travelled with concrete actions. Infused of that spirit, I immediately and enthusiastically accepted the honor of taking part in this panel, on behalf of Vienna-based International Gender Champions, together with Ms Khojesta Fana Ebrahimkhel from Afghanistan.

Recently my Government undertook the step of transforming its foreign policy into a Feminist one. That means that, more than ever before, all our actions including in the multilateral arena are aimed at advancing on empowering women and girls and guaranteeing that they will have equal opportunities in life.

Your appointment, Madame Waly, sends a strong message to young girls around the world that there is not a level of responsibility nor an area of professional development that women

cannot undertake or where they cannot excel at. We are looking forward to continuing working with you in advancing a Gender agenda for UNOV and UNODC.

While paying homage to Ambassador Pellicer and the women and men that gave to us the Beijing Declaration and its Plan for Action, I would like to praise the new generation of leaders, such as the mater-mind of this event, Doris Rechs, for bringing us together with the intention of having our joint political wills transforming into concrete actions. For that purpose, the presence of you, Madame Waly, and of my dear friends, colleagues and certainly champions themselves, Ambassador Khan and Ambassador Marcondes, is the proper way for ensuring that Vienna is fully engaged in contributing to realize gender equality and for empowering all women and girls, by having both the Office and the governing bodies engaging at the highest level on advancing this cause.

In terms of the implementation of the commitments contained in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the contribution of Vienna, particularly UNODC related, is three-fold:

1) firstly, consider the involvement of women in crime and its repercussions in all its dimensions, that is to say, not limiting our approach to the pretension that the relation between women and girls is limited to them being victims of certain types of crime, such as trafficking, violence, harassment and abuse. As with the case of men and boys, women and girls are on both side of the equation, both as victims and perpetrators. Ignoring their ability to engage in and the contribution that they are already making on preventing and combatting crime is preposterous.

2) Secondly, create the conditions both in Headquarters and in the field to help women engage in and advance their careers on issues related to drugs, crime and corruption, and provide assistance to countries with the same goal. We need to rush for reaching soon a time in which merits and capacities are the only condition for promoting a person, being a woman or a man.

3) Thirdly, UNODC has to be the Gender Champions towards all the other, UN and not, international organizations based in Vienna. Here, I will jump on one of the possible next steps following today's high-level event: a gathering piloted by you, Madame Waly, in which all those other organizations, including the likes of OSCE, OPEC or even the Wassenaar Arrangement, look into how they can advance, internally and within their mandates, the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action.

In those efforts, the contribution of the Chairpersons of the governing bodies. It is not about looking for quotas or sparkling here or there a woman on a panel. It is about exercising your leadership and guidance for guaranteeing that either discussions or decision of your respective bodies are addressing gender issues in all its dimensions.

It is for all of us to foster an enabling and inclusive environment for meaningful and substantive participation by women in the meetings of the CND and CCPCJ, but also for them to undertake any task at UNOV or UNODC, or at any other entities based in Vienna. The Code of Conduct for the UN System events presented some months ago is one of many tools that can help in those efforts.

I will stop my intervention at this point to give the opportunity to others to participate in this discussion. Thank you very much again for granting me this honor.