

**USING GENDER INCLUSIVE COMMUNICATION IN THE WORK OF
VIENNA-BASED INTERGOVERNMENTAL BODIES**

(Monday November 25th – 10:00am)

Dear Mrs and Mr Chairpersons of the Commissions on Narcotic Drugs; and, on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice;

My dear friends Alena & Mirghani:

Let me start by expressing my deepest appreciation for considering me again to participate in the **“Let’s Talk Gender”** initiative of the Secretariat to the Governing Bodies.

As some of you are aware, during the last Vienna Discussion Forum 2019 on *“Ending violence against women through crime prevention, criminal justice responses and women’s economic empowerment”*, I referred to the series of events and gatherings that are taking place these days related to the issue of Gender and Violence, including this meeting. And, I highlighted the pertinence of having all these meeting that enable us to address fully the complexities and the different challenges that Women and Girls are facing around the world, as well as, the possible responses from us, and, in this particular case, from the Governing Bodies of the UNODC.

I would like to start then, by recalling the recognition made by some of my fellow panelists in that meeting, on the undeniable advances made in the field in the past couple of decades, and on how the developments at the International Fora have been, in not few cases, the catalyzers for positive changes at the national level.

It is fair to rejoice from those developments, provided that we remain mindful that more, much more, needs to continue to be done. For instance, in the case of sexual exploitation and abuse, we need to quickly advance in recognizing the different dimension of victim and survivor, and in identifying and addressing the short, mid- and long-term needs of the latter.

Another need is to fully understand that crime, safety, rule of law, *et al.*, are not and cannot be treated as a “Gentlemen’s club”, as they do not only have a gender perspective that has to always be taken into account; and, that the needs and involvement of girls and women, either as victims, perpetrators, security and justice officers or activists have to be fully recognized and fostered. We have the data presented during the past days, including during

the *Food for Thought* session on **Security Council Resolution 1325 (UNSCR 1325) on Women, Peace, and Security and its link to UNODC mandates**, about the difference, a very positive one, of women involvement on safety and security issues.

Last Thursday, I referred to a number of projects being currently undertaken by the UNODC Mexico's Office for Liaison and Partnership and I would like to mention again just a couple of them: Chuka - Break the Silence, the Gender and Justice Programme, and the Spotlight Mexico Initiative. Those are examples that I am certain that our colleagues of UNODC will make available, as good practices for developing projects with a strong Gender orientation for addressing specific needs and challenges of women and girls.

Finally and regarding national practices on gender inclusive communication, I would like to share that Mexico's General Law for Equality between Women and Men has been reformed in order to establish the obligation of eliminating obstacles in the educational system impeding effective equality between women and men, and to promote that all government bodies refrain from using sexist and discriminatory stereotypes in all their official communications, incorporating instead an inclusive language.

The implementation of this law is enabled through several mechanisms, including the following:

- Manuals on inclusive communication, based on a model from the Institute for Women and adapted to the context of each government agency.
- An official set of Mexican Standards for Labor Equality and Non-Discrimination, adopted in 2015, which sets out clear guidelines for certification, including criteria on the use of inclusive, accessible and non-sexist language. Institutions are awarded bronze, silver or gold certificates, with an ongoing and periodical assessment process.
- The adoption, just last week, on 21 November, of an Agreement for Equality that will set in motion a National Programme for Equality with resources to accelerate progress towards gender equality.

We'll be happy to share these experiences with interested parties.

All of the UNODC Governing Bodies starting with the two Commissions should adopt similar directives, in order to guarantee that our communications, including resolutions, decisions *et al*, are always produced with a gender inclusive language. If deemed needed, UNODC could explore with UNWomen workshops for delegates and staff, alike, for attaining that goal.

Thank you.