

**Women's Commission**

**Information Note on**  
**the Sixtieth Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status**  
**of Women**

**Introduction**

This paper reports on the participation of the Women's Commission (WoC) at the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) from 14 to 15 March 2016 in New York.

**Background**

2. UNCSW is a functional commission of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), dedicated exclusively to gender equality and advancement of women. It is the principal global policy-making body on women's issues. Every year, representatives of Member States gather at the United Nations Headquarters in New York to evaluate progress on gender equality, identify challenges, set global standards and formulate concrete policies to promote gender equality and advancement of women worldwide. UNCSW normally meets for a period of 10 working days each year in early March.

**The 60<sup>th</sup> Session of UNCSW**

3. The 60<sup>th</sup> Session of CSW was held from 14 to 24 March 2016 in New York. The priority theme and review theme of the Session were

women's empowerment and the link to sustainable development, and the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls respectively. The Session also discussed the emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men.

4. The China delegation was led by Madam MENG Xiaosi, Vice-Chairperson of the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF). Mrs Stella LAU, WoC Chairperson and Miss Fiona LI, Principal Assistant Secretary for Labour and Welfare attended the first two days of the meeting as part of the China delegation.

5. The Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr BAN Ki-moon spoke at the opening of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of CSW. He shared with the participants his own experience of appointing more female members to take up prominent posts in the United Nations. Mr BAN then called for all nations to appoint more women to the respective national cabinets and parliaments so that women's voice could be better represented. In his speech, he also mentioned the United Nations' HeForShe Initiative and hoped that more men and boys would take part in the process of achieving full equality around the world.

6. Following the Secretary-General's opening statement, participants including representatives of Member States, United Nations entities from all regions of the world shared how they empowered women in their respective regions, as well as the significant role women leaders were playing in different aspects. A series of parallel events were organised by Member States and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to provide additional opportunities for exchange of information and sharing of experience and best practices on empowering women and eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls.

7. On the second day of the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of CSW, Member States were also invited to make voluntary presentations on the review theme

(i.e. the elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls). Madam MENG, on behalf of the China delegation, introduced China's strategies and progress in safeguarding women's rights and interests and eliminating violence against women through improving the legislation against domestic violence (DV), enhancing support service for DV victims and empowering women through public education campaigns.

### **Meeting in New York**

8. The opportunity was also taken to establish contact with representatives from women's groups in New York City, as well as individuals who are dedicated to advancing women's well-being. A breakfast meeting was hosted by the Hong Kong Economic and Trade Office in New York on 15 March 2016 at which WoC Chairperson met with participants coming from different backgrounds, including representatives of women's groups, senior female executives in the business and professional sectors, academics, and students. During the meeting, WoC Chairperson spoke on the latest development of women in Hong Kong and shared with the participants the new initiative announced by the Chief Executive in his 2016 Policy Address to implement a pilot scheme to encourage NGOs in the social welfare sector to refer to the Gender Mainstreaming Checklist developed by WoC and apply gender mainstreaming when formulating policies and programmes.

### **Networking with ACWF**

9. The Hong Kong SAR Delegation and the Macau SAR Delegation jointly hosted a networking dinner for the China Delegation on 14 March 2016. Apart from the members of the China Delegation, three other representatives from the Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the United Nations also joined the dinner. Participants exchanged ideas on various issues of concerns to women in China, Hong Kong, and Macau.

10. The Hong Kong delegates joined the delegation dinner reciprocated by Ambassador LIU Jieyi, Permanent Representative of the Permanent Mission of PRC to the United Nations on 15 March 2016 at the Mission of PRC to the United Nations.

**Advice sought**

11. Members are invited to note the contents of this paper.

**Women's Commission Secretariat**  
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