

WHOSE JUSTICE, WHOSE ACCESS?



8

Number of events

26+

Members present

2

Interventions

The 70th session of the Commission on the Status of Women on “access to justice” took place in a context shaped by rising anti-rights mobilisation, geopolitical tensions, and increasing pressure on multilateral spaces. Feminist civil society remained present and engaged throughout the session, navigating a more constrained environment while continuing to organise, advocate, and build collective positions.

OUR IMPACT

Throughout CSW70, the Women’s Major Group (WMG) was present alongside partners and members, engaging in feminist advocacy across the session.

At the same time, access to the space itself remained unequal. Many activists, particularly from the Global Majority, were unable to secure visas or did not feel safe travelling to the United States in the current political context. These constraints shaped who was able to be present and whose voices were heard. **Together with members we:**

Convened strategic dialogues between Member States and civil society, including a **closed-door working breakfast on UN80 reforms**, co-organised with the Feminist Diplomacy Lab

Co-organised multiple **parallel events** centring sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and access to justice.

Amplified member-led advocacy and interventions across regions.

Supported alignment of messaging and **collective positioning** during negotiations.

*“At CSW 70, we confirmed that the **Global North is not as 'global' as it is often perceived to be**, or at least that it does not act as a unified bloc on the gender agenda. In the face of this reality, feminist movements from around the world once again provided a historic example of political commitment, horizontal organizing, strategic vision, strategic coordination, and intersectional solidarity.”*

María Inés Re, RSMLAC, Argentina

WMG Latin America & Caribbean Organising Partner

HIGHLIGHTED EVENTS



AGAINST THE TIDE, TOWARDS THE FUTURE

A working breakfast on strengthening the UN gender equality architecture through



PROTECTING THOSE WHO PROTECT

Addressing political violence against SRHR defenders and pathways to justice. Organised together with Associació pels Drets

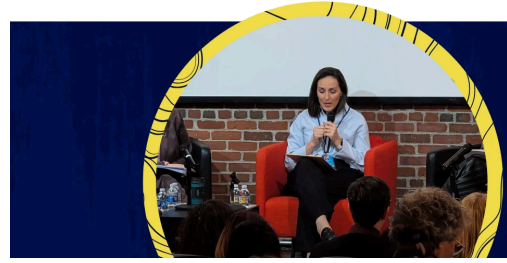
UN80 reforms. Organised together with [Feminist Diplomacy Lab](#).



UNLOCKING ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Strengthening justice systems to advance accountability for universal access to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR). Organised together with [ARROW](#), UN Women and the Regional Commissions New York Office.

Sexuals i Reproductius (ADSiR) and [Zamara foundation](#).



SPANISH FEMINIST COOPERATION STRATEGY

Discussing political and economic participation at event hosted by Spain. Women's Major Group Represented by [International Center for Research on Women](#).



KEY ADVOCACY MESSAGES

- 1 Address the **chronic underfunding of gender equality commitments**, including Member States failing to meet their financial obligations.
- 2 Defend and advance **sexual and reproductive health and rights** in increasingly hostile political environments.
- 3 Recognise the interlinkages between **gender justice, climate justice, economic inequality, and conflict**.
- 4 **Move beyond narrow “empowerment”** framings towards addressing structural inequalities and systemic barriers.

LET'S TALK ABOUT THE NEGOTIATIONS...

In an unusual development, negotiations on the [agreed conclusions](#) were concluded during the **first week** of CSW70. This early finalisation reflected heightened political tensions and a strategic effort by Member States to avoid prolonged and potentially contentious negotiations.

*“But here’s where it gets spicy: for the **first time in history, the conclusions weren’t adopted by consensus** but by a recorded vote. The final tally? 37 in favour, 1 against (USA), and 6 abstentions. The win for us is that the text is a feminist victory! It focuses on accelerating legal reforms, strengthening Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR), tackling GBV, and protecting our sisters on the frontlines—the women human rights defenders.”*

*From our member **FEMNET***

While this approach reduced open conflict, it also limited space for deeper deliberation and progressive ambition—highlighting heightened challenges within multilateral processes.

THE FUTURE OF THE UN AND ITS GENDER ARCHITECTURE

Discussions at CSW70 also intersected with ongoing debates around UN reform processes, including the **UN80 reform agenda**.

These reforms could have major implications for the UN’s gender equality architecture, including the mandates, funding, and influence of key gender equality institutions and mechanisms.

For many feminist organisations, this is a critical political moment. As discussions around restructuring and efficiency accelerate, there are growing concerns about shrinking civil society space and the potential weakening of gender equality commitments within the multilateral system.

Feminist engagement will be critical to ensure that institutional reforms:

- Strengthen—not weaken—gender equality commitments
- Protect existing gains

- Remain accountable to civil society and rights holders

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR WORK ON UN80

...THE UNITED STATES CHALLENGED DECADES OF CONSENSUS ON GENDER

CSW70 also saw a significant escalation in anti-rights organising. The United States introduced a proposal aimed at rolling back internationally agreed language on gender equality—effectively attempting to undermine decades of consensus grounded in the Beijing Platform for Action.

While the proposal was ultimately blocked on procedural grounds, "[no-action motion](#)", this should not be mistaken for a political defeat.

👉 Our joint analysis was reported by outlets such as [Ms. Magazine](#) and [PassBlue](#). Where we warned about how this move signals a broader and ongoing strategy to challenge gender equality norms across UN spaces.

At the same time, participants observed:

- A **stronger and more visible presence of organised anti-gender actors**
- Moments of coordinated disruption and public support for regressive positions
- A noticeable **reduction in progressive and feminist civil society presence**, increasing pressure on those present to remain engaged and coordinated



“At CSW70, discussions focused on leadership, equality, decision-making, ending gender-based violence, and building systems that leave no one behind. **A key message** was that gender equality cannot be separated from justice. It requires safety, accountability, protection, and systems that guarantee the rights of women and girls in all their diversity. Access to justice is therefore essential for gender equality, peace, and sustainable development.

Through moderating the side event *Strengthening Women’s Access to Justice: A Survivor-Centered Approach to GBV*, we contributed to global discussions on ensuring safe and effective access to justice for survivors. The event highlighted good practices from North Macedonia, Moldova, Sweden, and Czechia, as well as the vital role of civil society in partnership with governments.

A survivor-centered approach to justice places the rights, needs, safety, dignity, and agency of GBV survivors at the core of legal, policy, and institutional responses. CSOs, thanks to valuable expertise, in partnerships with state structure, can contribute to social and economic empowerment of GBV survivors, to legal awareness, safe referrals, and the provision of free legal aid.”

Valentina Bodrug-Lungu,

Gender-Centru, Moldova, Outgoing
Organising Partner for WMG for
ECA



MOVING FORWARD

CSW70 was a reminder that progress cannot be taken for granted—and that collective action remains our strongest tool.

In the lead-up to the [High-Level Political Forum \(HLPF\)](#), the Women's Major Group will continue convening feminist voices, supporting collective advocacy, and creating space for strategic exchange and solidarity across movements and regions.

Join us as we prepare for HLPF and future advocacy moments

Join us

Women's Major Group

c/o Women's Environment &
Development Organization (WEDO),
147 Prince St, Brooklyn
United States of America

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