**50th session of the Human Rights Council**

**Annual thematic panel discussion on technical cooperation and capacity-building**

***Theme: Technical cooperation on the full and effective participation of women  
in decision-making and in public life and on the elimination of violence,  
with a view to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls***

*Concept note (as of 24 June 2022)*

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| **Date and venue:** | **Monday, 4 July 2022, 10 a.m. to noon (UTC+2)  Room XX, Palais des Nations, Geneva, and online platform (Zoom)** *(will be broadcast live and archived on* [*https://media.un.org/en/webtv*](https://media.un.org/en/webtv)*)* |
| **Objective:** | The panel discussion provides a platform to share experiences on the activities and plans of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and United Nations country teams and civil society organizations to support States’ efforts to promote and protect the rights of women to full and effective participation in decision-making and in public life and to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls. |
| **Chair:** | **H.E. Mr. Muhammadou M.O. Kah**, Vice-President of the Human Rights Council |
| **Opening statement:** | **Ms. Nada Al-Nashif**, United Nations Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights |
| **Moderator:** | **H.E. Ms. Suphatra Srimaitreephithak**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva |
| **Panellists:** | * **H.E. Ms. Shara Duncan Villalobos**, Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Costa Rica to the United Nations Office and other international organizations in Geneva * **Dr. Najat Maalla M’jid**, Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children *(video message)* * **Mr. Bafana Khumalo,** Global co-chair, MenEngage Alliance, and co-founder, Sonke Gender Justice *(video message)* |
| **Outcomes:** | The expected outcomes of this thematic discussion are as follows:   * Shared information on good practices in implementing technical cooperation and capacity-building activities to promote the full and effective participation of women in decision-making and in public life and to eliminate gender-based violence against women and girls; * Improved awareness of States on opportunities for technical cooperation in this area, making use of the technical capacities and expertise available in the United Nations system and other actors. |
| **Mandate:** | In its [resolution 48/24](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/RES/48/24), the Human Rights Council decided to focus the annual panel discussion under agenda item 10 on technical cooperation on the full and effective participation of women in decision-making and in public life and on the elimination of violence, with a view to achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. |
| **Format:** | The panel discussion will be limited to two hours. The opening statement and initial presentations by the panellists will be followed by a two-part interactive discussion and conclusions from the panellists. A maximum of one hour will be set aside for the podium, which will cover the opening statement, panellists’ presentations, and their responses to questions and concluding remarks. The remaining hour will be reserved for two segments of interventions from the floor, with each segment consisting of interventions from 12 States or observers, 1 national human rights institution and 2 non-governmental organizations.  The list of speakers for the discussion will be established through the online inscription system and, as per practice, statements by high-level dignitaries and groups of States will be moved to the beginning of the list. Each speaker will have two minutes to raise issues and to ask panellists questions. Delegates who have not been able to take the floor due to time constraints will be able to upload their statements on the online system to be posted on the [HRC Extranet](https://hrcmeetings.ohchr.org/HRCSessions/RegularSessions/50/Pages/Panel%20discussions.aspx). |
| **Background:** | The rights of women to full, equal and meaningful participation in decision-making and in public life and of all women and girls to be free from all forms of gender-based violence are at the heart of the principles of equality of rights and respect for human dignity, and are essential for the realization of all other human rights. These rights are enshrined in numerous international and regional human rights instruments and documents, including the Beijing Declaration, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Rights of Child, the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action, the Maputo Protocol, the Convention of Belém do Pará, the Istanbul Convention and the Lanzarote Convention.  Ensuring women’s full and effective participation in decision-making and in public life and eliminating gender-based violence against women and girls are essential to achieving 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Secretary-General’s call to action for human rights, which places human rights at the centre of sustainable development, outlines actions for the United Nations system to advocate for, and support efforts towards, the equal rights of women and girls, with a focus on dismantling discriminatory laws, increasing the use of temporary special measures and protecting and expanding civic space for women and girls.  Recent experience demonstrates the importance of undertaking technical cooperation on the basis of the components of good practices elaborated by the Board of Trustees of the Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights and the Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance in the Implementation of the Universal Periodic Review. Strong leadership by national Governments and the international community is necessary for building an enabling legal and policy environment for the meaningful participation of all women and girls in public and political life and in decision-making, and for accelerating substantive gender equality and realizing human rights for all. Measures aimed at eliminating and preventing gender-based violence against women and girls should be designed and implemented with their meaningful participation. Diverse partnerships and effective participation by all stakeholders are also essential to ensure the empowerment of all women and girls to claim and enjoy their human rights and to ensure that no one is left behind. |
| **Background documents:** | * [Human Rights Council resolution 48/24](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G21/288/65/PDF/G2128865.pdf?OpenElement) of 11 October 2021 on enhancement of technical cooperation and capacity-building in the field of human rights * Report of OHCHR on technical cooperation and capacity-building to promote and protect the rights of women and girls to full and effective participation in decision-making and in public life and to freedom from violence ([A/HRC/50/62](https://www.ohchr.org/en/hr-bodies/hrc/regular-sessions/session50/list-reports)) * Report of the Chair of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Technical Cooperation in the Field of Human Rights ([A/HRC/49/93](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/49/93) ([advance unedited version](https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/2022-03/A_HRC_49_93_AdvanceEditedVersion.docx)), 17 March 2022) * [Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action](https://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/pdf/BDPfA%20E.pdf) * [Our Common Agenda: Report of the Secretary-General](https://www.un.org/en/content/common-agenda-report/assets/pdf/Common_Agenda_Report_English.pdf), 2021 * Report of the Working Group on discrimination against women and girls on the issue of discrimination against women in law and in practice ([A/HRC/23/50](http://undocs.org/A/HRC/23/50), 19 April 2013) * Reports of the Special Rapporteur on violence against women, its causes and consequences on violence against women in politics ([A/73/301](http://undocs.org/A/73/301), 6 August 2018) and on the intersection between the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and the pandemic of gender-based violence against women ([A/75/144](https://undocs.org/A/75/144), 24 July 2020) * Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, General recommendations [No. 23 (1997) on political and public life](https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CEDAW/Shared%20Documents/1_Global/INT_CEDAW_GEC_4736_E.pdf) and [No. 35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women](http://undocs.org/CEDAW/C/GC/35) * Committee on the Rights of the Child, General comments [No. 12 (2009) on the right of the child to be heard](http://undocs.org/CRC/C/GC/12) and [No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence](http://undocs.org/CRC/C/GC/13) |