

5 January 2021

Excellency,

I have the honour to refer to the sixty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW65) scheduled for 15 – 26 March 2021 and the modalities imposed by the corona virus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the session.

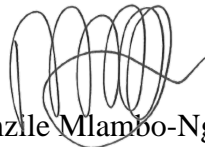
As we anticipate very limited, if any, travel of representatives from capitals to the United Nations Headquarters, I encourage Governments to contribute to the visibility, impact and traction of the work of the Commission, especially around the session's priority theme "Women's full and effective participation and decision-making in public life, as well as the elimination of violence, for achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls".

This can be done through increased and expanded activities at the national level, during the two weeks of the session, by 'bringing CSW home'. Such localization could be in the form of virtual or other events (circumstances permitting), such as panel discussions, round table dialogues, stakeholder events, and CSW viewing parties of segments of the session. This could involve key national and local actors, including the Minister responsible for gender equality, civil society, academia and researchers, the media and others. International Women's Day 2021 could build momentum for further events in conjunction with the two-week session.

UN Women, where we have a presence, will also seek to step up and support, or convene events. We will also endeavour to create some informal, virtual opportunities here at Headquarters where interested government and civil society representatives can 'drop in' for exchanging ideas and suggestions during the session.

Let me take this opportunity to express my solidarity with Member States who are fighting COVID-19 and extend my sincere condolences for their loss.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka  
Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director

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