

**Statement by the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Cyprus,  
Ambassador Andreas Hadjichrysanthou, in the Third Committee  
Agenda Item 25 « Advancement of Women»**

**78<sup>th</sup> Session of the United Nations General Assembly**

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Mr. Chair,

Cyprus fully aligns to the statement delivered by the European Union. Allow me to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

Despite positive steps and progress made in recent years, we are lacking behind our goal to achieve gender equality. The challenges are many, exacerbated by factors such as instability and fragility caused by conflicts, climate change and pandemics. It is indeed worrisome that at this critical midpoint, none of SDG 5 “Gender Equality” indicators are at “target met or almost met”, according to the latest gender snapshot report on SDGs progress.

Gender inequality is deeply rooted in stereotyped gender roles and historic inequalities which perpetuate the problem. It is, therefore, imperative to address its root causes; we need to push back against push backs on women’s rights around the world.

Cyprus is determined to intensify efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women and girls. We are committed to provide equal opportunities for the full, equal, and meaningful participation of all women and girls, in all their diversity, including for women and girls with disabilities. Cyprus has set as a top priority to gender mainstream all its policies and actions so to create a gender-responsive political, economic, and social framework, leaving no one behind. To achieve this goal, the Office of the

Commissioner of Gender Equality –soon to be institutionalized as a permanent structure within the Government of the Republic Cyprus—is preparing the new Strategy on Gender Equality 2024-2026. In this regard, gender focal points have been appointed in all relevant Ministries and Authorities, with the civil society having a prominent role in the drafting process of the new national strategy.

Mr. Chair,

Prevention and combating of all forms of violence against women and girls is within the highest priorities of the Republic of Cyprus. We strongly condemn sexual and gender-based violence in all its forms and manifestations; online and offline; in public and private spheres, in peacetime as well as in crisis and conflict. Sexual and gender-based violence is a major violation of human rights and a barrier for the advancement of all women and girls globally.

Allow me to specifically touch upon **gender-related killings**. Femicide is the most brutal and and extreme manifestation of violence against women and girls, taking place in all regions and countries around the world. According to statistics, in 2021, over five women and girls were killed by someone in their family, every hour. Numbers are alarmingly high when the true scale of femicide might be higher.

Last year, Cyprus' Parliament took a highly significant step adopting a law on *femicide*. The law was the first of such piece of legislation in Europe, integrating femicide into the Criminal Code as a distinct crime, rendering gender-related killings as an aggravating factor when imposing sentences.

Cyprus recognises the importance of taking appropriate and effective action towards eradicating the heinous crime of femicide around the world. During the 53<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council, we led a Join Statement on “Femicides and Human Rights” together with Israel, co-sponsored by 69 Member States from all regional groups. Additionally, together with Malta, UNODC and UN Women, we organized a side event during CSW67 last March in New York, breaking the silence on femicide.

Cyprus encourages all states to acknowledge the existence of femicide and define gender-related killings in their national legal frameworks. Furthermore, we encourage all states to develop prevention strategies to address femicide, including through education and training of law enforcement authorities, judicial officials, educators, health system workers, and other relevant stakeholders.

Mr. Chair,

Human Rights is the cornerstone of the multilateral system and a top priority for Cyprus' foreign policy. As a candidate for the Human Rights Council for 2025-2027 from the Asia-Pacific Group, Cyprus remains committed to the promotion, protection, and fulfilment of all human rights by all women and girls. We reaffirm our commitment to the international framework on gender equality, the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Programme of Action, as well as the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Human rights cannot be a privilege of few. It is our common responsibility to recognise and promote the positive role women have as agents of change. Their potential, perspectives, knowledge, and skills should be at the heart of our efforts to achieve real gender equality.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.