

Delegation from the Kingdom of Morocco
Position Paper for the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women

The topics before the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) are Eliminating Child, Early and Forced Marriage by 2030 and Supporting the Involvement of Women in Governance and Decision-Making. The Kingdom of Morocco considers these topics as highly important for achieving *the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and is looking therefore forward to work towards a solution at the upcoming conference.

I. Eliminating Child, Early, and Forced Marriage by 2030

The number of child marriages are slowly decreasing, however The United Nations Children's Fund provides the figures that still 12 million underaged girls are married of each year. Child, Early, and Forced Marriage (CEFM) is a violation of the human rights of every child. The victims are robbed of their perspectives in life, since CEFM makes them drop out of school early and leaves them with a high probability of domestic violence, early childbirth and poor health. There are various reasons for parents and custodians to marry their children of early, including poverty, traditions and social insecurity. Following, it is of high significance for the international community to change existing frameworks which allow and benefit CEFM and work towards securing the human rights of every child.

Eliminating CEFM is directly verbalized as the third target of the Sustainable Development Goal 5. Morocco already approached this goal in 2004 by greatly reforming and modernizing its existing family law (*Moudawana*) by enhancing the rights of women in marriage and family. One vital part of this reform was the raise of the minimum legal age of marriage to 18 years for both genders. Furthermore, Morocco doubled the enrolment of children in primary education between 1990 and 2013 to almost 100% and can also register a huge increase in secondary education, all due to several reforms of the educational system and the *Tayssir Programm*, which supports families in rural areas who keep sending their children to school with cash transfers since 2008. Moreover, the project of the *Integrated public policy for child protection* was adopted in 2015, which aims to build an effective protection system for children.

The Kingdom of Morocco stresses the importance of eliminating CEFM and encourages therefore all Member States to update their existing laws towards the prohibition of child marriage, if not already the case and the extension of the rights of girls and women to equalize them with the rights of boys and men. In addition, we recommend to invest in the domestic educational systems, as the education of girls is the most promising way to protect them from CEFM and thereby equip them with the self-confidence to lead a self-determined life. We furthermore suggest Member States with a low school attendance rate to introduce programmes which support parents with financial incentives to enable them to continue their children's education despite a challenging financial situation.

II. Supporting the Involvement of Women in Governance and Decision-Making

Until the present day, no country in the world has reached entire gender equality, although the equal representation of women and men is vital for an inclusive decision-making process in politics. Women balance the thematic discussion by stressing topics which are important especially for the female population of a country. However, in the present day only 11 out of more than 190 Head of States are female and only 12 women are Head of Government. In parliaments the situation is similar, only about 23% of all parliamentarians worldwide are female as UN-Women reports. The Kingdom of Morocco acknowledges this concerning situation and is eager to find solutions that empower women, particularly in governance and decision-making.

In 1993, the Kingdom of Morocco ratified the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (1979)* to strengthen the rights of females. Following, we changed our constitution in 2011 and laid special emphasise on the civil, political, social, and economic equalisation of women and men. Furthermore, the new constitution assures equal access of both genders to elective functions and reserves at least 60 seats in the parliament exclusively for women. Thereupon, the number of women occupying seats in the Moroccan parliament rose from 1% to 17% between 2000 and 2015, as the Overseas Development Institute reported. In 2015, Morocco also committed to the *Agenda 2030 for Sustainable development* and is working since then towards achieving its Goals.

As the Kingdom of Morocco is aware of the importance of an equal representation of women and men in political processes, we recommend all Member States to change their existing frameworks towards an easier and equal access for women in politics and furthermore encourage the Member States to introduce a quota for women in parliaments, to increase the involvement of women in governance. In addition, we suggest to illustrate the options women have in all fields of employment and especially in governance already to girls in school, so that girls and boys grow up with a modern understanding of the status of women in society and therefore take the involvement of women in governance and decision-making for granted and even demand it.