



**Interactive multistakeholder hearing on the priority theme of the 70<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

Friday, 30 January 2026

10:00am – 1:00pm (EST)

Conference Room 3, United Nations Headquarters

**Programme Outline and Speakers**

<b>Opening Segment of the multistakeholder hearing</b>	
<p>Speakers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• H.E. Ms. <b>Maritza Chan Valverde</b>, Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women</li> <li>• Ms. <b>Sima Bahous</b>, Executive Director, UN Women</li> </ul>	<p>The opening segment: establishes a shared understanding of access to justice as a structural, cross-cutting issue central to gender equality and sustainable development.</p>
<p><b>Panel Discussion - Transforming Systems: From Local Realities to Structural Reform</b></p> <p>Moderator: <b>Raquel Lagunas</b>, Director of Gender Equality, UNDP</p> <p>Panelists (3 min each):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mr. <b>Rio Hada</b>, OHCHR</li> <li>• H.E. Mr. <b>Michael Gort</b>, Deputy Permanent Representative of Canada to the United Nations</li> <li>• Mr. <b>Yassine Salah</b>, Deputy Permanent Representative of Tunisia to the United Nations</li> <li>• Ms. <b>Stephannie Esther Sayo</b>, Youth Activist, Lawyer and Human Rights Advocate (<i>virtual</i>)</li> <li>• Ms. <b>Piyumi Samaraweera</b>, CREA (<i>virtual</i>)</li> <li>• Ms. <b>Monica Aleman</b>, Ford Foundation (<i>virtual</i>)</li> </ul> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What systemic barriers and discriminatory practices continue to limit all women’s and girls’ full and effective access to justice especially in challenging contexts, and what innovative approaches can transform justice systems to become inclusive and equitable?</li> </ul>	

- How can justice reforms be accelerated to eliminate discriminatory laws and strengthen accountability mechanisms at all levels, from local to global, while ensuring sustainability and impact especially for the most structurally excluded?
- What concrete legal, institutional, and political accountability mechanisms are most effective in ensuring that commitments to gender-equal access to justice are implemented in practice, not only in law and policy?
- In what ways do partnerships and collective action achieve outcomes that individual efforts cannot, and how can multistakeholder collaboration drive systemic change?

### **Interactive discussion**

#### *Lead discussants*

- **Natalia Gherardi**, Equipo Latinoamericano de Justicia y Género (ELA) (*virtual*)
- **Nargiz Arupova**, **Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions** (*virtual*)
- **Sanjolli Padhy**, YP Foundation (*virtual*)

Summary from the moderator, **Raquel Lagunas**, Director of Gender Equality, UNDP

Closing remarks by the H.E. Ms. **Maritza Chan Valverde**, Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women