



2025 marks the 30th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action—an enduring global commitment to advancing the rights and empowerment of women and girls. In this context, the UNODC was hosting a high-level conference. This conference examined how gender equality commitments had been integrated across UNODC's mandate areas—from justice reform and crime prevention to countering terrorism, organized crime, drugs, and corruption. It charted strategic actions to strengthen gender-responsive approaches in UNODC's mandated areas. : **Website:** https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/gender/events/unodc-and-beijing-30_-women--justice--and-security-in-a-changing-world.html

The conference included: High-level dialogues – featuring youth voices alongside policymakers and experts – on how gender perspectives enhance criminal justice responses to corruption, organized crime, terrorism, and drugs – with a focus on both the progress made and the persistent gaps since Beijing 1995.

High-Level Opening Session: UNODC and Beijing +30

This session was moderated by **H.E. Ms. Maria Sebastian De Erice**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Spain to the International Organizations in Vienna. It emphasized the fact that, women are pulled into roles as cultivators, couriers and consumers not by choice, but through poverty, coercion or lack of other opportunities.

- **Panel 1: Violence as a Cross-Cutting Issue:** Moderated by **H.E. Ms. Corinne Angela Kitsell**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom to the International Organizations in Vienna.. It emphasized the fact that, violence is a pervasive issue that cuts across criminal justice, organized crime, terrorism and various forms of trafficking.

- **Panel 2: Integrating Gender Perspectives in Criminal Justice Reform:** Moderated by **H.E. Ms. Evangelina Lourdes Bernas**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the International Organizations in Vienna. It emphasized that, a truly effective and fair criminal justice system must ensure that policies, laws, and institutions address the unique challenges faced by women and girls - both as victims, perpetrators and as justice sector professionals. This panel

examined the importance of integrating the perspectives of men, women, girls and boys into criminal justice reform, focusing on strategies to create inclusive legal frameworks, survivor- centered policies, and gender-balanced law enforcement and judiciary systems.

- **Panel 3: From Margins to Mainstream: Women's Role in Preventing and Responding to Violent Extremism:** Moderated by **H.E. Rüdiger Rainer Bohn**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Germany to the International Organizations in Vienna. It emphasized that, terrorism and violent extremism impact women and men in distinct ways. Women who are victims of terrorism often face distinct, gender-specific challenges such as stigma, sexual violence, legal discrimination and exclusion from support services. These barriers can severely limit their ability to access justice, claim their rights.

- **Panel 4: Addressing Organized Crime: A Gendered Approach:** Moderated by **H.E. Mr. Jose Antonio Zabalgoitia Trejo**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Mexico to the International Organizations in Vienna. It emphasized that, women's potential for peace and development was underutilized.

- **Panel 5: The World of Drugs: From Trafficking to Treatment:** Moderated by **Ms. Valerie Rugene**, Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Kenya to the International Organizations in Vienna. It emphasized that, the global drug trade has far-reaching social, economic, and security impacts. Women and men play a critical role at every stage — from production and trafficking to law enforcement and treatment.

- **Panel 6: Corruption: Implications for Women's Rights and Empowerment:** Moderated by **H.E. Ms. Matilda Aku Alomatu Osei-Agyeman**, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Ghana to the International Organizations in Vienna. It highlighted Areas where corruption remains a major barrier to women and girls include equitable access to justice and equality before the law, economic opportunities, access to public services, in particular health services, and access to leadership and decision-making roles in the public and private sector.



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