

Commission on the Status of Women (CSW)

Why do the nations rage and the peoples plot in vain? Psalm 2:1

For the past 25 years I have attended UN meetings to lobby with the pro-life/ pro-family NGOs at the UN and would have attended around 150 meetings. Because of the COVID pandemic this year's Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) is being held over the internet. Last year CSW was cancelled. I normally hang out where the document is being negotiated and encourage the diplomats, I know to delete references to bad language and put in good stuff.

The United Nations was founded in 1945 in the ashes of WWII and was meant to prevent a third world war. After the end of the Cold War certain people decided to use the UN as a place to introduce a new world order, by the production of documents, non-binding, but by their endless repetition make them hard international law. By this process the world would be changed into a very politically correct place. The most radical of ideas contrary to the Word of God are promoted. Chief among these is making abortion a universal human rights. Our responses to this is that a wrong should not be made a right. The other big effort is to promote LGBTQI issues and to denigrate the traditional family. The UN is committed to individual human rights with no reference to the responsibility of individuals. All sorts of sin are being claimed as human rights.

The theme of this year's CSW is as follows:

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

Opening session

Secretary General -Antonio Guterres gave an 11-minute statement to kick off the session. He claimed that the COVID -19 epidemic has had a devastating impact on women and girls. I thought men and women died from this pandemic is roughly a 50 /50 split. He then goes on to talk about on-line violence. This is a ploy to bring in hate speech legislation by claiming speech you do not like is violence. He then went on to mention health and reproductive services, a code word for abortion. There was one mention of LGBTQI people and their rights. He then mentioned quotas for women politician, I consider this discrimination against men, and you do not get the best people with quotas. To end up he mentioned gender equality and let slip that this was about power. I believe him, the radical feminists at the UN are not wanting equality but matriarchy.

President of the General Assembly -Mr Volkan Bozkir was next to speak. He mentioned that 50 countries out of 192 had female ambassadors. Also, one in four parliamentarians in the world were women. He mentioned outdated patriarchal norms, it always makes me sad to hear men speak like that. He then mentioned gender targets and said how he was an International Gender Champion and was wearing a lapel badge to show this. I disagree with him. I do not believe that gender is a social construct. I believe God made us male and female Gen 1:27. Also I do not believe the patriarchal oppression narrative. Men and women have worked together in co-operation if we had not the human race would not have survived.

NGOs

It is very instructive to see who out of all the hundreds of NGOs at the UN get a prime place to speak. The General Assembly Hall at the UN headquarters in New York, at the opening of the CSW is a pretty good spot.

So Ms. Budroma from Fiji was the first choice who is a co-leaders of the Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human rights for Asia & the Pacific. On several occasions she mentioned "women and non-binary people". This means that trans people and lesbians are included. She mentioned entrenched patriarchy and claimed only 7.7% of politicians in Fiji were women. She also said that "Sex workers had been mobilised around the climate emergency". I did not imagine that prostitutes were concerned about their carbon footprints. I do not believe we are in a climate emergency, God gave us a tough planet, and carbon dioxide is not a pollutant causing global warming. Then she mentioned "women known in all their diversity". We can perhaps guess this included the LGBTQI people.

UN agencies

The next speaker was a very pretty young Brazilian lady. She is the Co-Leader of Women and Gender Working group of the Youth constituency of the UN framework Convention. I have no idea what this is ! So, Ms Renata Koch Awarengo said she was "using her privilege to be a climate justice advocate. She was also defending sexual and reproductive and health rights. (An attempt at making abortion a right). She was also supporting the LBGTQI and youth and mentioned intersectionality. That all sounds like identity politics on steroids. "Charm is deceptive, and beauty is fleeting but a women who fears the Lord is to be praised "(Prov. 31:30)

CEDAW

Ms Gladys Acosta Vargas is the chair on the Committee on the Elimination of all form of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). This little compliance committee had been for years trying to force countries to legalise abortion. The CEDAW convention does not even mention reproductive health let alone abortion. She said sexual and reproductive rights and health is vital. Also, she said she wanted appropriate sexual and reproductive education. Then she wanted more contraceptives and abortion and post-abortion services which are safe including before and after the pandemic. States parties MUST legalise abortion in cases of rape and incest and when there is a threat to the health and life of the pregnant woman, and they must decriminalise it and cease to demonise it in all of the cases. Many pro-abortion NGOs and people like Ms. Vargas seem to think abortion is a human right, however most countries in the world prohibit most abortions. She did mention one thing that I did agree with, that there has been a shadow pandemic, that of domestic violent , caused by the lock downs in many countries around the world.

LGBT core group

Second last to speak in the opening session was the Charge d' Affairs from North Macedonia who was speaking on behalf of an informal LGBTQI group, set up in 2008, co-chaired by

Argentina and the **Netherlands**. The following countries are members: Albania, Australia, Bolivia, Brazil, Cape Verde, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany, Iceland , Israel, Italy , Japan, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico , Montenegro, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Spain, UK, USA, Uruguay and the EU, also the NGO Human Rights watch.

This group wants gender equality to include LGBTQI people, including women and girls **in all their diversity** including bi-sexual, intersex and transgender women. So, when you read gender equality it might not mean equal rights and opportunities for men and women, but a lot of other stuff. He also wanted laws against gays repealed around the world.

USA vice president

Last on the list of speakers was **Kamala Harris** who mentioned that the USA had re-joined the Human Rights Council, also the World health Organisation and would re-engage with UN Women. I can remember when a small number of Trump appointed diplomats attended their first CSW, we were meeting with them in the C-Fam office. One of them nervously asked if she could open the meeting in prayer. This lovely Southern Baptist lady then led us in a most uplifting prayer and there was much conviviality and good humour for the rest of the meeting. Needless to say, Ms Harris did not open in prayer.

Various other statements

For many long hours I listened to 56 countries make statements in the general discussion periods for CSW. I noticed that 46 of these speakers were women, that was 82%. I did not hear anyone ask for more men to be running ministries of women's affairs. Perhaps there will be some more gender equality here next year!

I think the worst statement came from the deputy Prime Minister of **Belgium** . He said that sexual and reproductive health and rights **SHOULD NOT BE CONTENTIOUS**. He wants choice for all sexual and reproductive health information and services, safe abortion, sex education for all women and girls in all their diversity. If I had a chance to speak with him after his little intervention I would have asked, "I am sure that you are glad that your mother did not hold this view when she was pregnant with you."

Next worst was the prime Minister of **Iceland**. He mentioned women and girls in all their diversity. Also wants laws to close the gender pay gap, that would be interesting. Then full sexual and reproductive rights, progressive abortion laws. Gender autonomy with sexual orientation and gender identity or gender expression with an intersectional approach. None of this is in the final document.

The minister for gender equity and housing claimed that she was speaking on behalf of the **Swedish Feminist government**. I had not heard that Sweden had changed its name. She wanted a mention about non-binary people as they should also enjoy their human rights. She wanted no discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation nor gender identity, nor age. There was a mention that female suffrage had been achieved in Sweden 100 years ago. She mentioned on-line

violence, not sure what this is. She talked about women and girls in all their diversity. Mentioned the increased violence during the lock – down, I agree with her on this one and it is terrible. Women and girls were to be at the centre of generation equality, sexual and reproductive rights with safe legal abortion and comprehensive sexuality education (lessons in depravity).

Norway had a male minister speak and he quoted a poem read out at President Biden’s inauguration last January. It talked about light and shade. The inference being Biden was the light. To me only Jesus is the light of the world. So after an attempted deification of Mr Biden he claimed that sexual and reproductive rights were being hampered. We were told to look to the light, democracy had been invented 2,400 years ago in Greece. He wanted safe and legal abortion. Mentioned women in all their diversities and said we should target boys and men somehow. He talked about gender based digital violence and spoke against son preference. This was the only point I agreed with him. He then said we must create our own light. I prefer the light of the Gospel. The Scandinavian countries are usually the most radical at the UN.

Cape Verde had a male representative speak. He had an interesting perspective on all this gender equality. Now I am against quotas to elected office as they will discriminate against men. However, this chap said that women should only hold 40 to 60% of elected offices and the same for men. This was a good idea as women should then not hold over 60% of places. Not sure how this would work in practice.

Interactive panel

During an interactive panel the **USA** got to do their new thing at the UN. Their representative Jennifer Klein is the co-chair of the new White House policy council to advance gender equality. Trump did not have one of these, he was more interested in low unemployment, high stock market prices, fewer wars and a secure southern border.

Other countries were there to ask questions after certain countries gave presentations in an interactive dialogue. But the USA brought along their own people to ask some soft ball question. Their youth representative, brown in complexion, seemed quite lost and needed prompting with her script. Then there was a very black lady, an immigrant who has a top job with Clarion partners doing real estate. She really struggled to be a victim, even claiming she had achieved the American dream, she was wanting gender pay equity more access to capital and quotas on Public Company Boards like in California. The third person was a very black trans “woman” called Dr. Lourdes Ashley Hunter. Please forgive my pro-noun sins. This person comes from a trans women of colour collective and is the first of his /her kind on the US delegation. Wants help with domestic violence for LGBT people as it’s a big problem. Black and brown transgender women need special help. Wants to end pay gap discrimination and wants to support women in all their diversity.

Final document

Family

The two paragraphs below on the family are quite good. There were two other good family paragraphs that were deleted. Overall a good result.

Paragraph 47

The Commission recognizes that the sharing of **family responsibilities** creates an **enabling family environment** for women's economic empowerment in the changing world of work, which contributes to development, that women and men make a significant contribution to the **welfare of their family**, and that, in particular, women's contribution to the home, including unpaid care and domestic work, which is still not adequately recognized, generates human and social capital that is essential for social and economic development.

Paragraph 48.

The Commission acknowledges the benefit of **implementing family-oriented policies** aimed at, inter alia, achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, the full participation and decision-making of women in public life, **work-family balance**, the self-sufficiency **of the family unit** and recognizes the need to ensure that all social and economic development policies are responsive to the changing needs and **expectations of families** in fulfilling their numerous functions and that the rights, capabilities and responsibilities of **all family members** are respected.

Life

The paragraph below is about average. It is hard to see how this promotes abortion as a human right. The reference to the Cairo conference means the acceptance that: Abortion legislation is to be determined at the national level, also that abortion cannot be promoted as a method of family planning. On the negative side is the mention of human rights at the end of the paragraph.

Paragraph 61 bbb

Ensure universal access to **sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights**, in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (Cairo) and the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome documents of their review conferences, including universal access to **sexual and reproductive health-care services**, including for family planning, information and education and the integration of **reproductive health** into national strategies and programmes, and recognizing that the human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on all matters related to their sexuality, **including sexual and reproductive health**, free of coercion, discrimination and violence, as a contribution to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and the realization of their human rights;

Reservations and Explanations of Position

At the end of all negotiations at the UN countries have the chance to make objections to the agreed text. As there are over 190 countries in the world it is difficult to get consensus. So the

strong countries, those with the money, put pressure on the less wealthy countries. Also, the UN has many good jobs. A delegate from a poor country can get a job at the UN if he or she does their bidding. Also, very pro-life/pro-family delegates can be offered a job to get them out of the negotiating process. Last night, the 26th March, I was waiting for the final session to start, I missed the first few speakers, but still got to hear 21 countries offer reservations.

Here are a few examples:

Sudan – Not happy with the term sexual and reproductive rights, nor with intersecting forms of discrimination and women in all their diversity. She wanted more references to the family.

Egypt – Said the text was unbalanced, a code word for “I do not like it.” There was not enough time to consult with my Capital, there were many night sessions which should not occur. (This is an old tactic, wear them out with sleep deprivation)

China – Does not accept the term women human rights defender.

Libya -Called for respect for national sovereignty, with each country’s priorities and moral precepts. She objected to ambiguous terms like gender and sexual identity. In Libya they only recognise men and women.

Iran – His explanation of position was that Iran would follow its own laws and regulations especially relating to religious, cultural, and moral values and national priorities. This is the view of most Islamic countries.

Nigeria – Said that the document did not reflect all positions, there has been too many long nights of negotiation.

Yemen- We need to accept the different structures in each country. Some of the terms are not explained at all. Gender is biological, just male and female. National circumstances should be taken into account more.

Russian Federation – This intervention was made by my friend Guzal who I have known quite a few years. She called for respectful negotiations. She wanted a balanced outcome and did not like the text much. She wanted more support for mothers and to support the family. She asked why a good national sovereignty paragraph had been deleted. She said “women rights defenders” should not be protected more than other such people. She wanted a reference to violence on the basis of sex but not gender.

It was now 7pm and the interpreters were given permission to go home, they had been sitting around most of the day doing nothing. I once had lunch with an interpreter who said it was an abuse of mankind having wording that was so perverted and deceptive. I agreed with him. By the way with the all-night sessions there is never any translation services.

New Zealand -This explanation of position was on behalf of Canada, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland as well as New Zealand. The COVID pandemic had imposed additional barriers to women in public life. We must build back better (echoes from the Democrat party in 2020 presidential election) There were intersecting issues that should include LGBTQI people. There

were some positive elements in the text but not enough. Wanted a reference to women in all their diversity. There was a lack of health service (i.e. abortion) There should have been a reference to intimate partner violence. There should be full respect for human rights especially women human rights defenders.

USA- Acting representative to the Economic and Social Affairs Council, Courtney Nemeroff said ,”We must build back better”. She regretted that there was not a stronger text than two years ago. Intimate partner violence has skyrocketed in the last year. This was a tepid consensus. Concerning women human rights defenders and gender-based violence we were only treading water. Why for the past two and a half weeks have we been working until 11pm and the last four days all night? There was disrespect to other delegates and filibuster. This is a call for respect. Customary international law is not a new thing.

Nicaragua – She was concerned with the term sexual and reproductive rights; this should not include abortion and in no way should it be promoted as a method of family planning. National sovereignty is very important, under my country’s constitution and law everyone has the right to life from conception.

Holy See – Made the same reservations as in Beijing in 1995. In regard to sexual health and reproductive rights this does not include abortion or abortifacient. Parents are the prime teacher on issues about sexuality which must be only within marriage. Gender is biological, just male and female.

Small summary

It is especially important to not just look at what is in the document but also to what is NOT in it. There is no mention explicitly of abortion. Also, the term sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) is absent. Sexual orientation and gender identity were deleted from the second draft. We do not have, “various form of the family exist.” Women and girls in all their diversity is not mentioned. In fact, there is no really radical stuff in this document. Also, the United States new Biden appointed people were most unhappy with the outcome document. A sure sign that they did not get their evil way this year. However, the battle will continue until the Lord return.

I have recently published a book on my experiences at the United Nations. This is available at :

<https://www.lulu.com/en/us/shop/peter-smith/confessions-of-a-pro-lifer-at-the-united-nations-abridged-version/paperback/product-1g2rm8e9.html?page=>

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