

## General Assembly Second Committee Topic Summaries

### **Topic A: Women in Development**

The General Assembly (GA) adopted *A/RES/40/204* in 1985 and, for the first time, formally recognized the importance of mobilizing and integrating women in development.<sup>1</sup> The GA has regularly discussed the topic since, most recently considering the report of the Secretary-General *A/72/282* and adopting *A/RES/72/234*. The GA has repeatedly affirmed that women must play a vital role and be afforded full and equal participation in economies in order to achieve sustainable development and maximize economic growth and productivity; however, the GA has also noted that many gaps persist in achieving such a reality.<sup>2</sup> Not only do women often face limitations with regards to their economic activity, but they are also more likely work in the informal economy and be victims of unfair labor practices. International efforts on women in development have focused on ensuring women have access to decent work, equal pay, social protections, and a more equitable share of, or recognition for, unpaid care and domestic work. Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 5 stresses the importance of providing women with equal access to education, healthcare, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes.<sup>3</sup> While commitments have been made by Member States, the international community continues to push for full implementation of the *Beijing Platform for Action* and the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, which will further women's role in development and accelerate the growth of the global economy.

### **Topic B: Implementation of the Convention on Biological Diversity**

The *Convention on Biological Diversity* (CBD), also known as the *Biodiversity Convention*, entered into force on December 29, 1993.<sup>4</sup> The CBD is an international environmental agreement established to ensure the conservation, sustainable use, and fair and equitable sharing of the benefits of biological resources.<sup>5</sup> A primary aim of the CBD is to protect and promote biological diversity as a resource and as part of the entire ecological system.<sup>6</sup> Two supplementary protocols have also been adopted, the *Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety*, which seeks to ensure safe handling and use of living modified organisms, and the *Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and the Fair and Equitable Sharing of Benefits Arising from their Utilization*, which establishes a legal framework for accessing and sharing genetic resources. Implementing the CBD continues to be difficult for many Member States. In 2002, the Conference of Parties to the CBD set the 2010 Biodiversity Target, which was largely not met throughout the international community, and Member States are falling short of the 2020 deadline for the Aichi Biodiversity Targets, which were established in 2010.<sup>7</sup> Implementation of the CBD requires Member States to take national ownership over implementation activities with assistance from the regional and international levels.<sup>8</sup> This assistance includes capacity building for effective national action, financial contributions and resources, enhanced cooperation through partnerships and other initiatives, and support mechanisms that enable research, monitoring, and assessment.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://undocs.org/a/res/40/204>

<sup>2</sup> <http://undocs.org/a/res/72/234>

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/history/>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.sai.uni-heidelberg.de/sapol/pdf/Implementation.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.bfn.de/fileadmin/MDB/documents/impecbd.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0006320717309631>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/sp/elements/default.shtml>

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.cbd.int/sp/elements/default.shtml>