

# WORLD: United Nations chief warns of pushback on women's rights

RFE/RL (12.03.2019) – <https://bit.ly/2EYLpPW>– The head of the United Nations has warned of a “deep, pervasive and relentless” pushback on women’s rights around the world.

Speaking at the opening of the annual meeting of the Commission on the Status of Women on March 11, Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called for a fight to “push back against the pushback.”

The commission has been charged with achieving “equality with men in all fields of human enterprise” since its founding in 1947.

Guterres pointed to increased violence against women, especially defenders of human rights and women running for political office.

He cited “online abuse of women who speak out,” and said women were 26 percent less likely to be employed than men.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, head of the UN women’s agency, said some countries don’t want health-care facilities to provide “sexual and reproductive rights.”

She said the latest data indicated 131 million girls worldwide aren't going to school and there had been a 6 percent increase in girls not attending elementary school.

Geraldine Nason, the Irish UN ambassador who presides over the Commission on the Status of Women, said less than 7 percent of heads of state and government were women. She said only one in four parliament members around the world were female.

She said the commission will be deliberating in the next two weeks about maternity, pensions, safe roads and transport.

The commission will also be focusing on schools that teach girls skills to succeed, women's access to vital health care, "and the fair distribution of care and the domestic work between men and women," she said.

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