

62th Session of the Human Rights Council

Benelux Intervention

Panel discussion on women and girls in sports

23 June 2026

Mr. President, Distinguished Panelists,

I have the pleasure to deliver this statement on behalf of our longstanding BENELUX union: Belgium, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, and my own country, Luxembourg. We align with the statement of the European Union.

We thank the organizers for this discussion in accordance with resolution 59/17. Sport is a powerful tool for the achievement of gender equality as it promotes health, confidence, and leadership. It can also support the achievement of the SDGs, in particular SDG5 on gender equality.

Yet, barriers remain. Women and girls, in all their diversity, still face discrimination, unequal opportunities, and are subjected to different forms of gender-based violence in sports. Their participation is often limited, they remain underrepresented in leadership positions, and they receive less public recognition and pay.

BENELUX is committed to ensuring safe and inclusive sports. We stress the need for equal access to facilities and opportunities. We also support stronger measures to prevent and address the harassment and abuse that women and girls may face in sports and advocate for a safe environment, which is essential for full and inclusive participation.

We further underline the importance of strengthening women's leadership in sports. While this approach requires sustained and coherent investment in the training and mentoring of women and girls, its success depends especially on the removal of structural barriers. An inclusive and intersectional approach must guide all policies, in particular to support girls in vulnerable situations.

Thank you.