

## Statement

**Parallel event “Student Engaged Learning to empower mountain women and girls”  
63<sup>rd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women  
Viktoriia Bahrii, member, Utah International Mountain Forum,  
a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University**

Good morning, everyone!

I'm Viktoriia Bahrii, an international student from central Ukraine, and Logistics Specialist for Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at Utah Valley University (UVU). Having been involved with UIMF since 2017 allowed me to gain practical skills and networking opportunities through student engaged learning model by getting acquainted with activities of local and international experts promoting sustainable mountain development (SMD) and women's issues in the State of Utah.

As a result, my peers and I were able both to get to know more about the mountain practices, as well as learn about what I and other students can do to contribute to the cause by hosting at UVU visits of Permanent Representative of Tajikistan to the UN, Mahmamin Mahmaminov in 2018 and Permanent Representative of Austria to the UN, Jan Kickert to the UN in 2019. Both His Excellency Mr. Kickert and His Excellency Mr. Mahmaminov talked about mountain security and its connection to socio-economic development, with later highlighting the water sustainability (and sanitation) having a major influence on local communities - the area in which Tajikistan actively cooperates with the Commission on Status of Women.

During preparations for this visit, I was able to participate at the service project traditionally hosted during the International Women's Day at UVU by "Days for Girls", an NGO in consultative status with ECOSOC, where my peers and I were able to assemble feminine hygiene kits for women worldwide. The event encouraged us to make palpable contributions towards the noble efforts of this famous NGO and its President Celeste Mergens to help women and girls worldwide.

All of this encouraged me to study how I could help women and girls in the Ukrainian Carpathian mountains. My ongoing research will demonstrate how successful practices established in Utah's mountain communities can be applied in Carpatys and vice versa through the relevant programs under the Mountain Partnership, not only resulting in improving the quality of life for women, but also encouraging women to be the actors for change.

I'm grateful to my colleagues at UIMF for supporting my efforts in this area and helping me to contribute meaningfully to the implementation of the 2030 Development agenda.

Thank you!