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Making Space for Agency?

**A Study of the Norwegian Delegation to the 60th Session of
the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women**

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DECLARATION

I, Gurminder J. Kaur, declare that this thesis is a result of my research investigations and findings. Sources of information other than my own have been acknowledged and a reference list has been appended. This work has not been previously submitted to any other university for award of any type of academic degree.

Signature..... Date.....

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Oslo, May 18th, 2016 Gurminder J. Kaur

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a case study of the Norwegian delegation before and during the 60th session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women. It has been conducted through data collection in meeting points of the state and civil society before CSW in Oslo, and during CSW in New York. The significance of this qualitative case study is that it provides insight into a unique case. It is unique since it gives an insight into the practices of the delegation in their meeting points during one event that will not take the exact same shape again. The aim of the thesis is to provide the reader with thick description of the practices within meeting points. This contributes to in- depth knowledge on how the Norwegian state and civil society cooperates in one UN conference process and what the nature and objectives of the cooperation is. Anthony Giddens' structuration theory and understanding of structure and agency is the main theoretical framework. In addition, this study has drawn upon constructivism and social movement theory to theorize access given by the structure and used by the agent. The findings of this study, supports the established perception of the Norwegian state's institutionalized cooperation with civil society. This is evident through the many meaningful access points provided to a broad range of civil society in the process of CSW. The findings also show that the state incorporates civil society's input in the state instruction, which describes the mandate of the delegation. The state receives civil society's input in a facilitative and cooperative way during the whole process. Information about the state's activities on the negotiations is not shared until Thursday the first week and perceived as constraining. The same type of information was shared in the open morning meetings for all civil society organizations and only for NGO members. The NGO members are part of the delegation because of the knowledge, experience and the constituency they represent. FOKUS views their purpose as being in the delegation to contribute to pushing the negotiations forward together with the state. FOKUS perceive the late information as constraining as they are not being involved actively in cooperation with the state to develop strategies in the morning meetings. As FOKUS and the state are two different institutions, they also have different understanding of which rules, procedures and strategies should prevail and at what time. Both parts are interested in collaboration to reach the goal of gender equality. The means to reach the goal are debated.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BLD	The Norwegian Ministry of Equality and Children
BPA	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action
BUFDIR	The Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs
CSW	The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women
ECOSOC	The United Nations Economic and Social Council
FOKUS	Forum for Women and Development
IR	International Relations
MFA	The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs
NorwayUN	The Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nation
NGO	Non- Governmental Organization
NGO CSW	NGO Committee on the Status of Women
NORAD	The Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
UN	The United Nations
UN HQ	The United Nations Head Quarter

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Global governance is a necessity in today's globalized world. Local problems need global solutions, as they reach beyond a single state's domain (Krut, 1997). United Nations (UN) Conferences are arenas in which states gather to reach consensus on matters that need global solutions. The Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) under the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) is such a conference.

CSW sessions are held every year since the establishment in 1947. The mandate of the UN conference has been to gather UN member states to address, make recommendations for and report on promoting women's rights in social, political and economic fields to ECOSOC. In addition women's rights issues that needs urgent attention is addressed and made recommendations for. The Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action (BPA) was the consensual document of the Fourth UN World Conference on Women in 1995. Since the Beijing conference in 1995, the mandate of the annual CSW sessions has been to monitor states' implementation of the BPA. The 60th session of CSW was held from 14th to 24th of March 2016 in New York. With the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) agreed upon in last September, this session's priority theme was Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development (UN Women, n.d.).

Norway values the normative work in the Commission and wants to work for its further relevance (Norwegian MFA, 2011). Alliances are made with other like-minded states, both in the global North and South, to push the agenda of gender equality internationally forward. Civil society organizations are also important partners in the Norwegian foreign and development policy work on gender equality (Norwegian MFA, 2013). From the beginning of CSW's history, until today, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and particularly women's organizations, have participated as observers in CSW and World Conferences on Women (Balleza & Webbe, 2010).

According to an extensive survey, NGOs' preferred strategy in international decision-making is to participate in their state delegation (Krut, 1997). This gives the NGOs an opportunity to influence national decision-makers and the international negotiations.

1.1 Problem Statement

This thesis studies the Norwegian state delegation during the 60th session of CSW. According to Pallas & Uhlin (2014), democratic states are more likely to include civil society actors in their state delegations. That is because they are chosen by the people, and aim to represent their citizens' views. Norway's delegation includes NGO members. These are civil society organizations that are included in the state delegation.

Norway is known as a consensus-democracy where civil society demands are incorporated by the state (Kjellman, 2007). In addition, Tryggestad (2014) argues that the level of institutionalized collaboration between civil society and the state in Norwegian foreign policy execution is high. So why is it significant to study the interaction between state and civil society in the Norwegian delegation (the delegation) during the process of the 60th CSW?

I argue that the established perception of the Norwegian state as accommodating makes it interesting to study the practices of the state representatives towards civil society in the delegation. The question that rises is how accommodating? In what ways?

This thesis is a case study of the Norwegian delegation. It has been conducted through data collection in meeting points of the state and civil society before CSW in Oslo, and during CSW in New York. This shows that there are established meeting points for civil society and state relation during the process of CSW. The significance of this qualitative case study is that it provides insight into a unique case. It is unique since it gives an insight into the practices of the delegation in their meeting points during one event that will not take the exact same shape again. To study practices of a process, allows getting valuable insight in the practices of the Norwegian state towards civil society. Thereby, this is a state-centric study. The aim is to provide the reader with thick description of the practices within meeting points, and include selected actor's perceptions of these practices. This contributes to in-depth knowledge on how the Norwegian state and civil society cooperates in the process and what the nature and objectives of the cooperation is.

1.2 Research Questions

The Research Question is:

In what ways do the state representatives in the Norwegian delegation enable or constrain civil society in the meaningful access points provided before and during the 60th CSW session?

To answer this research question, I first provide answers to these sub- questions:

- 1) What are the state representatives' practices of giving access to NGO members and civil society representatives in the meaningful access points?
- 2) In what ways does FOKUS, as a civil society actor, give input to the state representatives? And how is it received by the state representatives?

1.2 Key Concepts and Actors

To understand the research questions, the key concepts and actors will be clarified. The concepts will be briefly presented here and further elaborated upon in Chapter 3 'Theoretical and Analytical Framework'. The choices taken for selecting actors are described in Chapter 4 'Research Methods'.

Enable and constrain originates from Giddens (1984) structuration theory. Enable is understood as actors given space or opportunity to use its agency. Agency is the actors' capabilities to act according to their purposes. Constrain is understood as to hinder actors' agency.

Meaningful access points originate from social movement theory, and the scholar Brockett's (1991) theorizing of it. In this thesis it is understood as meetings in which civil society actors can give their input to negotiators and/ or national decision-makers. The term access point and meaningful access points are both used and contain the same meaning in this thesis.

Input is seen as agents using their agency to communicate with the state negotiators and/ or national decision-makers.

Access examines different ways the state involves civil society

State representatives of the delegation are the national decision- makers and the state negotiators at the CSW session. In this thesis the Minister of the Ministry of Equality and Children (BLD) and the State Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) make up the unit of the national decision- makers. One Senior Adviser from MFA (MFA representative) and one Counsellor from the Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nation (representative from NorwayUN) make up the unit of the state negotiators. These are chosen because of the definition of meaningful access points, which is concerned about civil society's access to national decision-makers and state negotiators.

Civil society is made up of seven organizations in the state delegation. These are called NGO members. In addition, several access points are open to all civil society organizations. The first sub-question is targeting all NGO members and civil society organizations that participate in the meaningful access points. The second sub-question specifies one civil society actor, Forum for Development and Women (FOKUS). FOKUS' Executive Director is their member in the delegation and thus the main unit of observation and informant from FOKUS. In addition, their constituency is included as a unit of observation/informants when they are present in the access points. Their constituency at CSW includes their Secretariat, Head of Board, member organizations and partner organizations from the South (South partners). The concept civil society organizations contain the same meaning as NGOs in this thesis.

1.4 Thesis Outline

The thesis is presented in six chapters.

The following chapter, *Background*, provides an overview of the CSW and briefly address the responsibilities of UN member states in connection to the conference. Thereafter, FOKUS is presented as an organization, including the roles and responsibilities of FOKUS during CSW.

Chapter 3, *Theoretical and Analytical Framework*, sets out the theoretical ground for the thesis. The chapter presents Anthony Giddens (1984) understanding of structure and agency interaction. The rest of the chapter is structured upon Giddens (1984) structure and agency theorizing, and brings in March and Olsen (1989) theorizing of the actions of agents. In addition to constructivist and social movement scholars' conceptualizing of access to the structure.

Chapter 4, *Research Methods*, describes and justifies the choices taken during the research process of this thesis. In addition, research ethics is covered and an assessment of the trustworthiness of the study is provided.

Chapter 5, *Findings and Discussion*, presents the findings of the study in a chronological order in line with the meaningful access points studied. The findings are analyzed in light of the theoretical and analytical framework presented in chapter 3, and interpretations of the findings are included.

Chapter 6, *Conclusion*, is the last chapter. This chapter answers the research question through a summary of the main findings. Included in this chapter are concluding remarks on the findings.

CHAPTER 2: BACKGROUND

This chapter provides an understanding of the context in which the delegation operates. That is by presenting CSW and the activities of the state during the two weeks. This chapter also gives an understanding of FOKUS as an organization and its role at CSW.

2.1 Understanding CSW and the Role of a Member State

During the annual CSW sessions, state's negotiate to reach a consensual outcome document called agreed conclusions. Negotiating on the drafts for the agreed conclusions is based on changing, adding and deleting words, phrases and paragraphs in the document. The document is based on 12 topics addressed in the BPA as critical areas of women's empowerment and gender equality (UN Women Watch, n.d.). To reach consensus all member states have to agree on the language of the document. This consensual document operates as a global policy framework on gender equality, which the member state's should implement in their own national context. UN Women is the UN agency that facilitates the work of CSW. 54 member states make up the CSW bureau that organizes CSW sessions for four years at a time.

The CSW bureau publishes a zero draft document of the agreed conclusions. This document serves as the base of the negotiations and is publicly available closer to the CSW. This year it was published three weeks before CSW. The member states of the UN send their input to the zero draft. A moderator of the CSW streamlines the input into a second draft. The second draft was available from 9th of March this year, and not publicly available. It is not publicly available because it is based on that the member states are the negotiators of the drafts. The second draft of the CSW was ready from 18th of March this year. Between the 9th and the 18th of March, states have informal meetings with other member states about the language of the latest draft, attempt to get an understanding of others meanings and prepare for what their input should in the negotiations should be. In addition, parallel negotiations were held on the program of future sessions of CSW and on resolutions for the CSW session. The 18th of March the third draft was available.

The 14th to the 18th of March was the first week of CSW. This is the high-level week of the CSW. During this week Ministers and others are reporting, by holding a speech, on their

implementation progress and urgent issues regarding gender equality. This week has a higher amount of participants than the second week. It also has the largest program of side-events. Official side-events are held inside the UN Head Quarter (UN HQ) by member states. Parallel to these side-events, NGO Committee on the Status of Women (NGO CSW) organizes side-events held by NGOs from all over the world. These attract a high number of NGO participants including some state representatives, and are held in buildings close to the UN HQ.

During the second week of CSW, the third draft was revised after member states gave input to it. The section that is most contentious and difficult to reach consensus on is the critical area of the BPA 'Women and health'. This section covers women's sexual and reproductive health. Some states want advancement in the language of this section by including terms like sexual rights and comprehensive sexuality education. Other states deny this language and wants national priorities to be in front in matters of women's health rights. The Norwegian state is among the states that argue for an advancement of this language.

2.2 A Profile of FOKUS

FOKUS is a unique organization in global perspective and also in a Nordic perspective. It is the only umbrella organization with its member base consisting of solely women's organizations and with gender equality projects in the South as its main focus (Aasen, Hellevik, Mosha and Halvorsen, 2008). Their overall aim is to improve women's economic, social and political condition globally, and especially in the South (FOKUS, 2011).

The organization consists of a secretariat, a board, 64 member organizations in Norway, in addition to 30 South partners (FOKUS^{1,2,3}, n.d.). The organization receives funding from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) mainly to facilitate and channel funds to their member organizations' projects with South partners (FOKUS, 2011). As NORAD is a state directorate under the MFA, FOKUS is a civil society partner of the state in the development field. They also have contracts with BLD and MFA (FOKUS, 2014).

FOKUS identifies itself as a knowledge and resource center for international women's issues (FOKUS, 2014). The organization has three full-time employees in their analysis and research-

section. The analysis and research- section's task is to produce knowledge-based literature. FOKUS is a dialogue-based organization, and aim to deliver credible knowledge to a broad audience, including the Norwegian authorities, media, their own constituency and other partners. Their special resource is the knowledge from women's organizations on women's situation internationally, which their constituency, members and South partners, contributes with (FOKUS, 2009). From 2010, FOKUS is the Norwegian National Committee of UN Women (FOKUS¹, n.d.).

2.2.1 FOKUS during CSW

To participate actively during CSW is one of the points mentioned in their strategy (FOKUS, 2011). FOKUS uses multiple channels at CSW. They participate with in the state delegation, have their own delegation, in Women's Rights Caucus and UN thematic working group.

FOKUS is an NGO member of the Norwegian delegation, and is delegated some specific tasks for the CSW process through a contract with BLD. The tasks of the contract include organizing two meeting points before CSW: the Contact conference and an NGO Forum the second day of the conference. These meeting points are further elaborated upon in Chapter 5. They also make information brochures for the delegation and summaries of CSW relevant UN reports published on UN Women's CSW pages. They hand out delegate passes to the NGO members of the delegation on arrival in New York. A delegate pass gives a broad access to the UN HQ, including the negotiations. After CSW, they make a report that is sent to the MFA and BLD.

FOKUS has NGO consultative status with ECOSOC. To have consultative status with ECOSOC gives the organization 20 accreditations to participate at CSW. These are shared among their constituency. Accreditation in form of a UN NGO pass gives entry to the UN HQ, but in a restricted form. The NGO pass does not give entry to the negotiations during a UN conference in New York.

11 South partners receive scholarships to join FOKUS at CSW. These take part in a FOKUS delegation to CSW during the first week of CSW. It is during this week that most NGOs participate on CSW. This year four member organizations participated in the delegation. These

included three Norwegian women's organizations and one diaspora organization. In addition, five from FOKUS' secretariat and Board participated at CSW. That included the Executive Director, Head of Board, Head of Administration, Head of Program and Analysis and Development-Advisor. The FOKUS delegation met for briefings, mainly about the negotiations, for breakfasts at their hotel, three evening meetings and some dinners. In addition, the secretariat facilitated their partners with an optional program, which included NGO CSW organized advocacy training and side-events organized by members, partners and the secretariat of FOKUS.

FOKUS' secretariat organized a side-event in collaboration with the Sami- Parliament during the first Monday of the CSW session, 14th of March. The topic and name of the side-event was *Violence against Indigenous Women*. In addition, the secretariat organized a side- event on *Business and Women's Rights* on Tuesday 15th of March. Several of their Norwegian member organizations and South partners held their own side-events during the first week of CSW.

As FOKUS is a National Committee of the UN Women, the organization also participates in UN thematic working groups during the CSW (FOKUS, 2011). Participation in a working group gives them an opportunity to influence the work of UN, and to get information from discussions going on within a specific topic.

The organization is also part of a network of international women's and equality organizations, called Women's Rights Caucus. The caucus met for a strategy meeting the 13th of March this year, the Sunday before the CSW session opened, to update, discuss and plan for strategies for the coming CSW session (FOKUS Executive Director, observation, 18.03.16). In addition, one from FOKUS' Secretariat participated on the caucus' morning meetings during the two weeks of CSW. In the morning meetings, the participants decide upon daily efforts in regard to what is happening in the negotiations. Examples of daily efforts are to watch what their national politicians say during CSW, to be able keep them accountable for what they say. In addition, sharing information to be able to influence state delegations to push the negotiations forward (FOKUS Executive Director, personal communication, 08.02.16).

CHAPTER 3: THEORETICAL AND ANALYTICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter, I engage with theories and literature relevant to understand the scientific ground of this thesis. The theoretical concepts of the research questions originate from the sociological theories, structuration theory and social movement theory. The constructivist strand of International Relations (IR) theory has adopted central sociological concepts and provided an understanding of them within the field of IR theory. Thereby, the theoretical and analytical framework of this thesis draws upon constructivism, structuration theory and social movement theory.

This thesis is concerned with the interaction between state representatives and civil society within the Norwegian delegation. To analyze this interaction I have applied Anthony Giddens' understanding of structure and agency interaction from his work *The Constitution of Society* from 1984. In this chapter, I outline Giddens' (1984) understanding of the structure, agent and their constraining and enabling interaction. The framework of Giddens shapes the base of the whole framework. In addition, I have drawn upon the work of March and Olsen (1989) *Rediscovering Institutions* and the constructivist scholar Barnett (1999) to understand the agent's agency and actions. In the end I theorize access, drawing on the work of several constructivist and social movement theorists.

This theoretical and analytical framework will be applied to the analysis of the findings in chapter 5.

3.1 Structure and Agency Interaction

Structuration theory, developed by Giddens (1984), understands social sciences as the study of human behavior. He theorizes the interaction of agents (individuals) with structures (social systems). A structure is understood as a social system that is created through practices over time. According to Giddens, agents do not create social systems, or structures, but reproduce them and transform them. The reproduction and transformation of structures happens through agents' interaction with the structures over time. "In and through their activities agents reproduce the conditions that make these activities possible" (Giddens, 1984, p.2).

The interaction between agents and structures underlines that they are intertwined. In addition, the agent both affects and is affected by the structure. This leads to the question of what the agency of an agent is. Giddens (1984) defines agency as not having to do with an agent's intentions. That is because he notes that agency often is referred to as an agent's intention of doing something. Instead he understands it as an agent's capability of doing something: "Agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place" (p.9). As he excludes the term intention, he also says that humans have reasons for what they do: "To be a human being is to be a purposive agent, who ... has reasons for his or her activities" (p.3). He thus links capability to an agent carrying out an action, in addition to the agent having reasons for carrying out the specific action.

3.1.1 The Structure as Constraining and Enabling

Giddens (1984) emphasizes that a structure should be seen as both enabling and constraining. He mentions that the focus of grand theorists within political and social sciences, like Emilé Durkheim, Marx Weber and Herbert Spencer, has been one-sided. They have focused on the constraining elements of a social system on an agent's agency, instead of enabling elements. He writes:

In certain traditions of social theory the concept of society [read: structure] is characteristically linked in a direct way with that of constraint....In rejecting such a view, I shall try to clarify the contention that the structural properties of social systems are both enabling and constraining.

(Giddens, 1984, p.162)

I have referred to Giddens' (1984) understanding of agency in the section above. It is understood as an agent's capability to act according to its purposes. Out of this understanding a structure's enabling practice is seen as a practice that makes an agent capable to act according to its purposes. A constraining practice is seen as one that hinders the agent's capability to act according to its purposes. The next section will provide a further understanding of an agent's agency as theorized in constructivism.

3.1.2 The Actions and Agency of Agents

To understand how agents' agency is constrained or enabled, I provide an understanding of how agency and actions of agents are theorized in social sciences. As I have mentioned, Giddens (1984) understands agency as an agent's capability to act according to its purposes.

3.1.3 Two Logics of Human Behavior

March and Olsen (1989) conceptualize the logic of appropriateness and the logic of consequences in their work *Rediscovering Institutions*. With these logics, they theorize how humans behave within political institutions. The logic of appropriateness perceives humans as rule-following, because they behave according to established routines, procedures, roles and strategies that they are socialized into. According to March and Olsen, humans act appropriate in line with routines even unconsciously: "Institutional routines are followed even when it is not obvious in the narrow self-interest of the person responsible to do so" (p.22). The reason they provide for this is that humans behave appropriately to be treated appropriately. To be treated appropriately can be seen as the structure enabling the agent. In line with this logic, the agent will mostly reproduce the system.

The other logic they theorize is the logic of consequences. According to this logic, humans weight their options and behave after the option that has the best consequences for them. This logic opens up for behavior that not always will be the most appropriate (March and Olsen, 1989). However, the scholars perceive the logic of appropriateness as more in line with the rule-following humans that operate within political institutions. In addition, they argue that it is more suitable for describing human actions, while the logic of consequences is used more for justification of previous human actions (March and Olsen, 1989).

The logic of appropriateness does, however, not eliminate conflict. Humans operate within separate institutions with their own cultures for what is appropriate action. When cultures with different understandings of appropriateness meet conflict can be created. According to March and Olsen (1989): "Major political conflicts are focused on which set of rules should prevail when and where" (p.37). This can be understood as humans acting according to the rules in the social

systems that they identify themselves with. They identify themselves with the institutions they are socialized within. Thereby, they will act according to their logic of appropriateness when operating in another institution as well. Which could create conflict between different humans' logical understandings of actions.

3.1.4 Agent's Aim to Change Rules

The constructivist scholar Barnett (1999) links agents' interests to their desire to change norms or rules to an outcome that is better in line with their interests. These norms and rules are part of a social system. Further, Barnett links agents' interests with their identities. Identities are made in relation to an agent's interaction with other agents and structures. As structures change through agents' interaction, identities also change (Barnett, 1999). Interests and identities are seen as socially constructed by the interactions taking place within a social system. This understanding of agents' activities underlines that agents have the ability to influence the systems they are operating within. Influence within constructivism is understood as the ability of agents to define and redefine, legitimize or relegitimize established concepts and ideas (Barnett, 2008). In the light of March and Olsen's (1989) logics of appropriateness, this can also be understood as an agent's desire to change a system in line with what the agent perceive as appropriate.

3.2 Theorizing Access: Space Given to Use Agency

Access is a concept that investigates in the structure that agents are embedded in. I have borrowed the concept from social movement theory. Social movement theory provides a well-developed framework for theorizing elements of a structure in which NGOs operates (McAdam, McCarthy and Zald, 1996). Agents, understood as NGOs, want access to be able to change the political system to be better in line with their interests. In other words, they aim to influence it. To be able to influence the system, access is necessary. I start this chapter with drawing on constructivist and social movement theorists to get an understanding of which resources the structure values to give access to agents. Thereafter, I engage with the social movement theorist Brockett (1991) to get an understanding of the concept 'meaningful access points'. In the end I turn to the social movement theorists Kriesi, Hanspeter, Koopmans, Duyvendak & Giugni (1992). These scholars give an understanding of how Western European states receive input given by social movements. I borrow some of their points to develop a framework for analyzing

how the Norwegian state receives the input given by the NGO members in the delegation. What access measures is the degree of openness or of closure of political institutions (Eisinger, 1973).

3.2.1 Resources for Access

To change systems, the agent has to use its agency: capabilities to act. Organization's capabilities are their resources. I will now draw on literature on social movement theory and constructivism that theorize which resources the structure perceives as the most important. As Giddens (1984) theorizes agents as reproducing and transforming the systems, agents in form of NGOs will first aim to get access to the system to be better able to influence it.

The most important resources that are mentioned to get access by the structure are constituency and knowledge and information. The larger and the more diverse the NGO constituency is in form of political background, the better possibilities of access within democratic states (McAdam et al., 1996; Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Pallas and Uhlin, 2014). According to Pallas and Uhlin (2014) democratic states are more open to a broader constituency because they aim to reflect the interests of a broader part of the population. Keck and Sikkink (1998) argue that it is in the democratic state's interest to secure votes. Closely linked to constituency is the organization's ability to secure influential allies. These can enhance the resources of the NGO as they can contribute with something that the NGO needs, in form of for example money or prestige (Keck and Sikkink, 1998).

Knowledge and information is the other resource that often is mentioned as one of the most valued NGO resource (Haas, 1992; Keck and Sikkink, 1998). One important reason for this is that the modern state bases its decisions on science. Specific knowledge within one field can lead to access to cooperate with and to influence state's decisions and behavior (Haas, 1992). NGOs that have worked extensively within one field over a longer time hold comprehensive practical competence and knowledge. In addition, organizations that participate in political networks, like advocacy networks, become an alternate source of information for the state, which the state value (Keck & Sikkink, 1998). Hence, specific knowledge and information gives an NGO the ability to

change the structure, as they get access to the state and the possibility to change the state's patterns of behavior and interests (Haas, 1992).

3.2.2 Meaningful Access Points

The social movement scholar Brockett (1991) conceptualizes meaningful access points. He studies the availability of meaningful access points for civil society to the political system. "By meaningful I mean both institutionalized and power-wielding" (p. 260). He understands power-wielding as access points with state representatives present that have power to make decisions on the issues that are discussed with civil society organizations. Brockett does not provide a definition of institutionalize. According to Oxford Dictionaries institutionalized is defined as: "Establish (something, typically a practice or activity) as a convention or norm in an organization or culture" (Oxford dictionaries, n.d.). This leads to understanding Brockett's conceptualizing of meaningful access points as meeting points that the state provides civil society organizations with, that are both an established practice with the presence of state decision-makers. An established practice is interpreted as an activity that is held repetitively at the same points from one year to another.

In this thesis I study the Norwegian delegation in the process of the 60th CSW before and during the event. In this process, I have followed meetings that I define as access points, like Brockett. In the discussion part, I will analyze whether these access points are meaningful for the agents. I then discuss it to the two criteria Brockett applies.

3.2.3 State Strategies of Receiving Input

The social movement theorists Kriesi, Hanspeter, Koopmans, Duyvendak & Giugni (1992) (1992) underline that how a state engage with civil society, is procedures that have been developed over a long time in a given country. Thus, this can be directly linked to Giddens (1984) understanding of structures as products of human interaction over time. Another highlight is that the procedures of receiving input are distinct for a given country. This provides a useful framework for understanding the state representatives actions. Their actions are based on Norway's tradition of interacting with civil society and receiving their input.

From the work of Kriesi et al., their understanding of a state's strategy of receiving input are relevant for this thesis. They provide two concepts: exclusive dominant strategy and inclusive dominant strategy. Both concepts are on the extremes of a scale. An exclusive dominant strategy refers to a state receiving input from civil society in a repressive and confronting way. On the other extreme, an inclusive dominant strategy refers to facilitative and cooperative reception of input (Kriesi et al.,1992).

3.3 Operationalizing the Framework

In this section I will connect the theoretical and analytical framework of this thesis to the research questions to provide an understanding of them.

The research question is:

In what ways do the state representatives in the Norwegian delegation enable or constrain civil society in the meaningful access points provided before and during the 60th CSW session?

3.3.1 State Representatives as the Owners of the Structure

The first element of this question that I will address is the perception of the state representatives as enabling or constraining civil society. This understanding point to the state representatives being the owners of the structure that can enable and constrain its agents. That is because the delegation is the state's domain. According to the constructivist scholar Wendt (1999) makes the statement: "States are people too" (p.215). He elaborates on this with referring to the state as individuals who represent the state. "State action depends on the actions of those individuals, since social structures only exist in virtue of the practices which instantiate them" (p.216). Thus, Wendt understands state action as state representatives' action. The state representatives are socialized to reproduce the collective knowledge of the state (Wendt, 1999). This is not to deny the agency of state representatives. Out of the fact that they are individuals, they are agents that over time will be part of shaping the structure out of their interaction with it. However, in line with the logic of appropriateness, the state representatives are rule-following actors that will act according to what is seen as appropriate in their roles. Their reason for acting appropriate is to legitimize their actions (March and Olsen, 1989).

It is also important to note that the Norwegian delegation, as a structure, is part of other structures. The Norwegian state is the structure it derives from. It also has its own rules and regulations, which put constraints to or enable the state representatives actions. In addition is the structure of a UN conference, which operates under ECOSOC's rules and regulations for civil society access. However, in this thesis I do not study the interaction of the state representatives with other structure, and limit it to the structure of the delegation.

3.3.2 State Representatives as Constraining and Enabling Civil Society

The understanding of state representatives as constraining and enabling points to the practices they carry out in the delegation. They conduct the practices after the logic of appropriateness. They are socialized to do carry out routines and procedures, which is in line with what is seen as appropriate in the structure they are part of (March and Olsen, 1989). Thereby, the state representatives will not constrain civil society because they are evil. It is the agents, the civil society representatives that perceive the structure as constraining or enabling. The main agents in this thesis are: NGO members of the delegation, Norwegian civil society organizations that participate in the selected meeting points and partner organizations from the South. The practices of the state representatives are the same towards all civil society, and therefore these three groups are chosen as they interact with the structure. It is the perceptions of FOKUS, and the perceptions of the FOKUS' Executive Director, as FOKUS' member in the delegation, that will be focused on.

The NGO members are part of the structure, the delegation, as they have accepted the invitation to participate. Thereby, they will reproduce the system, by being rule-following appropriate actors (the logic of appropriateness), they can calculate their consequences for changing their actions (the logic of consequences) and attempt to transform the system to better fit with their own interests (Giddens, 1984; March and Olsen, 1989; Barnett, 1999). What is in line with their interests is based on their identity, which is socialized in the institutional culture they belong to. Civil society actors will thereby perceive the practices of the state representatives as constraining or enabling according to their agency, their capability to act according to their purposes (Giddens, 1984). One element to bring in here is what March and Olsen (1989) mentions of political conflict, which can arise out of different perceptions of what is appropriate behavior.

3.3.3 Practices of Giving Access

The first sub-question asks: *What are the state representatives' practices of giving access to NGO members and civil society representatives in the meaningful access points?*

The meaningful access points are understood after Brockett's (1991) conceptualizing: power-wielding state representatives present in meetings in which civil society can give their input to state representatives. Power-wielding state representatives in this thesis are the state decision-makers and state negotiators. He also adds that the access points should be institutionalized.

The practices of access within such meaningful access points, refer to the state representative's practice of involving civil society in their work before and during the CSW session. This question is concerned with the ways the state representatives allow the agents to interact with the structure. By describing and analyzing the state's practices of giving access, I will be able to answer in what ways the agents are being enabled or constrained in these meaningful access points.

3.3.4 Giving and Receiving Civil Society Input

The second sub-question asks: *In what ways does FOKUS, as a civil society actor, give input to the state representatives? And how is it received by the state representatives?*

This question is also concerned with studying the practice of interaction, through studying the communication between the agents and structure. The way FOKUS gives input is linked to their agency in form of resources. Their resources make them capable to act according to their purposes. The main resources I have mentioned in this framework that the structure appreciates are: knowledge and information, a broad constituency and influential allies (Haas, 1992; McAdam et al., 1996; Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Pallas and Uhlin, 2014). To study when they use these resources in their input or their interaction with the state, is to study in what ways they use their agency. In what ways they communicate with the state, also tells about their purposes on their interaction. Through answering this sub- question, I will also answer in what ways they perceive the state as enabling them or constraining them to use their agency in their communication and interaction.

The second part of this sub-question is how the state representatives receive the input. Here I will use Kriesi et al.(1992) to analyze whether the state receive civil society input in a facilitating or confronting way, or in a way that is in between these two. By doing this I analyze whether the Norwegian state has an exclusive or inclusive dominant strategy towards civil society.

3.3.5 Scope and Limitations

Giddens (1984) theory of structure- agency interaction provides a study of how a structure changes after the interaction of agents with it. In addition, the agents are understood as influential as they aim to transform the structure. As this thesis studies one case in a limited amount of time, it does not study how the structure changes. Closely linked, it does not study the ability of the agents to use their agency and influence the system.

The aim of this thesis is to use this framework to analyze human behavior within the delegation, and how these practices are perceived. This is done through interpreting practices as constraining or enabling according to the agents' agency.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODS

In this chapter, I describe the research process from selecting the case, the methods used to collecting data and how the data was managed and analyzed. Finally, I reflect on the research ethics and assessed the trustworthiness of the study.

4.1 Research Design: Qualitative Case Study

Qualitative case study is the research design of this thesis. I chose a case study design because I gained access to study the Norwegian delegation before and during CSW in selected meetings held in Oslo and New York. My research goal thus became to understand and investigate in how the delegation works, their practices and the perceptions.

The setting for the case of this thesis is an event that occurred this year. The delegation, its practices and interactions could be somewhat similar, but will not be exactly the same next year. This characteristic of the case study fits with what Yin (2009) describes as a unique case.

There are many different ways of conducting case studies. Case study is a suitable method for studying a contemporary event, with a detailed examination of the setting (Yin, 2009; Bryman, 2012). The type that is chosen for this study is called embedded single case study (Yin, 2009). This implies that the case is taking place in one setting and has more than one analytical units embedded in the setting. The strengths of applying an embedded single case study design are that it gives a unique insight into the case (Yin, 2009; Berg & Lune, 2012).

The single case study design is critiqued for not collecting data that can be generalized beyond the case studied. In addition, qualitative methods are critiqued because the researcher takes subjective decisions during the research process. These are typical points of critique from the natural scientific tradition of quantitative methods. This method values the ability to generalize the findings beyond the chosen analytical unit(s), and perceive the collected data as objective facts (Berg & Lune, 2012). To understand the objectives of the qualitative case study method, the following part presents the epistemological and ontological concerns of this method. The aim is to provide a better understanding of the critique posed to the qualitative case study method.

4.1.1 Understanding the Epistemological and Ontological Concerns

Epistemology is concerned with how we know what we know (Bryman, 2012). What is acceptable knowledge within social sciences? The answer to this question is that we know what we know through analyzing objective facts, by researchers following the positivist epistemology of quantitative methods. On the other side, researchers of the interpretivist epistemology tradition of qualitative methods answer that we know what we know through interpreting the subjective meaning of human behavior and social action.

The positivist tradition is questioned for being a useful tool in the social sciences. That is because this discipline often is concerned about studying people and their institution (Bryman, 2012). In this thesis, behavior, routines and perceptions of humans conducting their professions are studied during a UN conference. The aim of the analysis has been to interpret the meanings of the informants' and the unit of observation's practices and perceptions. Thus, it follows an interpretivist epistemological tradition.

Ontology is concerned with the nature of social entities (Bryman, 2012). In this thesis, the activities, procedures and practices within a delegation is perceived as socially constructed. That a social phenomenon is socially constructed means that the people interacting with the phenomenon are giving it meaning by how they perceive and interact with it. This meaning can change over time as the interaction changes. Thus, this study follows a constructionist ontological position. On the other side, quantitative researchers value the ontology of objectivism. They see social entities as objective facts (Bryman, 2012). For example, if culture is seen as a social entity and an objective fact, it means that it is an external reality that has fixed rules and procedures. The constructionist approach would say that culture is subjective and constantly under change.

To understand the critique of case study research design by researchers following quantitative methods, it is necessary to understand the difference between the aims of quantitative versus qualitative research methods. The aim of quantitative research is to generalize their results from a representative amount of analytical units, to be able to *explain* a bigger population. On the other

hand, qualitative methods aim to *understand* a smaller unit, their behavior and the setting in which it takes place.

As this study follows the qualitative tradition, it does not aim to generalize the findings. While quantitative researchers would question the value of case study research, qualitative case study researchers would highlight the value of gathering data and getting an insight on unique case taking place in one point of time.

To study one contemporary event does not provide findings on change. However, the aim of this thesis is not to explain change in the practices of the delegation. The aim has been to understand the context, practices, behavior and the perceptions of the informants regarding the 60th CSW, which an embedded single case study design allows to do.

4.2 The Case Selection Process

The case selection process of this thesis started with contacting the Executive Director of FOKUS. Through her, I met with a state representative in the Ministry of Children and Equality (BLD). The process by getting one informant on recommendation by another informant is called snowball sampling (Bryman, 2012). After mapping current topics of interests, the preliminary focus was how Norway works with the UN on gender equality. I was put in contact with a state representative in the MFA with knowledge and experience from Norway's work in the UN on gender equality.

According to Fangen (2004), selection of a case, site and informants in qualitative studies takes place naturally as the researcher gets to know the field. This is in accordance with the snowball sampling process I described above. As I got to know the field through informal conversations with the informants and through secondary literature, I learned that the Norwegian state emphasizes on including civil society in its work. This led to an interest in studying in what ways civil society is included in the Norwegian state's work on gender equality in the UN.

4.2.1 Getting Access

In this thesis, the selected informants are professionals in State Ministries and the Executive Director of FOKUS. Thereby, I am sampling in a 'elite setting' (Hertz & Imber, 1993).

According to Hertz & Imber (1993), elite settings are difficult to access because of barriers they impose towards people on the outside. My experience was the opposite of their description. The state representatives took the time to meet me and also expressed that this was part of their profession's social responsibility.

The process of getting access was two-fold. First, I had to get access to the UN HQ for the CSW sessions, and secondly to the delegation's meetings. In the process of getting access to CSW, I got to learn that it had become more difficult for the state to give access to non-officials than before. This was valuable insight, because one informant also informed that the state had changed this practice towards them. Through the process of getting access, I got to experience how the NGO members and other civil society actors get access to CSW.

I approached different channels, the MFA, FOKUS and the Mira-center. The two latter had 20 accreditations in total from the ECOSOC. The accreditations were reserved and it did not work to get access through these channels. The fourth try was to the Permanent Mission of Norway to the UN (NorwayUN), in which one of the state representatives gave me access after an informal conversation and after checking the possibilities for doing it. Access to the pre-departure information meeting and the morning meetings was gained after an agreement among the state representatives working on the CSW.

I argue that the main reason for why I did not meet many obstacles for gaining access to the delegation was that the MFA representative became my 'gatekeeper'. A gatekeeper is a central person in the field of study. By gaining trust by a gatekeeper the possibilities of getting access increases (Fangen, 2004). She did not have the possibility to give me direct access to the UN HQ because of UN regulations. However, it was helpful that she informed me about other possibilities and that I could refer to her when contacting the representative from NorwayUN.

Later, I found out that the delegation's meetings took place in the NorwayUN's offices outside of the UN HQ. To conduct this study in the selected meeting points of the delegation, it would not have been necessary to access the UN HQ. However, I argue that by having access I got a better idea of what the delegation's work is about, and it also opened up for informal

conversations with the informants in the setting they operate within. In addition, it gave me valuable insight in how NGOs access the CSW sessions inside the UN HQ. This has been complementary knowledge to what the NGO informants have told me about this process.

Through gaining access to the delegation's information meeting before CSW, I got to documents that were handed out to the NGO members of the delegation. This gave me insight in what type of information was shared. In addition, I got access to the program of the Minister and the State Secretary during the first week of CSW. Their program included meeting points between the state and civil society representatives. I accessed relevant documents from FOKUS after an informal conversation with FOKUS' Head of Administration. In addition, we had already established e-mail contact after the NGO Forum. After an informal conversation with the FOKUS' Executive Director at the first day at the CSW session, I accessed the FOKUS' delegation's evening meetings. This gave access to the FOKUS' secretariat and constituency's perceptions of the practices in the delegation.

4.2.2 Selecting the Case of the Study

After gaining access, my study population consisted of the whole delegation. I thereby had to select an analytical unit I was interested in focusing on, both on the state side and the civil society side. In qualitative research the selection of analytical unit is a flexible process (Fangen, 2004). That is because the nature of the method is not to be able to select a representative unit that can be generalized beyond the unit studied. The typical method for selection in qualitative studies is known as purposive sampling under the category of non-probability form of sampling. This type of sampling, or informant selection, allows selecting the informants that are relevant to the study's research questions (Bryman, 2012).

4.2.2.1 Selecting the Analytical Unit Among the Delegation's Civil Society Organizations

In the case of the delegation, any of the civil society organizations could have been relevant for the research questions. The population of civil society organizations consisted of seven organizations; two trade unions, two umbrella organizations of Norwegian women's organization, one minority organization, one men's organization and one faith-based organization.

According to Fangen (2004) a researcher will have to focus on some units out of a population during a fieldwork. To this Berg & Lune (2012) add that a researcher's practical limitations are important considerations in this. In my selection process, key considerations became availability of the representatives, the limited time of the research process and that one researcher is carrying out the study.

As I got knowledge about the field I observed that FOKUS cooperates with the state to arrange two key meeting points before CSW, the Contact conference for civil society and the state, and the NGO Forum where civil society write input to the state. Thereby, I regarded FOKUS as a central piece in the state- civil society cooperation towards the CSW. With this, I also valued the information and experience the FOKUS Executive Director about civil society cooperation with the state in the process of CSW. In addition, I had already established contact with FOKUS' Executive Director one semester before I started the research in January. Because of time limitations, already established contact became a factor in favor of selecting FOKUS. The fact that FOKUS had their own delegation during CSW, consisting of their member organizations and South partners, showed that they had an established and serious approach to their participation at CSW.

The selected analytical unit

from civil society's side therefore became:

Main informant:

- FOKUS Executive Director, because she is the organization's member in the delegation

Included as unit of observation when they participating in the selected meetings of the delegation:

- FOKUS' Head of Board and FOKUS' secretariat
- FOKUS' member organizations
- FOKUS' South partners

4.2.2.2 Selecting the Analytical Unit Among the State Representatives

The state side of the delegation consisted of ten members. The members were:

1. The Minister of BLD
2. The State Secretary of MFA
3. The President of the Sami Parliament
- 4.+ 5. Two parliamentarians
1. The Ambassador of the NorwayUN (a part of the MFA)
7. One Senior Adviser from MFA
8. One Senior Adviser from BLD
9. One Head of Section in the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Ombud (administratively situated under BLD)
10. One Senior Adviser from the Norwegian Directorate for Children, Youth and Family Affairs (Bufdir) (an agency under BLD)

Out of this list it is evident that BLD and MFA are the Ministries in charge of the delegation. To select an analytical unit from the state side, I looked to the concept meaningful access points which is defined in chapter 3. One criterion of meaningful access points was the criteria of power-wielding state representatives present at the meeting points with civil society. I thus selected the state representatives that the analytical unit of this thesis saw as power wielding when it comes to the CSW negotiations and national politics. I observed whom civil society regarded as power wielding through their open communication and input to them during the delegation's meetings. The input towards these representatives took the form of attempts to influence. Influence either towards the CSW negotiations or the national state budget. In addition, the MFA representative, who I had established contact with earlier, had a key role in the negotiations. She also had extensive experience and knowledge about the cooperation between the state and civil society in the CSW process. One representative from NorwayUN was not formally in the list of delegation members. However, as part of her job she took actively part in the negotiations, and also in the morning meetings.

The selected analytical unit therefore became:

- The Minister of BLD
- The State Secretary of MFA
- One Senior Adviser from MFA (I refer to her as MFA representative)

- One representative from NorwayUN

The two former were the main targets of civil society for the national state budget and national policies. The two latter were civil society's targets for the negotiations.

4.2.2.3 The Selected Settings of the Case

The setting of the case in this thesis is the meeting points of the Norwegian delegation in the 60th CSW process before and during the CSW session. The selected meeting points in which I have gathered data are the following:

- 1st of February: The Contact Conference
- 2nd of February: The NGO Forum
- 3rd of March: The information meeting of the delegation
- 14th- 23th of March: The morning meetings during the 60th CSW session
- 14th of March: a side- event arranged by Norwegian Women's Public Health Organization (a member organization of FOKUS)
- 14th of March: a side- event arranged by FOKUS and the Sami Parliament
- 14th of March and 18th of March: evening meetings of the FOKUS delegation

In addition to these settings, spontaneous informal conversations were used for data gathering on the availability of the informants. The settings for these informal conversations were amongst other places, on walks from the NorwayUN's offices to the UN HQ and in the delegates lounge inside the UN HQ.

4.2.3 The Relevance of the Case for the Study

The objective of this thesis is to identify the practices of access within the meeting points of civil society and the state in the CSW process. The fact that the focus is on the practices in the delegation and that my main analytical unit from the civil society side is FOKUS, could pose some challenges for the relevance of the analytical unit. However, in the description of the selection process above I have argued for why FOKUS was chosen as the main analytical unit. It is a necessary delimitation according to the scope of the study and the possibilities of one

researcher to follow more than one NGO member and its constituency during CSW. In addition, this is a qualitative study that requires the researcher to gain a deep understanding of the context and why the informants perceive their social world in the way that they do. This is to be able to produce thick description about what is happening. In addition to ensure that the informants' social world was understood correctly (Bryman, 2012). I will discuss this further under the section 'Assessing the trustworthiness of the study'.

I argue that I found it useful to choose FOKUS as my analytical unit among the NGO members. The reason is because I perceived the organization to be the most active to give input in the morning meetings. In addition it was the only organization that stayed for the second week of the CSW session from the population of NGO members of the delegation.

4.3 Data Collection Methods

The data collection for this thesis was carried out in two phases: before CSW in the first part of February and during CSW 14th-24th March. As this case study is concerned with individuals' interaction within a real-life event, multiple research methods have been applied to get a good understanding of this interaction and the event. The methods used are observation, semi-structured interviews, unstructured interviews/ informal conversations and document analysis.

In February, I conducted observation during the Contact Conference and the NGO Forum in Oslo. Some informal conversations with civil society representatives during the NGO Forum gave me insight in their perceptions of the events. After the NGO Forum, I was included in the e-mail list of the participants in the NGO Forum. By getting access to the e-mail list, I got to observe the interaction between FOKUS' secretariat and participants on the NGO Forum on how the NGO Forum outcome document (NGO document) was formed.

After these two events, the two informants I perceived as the most experienced and knowledgeable about the civil society and state interaction in the CSW process were interviewed. These were the MFA representative and the FOKUS' Executive Director.

The second phase of data gathering was during CSW in New York from 14th- 24th of March. Data was gathered through observation, in addition to unstructured interviews and informal conversations. As this thesis is a case study qualitative research methods, observation and unstructured interviews are appropriate methods for generating a detailed examination of the case (Bryman, 2012). I observed the practices in the delegation and followed up by informal conversations with the selected informants. I also attended the FOKUS delegation's internal evening meetings, which allowed for a deeper understanding of their perceptions of the delegation.

4.3.1 Observations

To be able to study a case intensively and understand the context of the real-life event and individuals forming the case, observation poses many benefits. To observe gives the opportunity to study individuals in a natural setting (Yin, 2009). To study this thesis' informants in a natural setting by observing has been crucial for answering the research questions. I could have relied on interviews for accessing the informants' perceptions of the practices. However, to observe real-life interactions between civil society and the state representatives has given me first-hand information, a primary source, to make my own interpretations of the practices in the delegation, and the context around the practices. This makes it easier to understand the perceptions of my informants.

4.3.2 Conducting the Observations

As I had accessed the Minister's program and FOKUS' program for CSW, I used their program as a guide and chose to attend events in which my main units of observation were present. By attending the first meetings, I got access to contacts that gave me information about the times for the following meetings. In my field notes I wrote down the following information: the date, description of the settings, practices and routines, verbal exchange between my units of observation and others in conversation with them, in addition to connections between the participants. In addition to noting down what was being said, I noted the participants' expressions and my own interpretations of the discussions and settings.

4.3.3 My Role as an Observer

There are different types of observer- roles. The types of roles are divided according to their level of involvement (Bryman, 2012). I initially chose to be a non-participating observer. The reason was that it fitted with my goal for observing. The goal was to study the selected units of observation's interaction in their natural setting, without affecting their interaction. However, I accessed the arenas as an overt full member (Bryman, 2012). This means that my status as a researcher was known for the individuals present at the meetings I participated in. I introduced myself as a researcher and presented the thesis' research objectives to the delegation in the delegation's information meeting. It was also announced that if anyone had any comments about my presence, they could let the state representatives know about it. That my presence was known and seen could potentially affect the setting and the participants. One potential effect could have been that the participants reacted upon my presence and did not follow their normal routines or usual behavior. According to Berg & Lune (2012), this is not a long-lasting effect. I participated from the first meeting of the delegation, which was the meeting where the delegation members gathered for the first time. As they gathered for the first time, there were no established routines in the delegation before I participated. Some of the delegation members had participated in the delegation before, but not all. That I was *one of* the new ones, and that they had not started any activities from before, gave room for accepting me as part of the setting. I also adjusted from my preliminary strategy of observing without interacting, to becoming a non-participatory observer who interacted with my units of observation and informants. To clarify, I did not participate in the activities of the delegation, I mainly observed *and* interacted with the participants occasionally. This interaction took place as informal conversations before or after meetings, and took form as natural interactions. According to Stoddart (1986), by interacting with the participants the researcher gets closer to a status of becoming a 'invisible' researcher. A invisible researcher is one that has "(...) the ability to be present in the setting, to see what's going on without being observed, and, consequently, to capture the essence of the setting and participants without influencing them" (Berg & Lune, 2012, p.217). Fangen (2004) argues that by interacting naturally, the participants feel less stressed and objectified by the researcher's presence. The overall aim was to overcome the potential affect on the participants of my presence. Thereby, adjusting from an idea of not interacting, to interacting with the participants, helped me become invisible.

From the first to the second week, a change took place in the delegation's number of participants. While it was limited space around the table during the first week, it was natural that I took a seat behind the other participants. I was not the only one to sit in the back, which optimized my 'invisibility'. During the second week FOKUS' Executive Director was the only civil society representative present. From the state, two to four representatives were present at all of the morning meetings. In addition, one of the interns of the NorwayUN took part in the meetings. As I had established a good contact with the intern, it became natural to sit beside her around the table. Especially was this natural as there was sufficient space around the table. I evaluated it as becoming more visible than invisible by sitting alone in the back. The reason for this was that by not differentiating myself from the participants I became part of the environment. Berg and Lune (2012) regard these practices as practices of invisibility. Even though, in practice I was more visible around the table. However, the shift in the number of participants made it natural for the state representatives to look at me while talking. In this way, I became a participating observer, instead of a non-participating observer. Bryman (2012)'s term 'minimally participant observer' is described as: "Observes but participates minimally in group's core activities"(p.443). I argue that this description is in line with my presence and method of observation during the second week of CSW. As I was already a part of the setting, my presence did not noticeably affect the participants. The shift took place in a natural way, and to insist to sit in the back and to not answer when the representatives approached me would have made bigger implications for the established trust between the participants and me. In addition the interaction between the participants was consistent during the second week, and thus, I argue that my presence did not affect the interaction to any noticeable degree.

4.3.4 Semi- Structured, Unstructured and E-mail Interviews

Berg and Lune (2012) define interviews as "a conversation with a purpose" (p.105). Kvale and Brinkmann (2009) elaborate more on the purposes. They mention the purpose of understanding how the informants experience and perceive their social world. I used three different types of interviews that were chosen out of their appropriateness for a situation. The three different types were semi-structured, unstructured and e-mail interviews. The most used was the unstructured. In

this section, I will describe when the different methods were used, how, and potential limitations of these methods for the study

4.3.4.1 Unstructured interviews

The unstructured interviews took form as informal conversations. They were not planned in advance, but were conducted by the availability of the informants. According to Thomas (1993), elite informants have rigorous time schedules and can thus be difficult to access. During CSW, all my informants had planned activities for all days. However, as I participated in the morning meetings with them, I had access to the informants. This access allowed following their daily routines to have conversations with them, when they were available for it. This can be seen as the strategy Berg & Lune (2012) describe as 'tracking', which is originally a method for observation. They define it as: "(...) following the guides around during their usual daily routines and watching their activities and the other people they interact with" (p.228). I did not use it as an observation method, as it offered limited data on the practices in meaningful access points. The daily routines took the form of walking from the morning meetings to the UN HQ or joining informants in the Delegate's lounge, a café lounge inside the UN HQ. As these took place in natural settings in which the informants were situated, the atmosphere was relaxed. In the walks from the morning meetings, the discussions of the morning meetings became a natural topic. This allowed for getting informants' perceptions of what I just had observed. By doing this, the confirmability of the study was increased. Confirmability is one criteria of increasing the trustworthiness of the study, which will be discussed in the end of this chapter.

The strength of having the interview in a conversational form opens up for spontaneous answers. A spontaneous answer can give better insight in their subjective perceptions than answers provided in a formal interview setting. One weakness of this method is that its conversational and spontaneous form, does not go well with writing notes during the interviews. That is because writing notes during an interview makes the setting more formal and less as a conversation. By not taking notes there is a danger of forgetting information from the interviews (Berg and Lune, 2012). I overcame this weakness by writing notes right after the conversations took place, so the time gap between the interviews and note- writing was minimized.

4.3.4.2 Semi-structured interviews

I carried out in-depth semi-structured elite interviews with the two main actors before CSW: FOKUS' Executive Director and the state representative from the MFA. The interviews lasted from 40 minutes to one hour. I had prepared a set of questions that formed an interview guide (appendix 1). The purpose of the interview guide is to have thought through relevant topics to bring up in the interview. However, semi-structured interviews are flexible and questions are asked according to informants' answers (Bryman, 2012). The objective of these in-depth semi-structured interviews was to understand the perceptions of these two key informants of procedures, roles and perceptions of civil society and state in the delegation. The value of understanding their perceptions of the state's and NGO member's roles in the delegation was to compare their perceptions with my observations in the selected meetings. I used a recorder during the semi-structured interviews, to be able to focus on the informants. By taking a few notes, and mostly focusing on the informants I obtained a flow in the interview. A flow in the interview makes the informant less stressed as the interview takes more form of a conversation. Using a recorder can make the informant more stressed and less open to the informant (Bryman, 2012).

4.3.4.3 E-Mail Interviews

As the time for writing up the thesis was limited after the second data collection phase during the CSW session, a few e-mail interviews allowed for a suitable method for follow-up interviews. As I analyzed the data collected, some new questions arised. This method served well for the purpose. The strength of conducting e-mail interviews was that the informants got time to think through and write comprehensive answers. Comprehensive answers are not a guarantee of this method, but was my experience of this method. However, one weakness of this method is that it can take long time before you get an answer. In addition, the answers can be weighted for what is appropriate to say, instead of their subjective and spontaneous answers. I did not experience this to a noticeable degree found this method useful for the time frame of the research process.

4.3.5 Document Analysis

In addition to observing and interviewing, I analyzed two documents. These two documents were:

- The state instruction, which described the mandate of the Norwegian delegation at CSW

- The NGO Forum outcome document (NGO document), which was civil society's input to the state instruction

I accessed the NGO document (appendix 2) in the NGO Forum and the state instruction in the information meeting. I have conducted what Bryman (2012) defines as 'content analysis' of these two documents. According to Bryman the purpose of this method is to find underlying themes addressed in the documents. After highlighting which theme each paragraph addressed, I listed up the themes of each document and compared the two document's themes with each other. This has been seen as significant to do to learn about the nature of the state- civil society cooperation. In addition, I studied whether the state does include some of civil society's input as they say they do. It is however, difficult to certify that it is the civil society input that has led to one point ending up on the state instruction. To examine overlapping points on the two documents and the points that are not overlapping, gives an understanding of points of alignment and non-alignment between the state side and the civil society side of the delegation. I elaborate further on this in the chapter on findings and discussion.

4.4 Data Analysis

After collecting data, I wrote all the material I had on word documents to manage the data electronically. My data collection material contained of field notes from observations and unstructured interviews, in addition to transcribed data from semi-structured interviews. The reason to write and save all data in word documents was to manage the data in one place and secure that it is not lost. Thereafter, I analyzed the material by coding it after topics.

Coding is the first phase of the data analysis process. It is about managing the data and deconstructing the masses of data materials into fragments (Bryman, 2012). How these fragments of data are created is up to what makes sense for the researcher. As I collected data in two phases, I coded the data following each of the phases. This is in line with Bryman's (2012) recommendation, because coding throughout the research process gives a better understanding of the data gathered.

After the first phase of data gathering, I coded the data after what topics the data fitted into. Thus, I got a good overview. I did however not leave out much data. That was because I was still gathering more and was not confident on what should be left out. After the second phase, I got some key words to hang the data on. As qualitative research is an inductive process, the theory is generated from the data material (Bryman, 2012). This means that while I had reflected over the theoretical framework of the thesis before my fieldwork during CSW, the theoretical framework changed after I had gathered, coded and analyzed the data. To move between all the phases of the research process is in the nature of the qualitative research method. By generating key words and the theoretical framework for this, I coded the data after the chosen key words

The practices of the delegation became the main focus in this thesis. As the morning meetings lasted over two weeks, I analyzed the data after patterns in the morning meetings and deviations from the patterns. Throughout the process I separated between what my informants had said and when, and what my interpretations of the findings were. One weakness Bryman (2012) mentions about coding is that the context for what is said by informants can be lost. The context for what is said is important in qualitative research, as it is one of the criteria of trustworthiness. To overcome this weakness, I kept my notes on the date and context together with the quotes of the informants.

4.5 Research Ethics

I have argued that I became 'invisible' as I gained trust by the participants. In addition, I used the method of unstructured interview, which allows for spontaneous answers. However, a challenge for the research ethics is that the informants can say more than they want me to know (Berg & Lune, 2012). I overcame this challenge by sending my key informants quotes I would use in my thesis. By doing this, they could consent on whether they are comfortable with sharing the information publicly or not. My experience from civil society's side is that they are straightforward in their communication to the state representatives. Thus, the information they share with me is also known for the state representatives from before. At the same time, the research ethics were in place as the participants were conscious about my role as a researcher.

To ensure that the thesis followed a responsible conduct of research, I avoided using a recorder in any meeting in which I observed during CSW. That was because I was not allowed to use a recorder while the Minister was present. Even though I was not prohibited from using a recorder in other meetings, I would have had to ask the state representatives in charge another time for using it for other meetings. To gain trust, and not make implications for my attempt to be as 'invisible' as possible I avoided to use a recorder during CSW.

This thesis is reported to the Privacy Ombudsman for Research, Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD). The Privacy Ombudsman of NSD is securing that data is treated confidentially and that the interests of the informants are taken care of. I handed the data in files on my computer to which other people do not have access. In addition, the informants were told about my study and consented to participate.

4.6 Assessing the Trustworthiness of the Study

In this part I am investigating in the three criteria Bryman (2012) lists as the common ways to assess the trustworthiness of a study: credibility, transferability and confirmability. This has to do with whether the study can be trusted out of how it has been carried out.

4.6.1 Credibility

Credibility is concerned with whether the findings really reflect the phenomena being studied (Fangen, 2004). One method of ensuring this is triangulation. To use more than one method and source of data is to triangulate the findings (Bryman, 2012). As I have observed, interviewed and conducted document analysis, I argue that my findings are triangulated. I have also followed up through e-mail interviews when more questions arised from analyzing the data. This is to not draw my conclusions for what I observe, but to investigate in the informants' perceptions. I have also sent quotes to get the consent of my key informants. This can be seen as respondent validation (Bryman, 2012). As the term implies, respondent validation is about getting a validation from the respondents on what they have said.

4.6.2 Transferability

Thick description comes under the trustworthiness criteria transferability (Bryman, 2012). This method is about giving the reader a detailed understanding of the context of what I am describing. This allows the readers to get their own ideas of the context. In the findings and discussion chapter, I have provided the reader with thick description of what I have observed of practices in the delegation. I have also used quotes, which reflects what the informants have said directly, and given the context of when it was said to secure this trustworthiness criteria.

4.6.3 Confirmability

Confirmability is to ensure that the study is not overtly affected by my personal views (Bryman, 2012). Overtly is used as a word here because my interpretations are part of the discussion chapter, and also supposed to be part of it. Confirmability is concerned about whether the researchers have reflected over their personal views and presumptions, to not let their views dominate the study (Bryman, 2012). By saying this, a researcher's interpretation of the findings is a natural part of the findings and discussion chapter. A method I applied to ensure the confirmability of the study was to clearly divide my own interpretations from what I was observing while writing field notes. The reason for why this was important, was to not mix my personal interpretations with the observations and what the informants have said.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the findings of the study. The presentation of the findings takes a chronological form as it follows a process. The process is of meaningful access towards and during CSW. It is divided in two parts. The first part addresses findings from meaningful access points, including findings from a document analysis of a state instruction and NGO document. The second part presents findings from the two weeks with morning meetings during CSW.

5.1 Before CSW: Examining the Space For Civil Society

This section presents and analyzes findings from three meaningful access points held before CSW. These are the Contact Conference, the day two of the conference:NGO Forum and the information meeting of the delegation before CSW.

5.1.1 The Contact Conference

5.1.1.1 Introduction

The Contact Conference is a collaboration between the MFA, BLD, BUFDIR and FOKUS (FOKUS, 01.16). This is an annual meeting point for the state and civil society to meet, discuss and prepare for CSW (FOKUS⁴, n.d.) The Contact Conference is part of FOKUS contract with BLD. According to the FOKUS Executive Director, they get their suggestions through by their state partners on the topics of the Contact Conference (FOKUS Executive Director, 08.02.16). This shows that the state is enabling FOKUS to shape the access point as they want.

This year's CSW had a broad topic or priority theme: 'Women's empowerment and its link to sustainable development'. The topics of the contact conference arranged on 1st of February were 'Women's economic development and rights', and 'Women's political participation'. What is evident from the Contact Conference's panel debates, was that the discussions were not about CSW directly.

High-profile state participants included the MFA State Secretary and the BLD State Secretary. In addition, parliamentarians and state bureaucrats participated. Other high-profile participants

included a representative from UN Women. From civil society, a broad range of actors participated.

5.1.1.2 Alignment

I choose to give insight into the second panel debate of the conference to show that there is an alignment between the state, FOKUS and a researcher on the principle of gender equality. This gives insight into the nature of the state and FOKUS interaction. The panel consisted of the MFA State Secretary, the FOKUS Executive Director and a researcher from University of Oslo. The topic of the discussion was 'Women and economic development- for growth or for equal rights?' The answer of the panel was 'yes to both', gender equality is about economic growth through including more women in the job market, and also about their rights.

That there is a consensus on the principle of gender equality was supported by the MFA representative in an interview, "Naturally in the [Norwegian] gender equality field there is a high consensus, but there can be disagreements on which means to use to reach the end. As far as I know, all agrees on that the principle of gender equality is rights and smart economics" (MFA representative, personal communication, 03.02.16).

This paragraph is to show that FOKUS and the state are in alignment on the principles of gender equality. An alignment indicates that the Norwegian government and the NGOs, FOKUS in this case, have the same goals and visions when it comes to the gender equality field.

5.1.1.3 Input to the state

To illustrate this further I include a longer quote of FOKUS Executive Director from the contact conference. I want the reader to note the use of knowledgeable technical language and referring to an analysis by FOKUS, the target of the Norwegian state budget on gender equality internationally, and the use of the word 'we' to target FOKUS and the state:

Firstly, I am very glad that we are sitting here agreeing that women's economic development and rights are very important. Secondly, I think that we therefore have an important job to do together. Because we looked at how much of the Norwegian

development budget, as an OECD- DAC* cake, can be measured directly connected through a gender marker and statistics to a women and equality perspective. We compared economic development with other areas. ...We see that major [Norwegian] efforts and funding is now directed towards energy, economics and trade. The funding with a gender marked to these topics is very slim. [on Norwegian gender equality funding in the field of energy, economics and trade].

*The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)- Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (FOKUS Executive Director, personal communication, 01.02.16)

The finding from this paragraph is the use of language that shows knowledge and experience from the field. In addition, the sentence 'we therefore have an important job to do together' takes the form of a recommendation to the government, and an invitation to work closer with the government. I will discuss this finding closer in the next sub-section when discussing FOKUS purposes.

5.1.1.4 Summarizing and analyzing the findings

One significant findings of this part is that FOKUS is funded by the state to organize a meaningful access point for the state and civil society before CSW. This finding indicates that FOKUS is enabled by the state to create a meaningful access point, an institutionalized access point with power-wielding state representatives present (Brockett, 1991). By funding it and participating on the event on the given premises of the agent is an enabling practice. The practice of enabling is by Giddens (1984) understood as the agent being allowed to use its agency: the agent's capability to act according to its purposes.

That FOKUS is enabled to act according to its purposes, makes it interesting to analyze the choices of the conference program. The choices of the program show how FOKUS interacts with the state, which illustrates the structure- agency interaction. Agent's activities can be interpreted as them reproducing or attempting to influence the structure (Giddens, 1984). One aspect of influencing is to legitimize or relegitimize a concept or idea (Barnett, 2008).

Two of FOKUS activities, that I will now analyze, are the choice to invite a UN Women representative and the Executive Director's use of knowledgeable language and recommendation when talking to the State Secretary. The aim of analyzing this is to get an understanding of FOKUS purposes of their choices, and whether they are enabled or constrained to use their agency.

That UN Women is participating can be seen in connection with FOKUS' identity as the Norwegian National Committee for UN Women. UN Women is also an influential ally of FOKUS. According to Keck and Sikkink's (1998) influential allies can provide an NGO with prestige, and thus legitimize the NGO in the eyes of others (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). In this context, UN Women can be seen as a prestige guest that can legitimize FOKUS in the eyes of the state.

Knowledge and information are the key words of the two findings above. By having access to UN Women, FOKUS can be an alternate source of information for the state (Keck and Sikkink, 1998). The state values knowledge and information, and one important reason for this is that the modern state bases its decisions on science (Haas, 1992). In addition, by using knowledgeable language that shows specific knowledge within the field can lead to access to cooperate with and to influence state's decisions and behavior (Haas, 1992). By this being said, FOKUS is an established partner of the state. But what is to be established? Global political events create challenges and changes in the global context. This often leads to a change in the state's prevailing perceptions of policies' costs and benefits (Zald, 1996; Keck & Sikkink, 1998).

An example of a change in the state's policies became evident after an interview with the Executive Director. She expressed that the current Minister of Foreign Affairs prioritized the development aid civil society partner's of the state less when it comes to having a dialogue, than what had been the case before. She understood it as the Minister primarily focusing on the humanitarian part of Norway's foreign policies, and thus prioritizing the humanitarian civil society partners of the state (FOKUS Executive Director, personal communication, 08.02.16). This can be interpreted as a change in the interaction between the structure and the agent.

The two selected examples are interpreted as FOKUS purpose of its actions being to re-legitimizing itself above the state. These examples have also shown that FOKUS act according to its capabilities. It has the space to try to influence the state to act in accordance with their interests. This is in line with Giddens (1984) understanding of the agent's action, both reproducing the structure and attempting to influencing it. This points at the state constraining FOKUS action to the minimum. Instead they are enabling them through an access point and by participating on the program as FOKUS has suggested.

Another finding from this part was that the gender equality field in Norway has a high consensus. The example provided showed that this was the case of FOKUS and the state. This is an insight into the nature of interaction between FOKUS and the state. They are in alignment when it comes to what gender equality is about. I will come back to investigating further in this alignment through a document analysis later in the findings chapter.

5.1.2 The NGO Forum

5.1.2.1 Introduction

The NGO Forum was held the day after the contact conference. As this is day 2 of the contact conference, it is a state-funded and an institutionalized access point. It is also part of FOKUS contract with BLD. In this meeting civil society participate on collectively shaping input with the purpose of influencing the state's prioritizations for CSW. The input is sent to the state in the form of an outcome document (NGO document).

17 representatives from 13 Norwegian civil society organizations gathered in FOKUS' offices in Oslo. The FOKUS secretariat's role in this forum was to facilitate for the civil society organizations to form input to the state instruction for CSW.

5.1.2.2 Does the state listen?

The meeting started with information from the FOKUS secretariat on the purpose of the day. In addition to form input for the state instruction for CSW, the Executive Director encouraged the participants to form concrete input for the government's policies for gender equality in the international arena for the rest of the year. This is interpreted as FOKUS being interested in, not

only the CSW, but also the government's foreign and development cooperation policies on gender equality throughout the year.

There were some comments and questions from the participants to start with. One participant asked about whether the state follows up on the input sent from civil society. The Executive Director answered that:

The state usually has a finished text in which they incorporate input from civil society. One example of input being incorporated was when Solveig Horne [BLD Minister] mentioned sexual and reproductive health. It was clear that civil society had influenced it, and would not have happened without us.

(FOKUS Executive Director, personal communication, 02.02.16)

This quote shows that FOKUS believes that the state listen to civil society input.

5.1.2.3 The Document

The document was changed from targeting the Norwegian authorities, to targeting the CSW's agreed conclusions directly. This shift was found from the language shifting in the introduction of the two documents. The language was changed from "This document is intended to provide constructive input to the Norwegian authorities at the Commission on the Status of Women 2016, and other international fora" to "the Norwegian civil society has identified a set of priorities for the Agreed Conclusions of CSW60".

The FOKUS secretariat was the editors of the NGO Forum outcome document (NGO document). Civil society representatives sent their parts over mail to the Head of Administration. The texts were edited and streamlined, and sent between FOKUS and their member organizations for feedback, and editing.

The final NGO document was approximately 5 pages long. It was written around the points that the civil society representatives had highlighted during the NGO Forum. The organizations that answered the mails with constructive feedback, were positive to the document. One civil society representative asked about the choice of format. The Executive Director answered the mail:

This is a text developed after reading through and analyzing the zero- draft. FOKUS is connected to a closed group of some central participants in international women- and equality organizations that work together before and during CSW. The text is written with input from there. It also means that the Norwegian [civil society] input will be in line with and support other [civil society] delegations.

(FOKUS Executive Director, observation, 21.02.16)

This quote shows that FOKUS is connected to a transnational network of activists that support each other before and during CSW. It also shows that FOKUS sees itself as part of central participants in international women- and equality organizations at CSW.

5.1.2.4 Summarizing and Analyzing the Main Findings

The findings of this section show an example of the structure-agency interaction, when the structure is not present. The activities of the actors are however targeting the state, in an attempt to influence their prioritizations.

Brockett's (1991) conceptualizing of meaningful access points had the criteria of power-wielding state representatives being present in the meeting. This was however not the case. I still argue that it is a meaningful access point as it is directed towards the state. In addition, the state is facilitating for the meeting and expecting to receive the input. This can also point to Kriesi et al. (1992) theorizing of state strategies to receive input. Before pointing to the outcome of sending the NGO document to the state, it is evident that the state has a cooperative form of receiving input. The perception of the FOKUS Executive Director was also that the state do consider and include their input. This talks about the structure's nature. The finding is thus that the state enables civil society organizations to interact with the structure. Something civil society value and believe is for their benefit, as showed through the quote of the Executive Director. This is done by them facilitating civil society with a meeting in which they can gather to plan for influencing the state.

The finding of the document changing name is not seen as FOKUS not being interested in targeting the government's policies anymore. It is interpreted as FOKUS re-legitimizing itself as a knowledgeable actor for the state. This can be seen in light of the analysis provided in the contact conference- section, by using technical language and their influential allies. In other words, they are using their agency by using their resources of information, knowledge, allies and constituency.

Another finding is that FOKUS' interest in participating at CSW is not limited to the state delegation. The organization uses more channels and is interested in making an impact on the agreed conclusions of the CSW.

5.1.3 The Information Meeting

5.1.3.1 Introduction

The information meeting illustrated that the delegation is the state's domain in which civil society members are invited. This is because the NGO members were sent an e-mail from the state with an invitation to participate on the meeting, since they were invited and approved to be an NGO member of the delegation. In addition, it was the state representatives that held the meeting and were in charge of the program.

5.1.3.2 The State Instruction

The state instruction, describing Norway's prioritizations, was handed out in the meeting. As already mentioned, the NGO document was sent as input to the state instruction with the purpose of influencing Norway's prioritizations.

In the meeting, a state representative mentioned civil society input. She mentioned that the input from FOKUS was received, and that they had received input from some others in addition. This shows that FOKUS input is the biggest part of the input from civil society. The MFA representative described the link between the state instruction and civil society's input in an interview:

The instruction that the delegation works from is the government's political platform on gender equality, but it is inspired by what civil society view as their needs.

(MFA representative, personal communication, 03.02.16)

This quote communicates that the state values the input from civil society, and is concerned about their needs.

5.1.3.3 The Role of NGO Members

In this meeting the state representative's expectations and tasks for the NGO members were communicated. In addition, the state representatives presented the BLD Minister and the MFA State Secretary's program. An overview of the CSW negotiation process and general conflict lines, in addition to Norway's prioritizations for CSW were also presented.

The expectations to the delegation is captured by citing one of the state representatives in the meeting:

To be part of the delegation is a responsible task. You are chosen because you represent a diversity of the Norwegian society. ... It is important that you support the instruction we work from. You do not need to promote everything that the instruction says, but it is important that you do not go against it. ... We expect that you are active on the basis of the competence of the organization you are representing. You can present yourself as an NGO member of the Norwegian delegation. Show that you are from Norway.

(MFA representative, observation, 03.03.16)

This quote can be summed up in three points of the state's expectations:

1. Visualizing the diversity of Norwegian civil society
2. State instruction is the base of their work at CSW, but not bound to it
3. Be active on the basis of your organization's competence

These points are interpreted as a low degree of executing control over the NGO members. That is because the NGO members are given space to participate out of own organization's interests, even though the instruction is the framework for their participation in the delegation.

In addition, benefits of being in the delegation were presented. The main point highlighted was the delegate entrance pass to the UN building. A delegate pass is a pass that the UN gives to its member states. This pass gives access to the negotiations, that for example NGOs with NGO entrance pass do not get access to.

For this year the NGO members were given a new task. This was to write notes from side-events. BUFDIR joined the delegation for the first time in order to coordinate the note writing. It was communicated as an important task for getting relevant input to Norway's work after CSW. operating in the state structure, and thus a part of the structure. To write notes was until this year only the MFA and BLD's tasks. They were still going to write notes, but from the state's bilateral meetings. As there are hundreds of side-events held during CSW, the side-events chosen would be the ones that are most relevant for Norway in form of topic or host organization/state. I interpret this as the state not having time between their duties, and therefore saw the need to delegate writing reports from side-events. After the message of writing notes was given, the NGO members were asked for input about it. One NGO member said it was good to be involved practically. By this I do not argue that all NGO members shared the same view. I pointed out the only input on this during the meeting.

5.1.3.4 Summarizing and Analyzing the Main Findings

This meeting established the structure. Even though the Norwegian delegation to CSW is established every year, it is not a structure throughout the year. Thus, with some new NGO members the structure is reproduced or possibly transformed by the state representatives communication of it.

By establishing the structure what is viewed as appropriate is stated. According to the logic of appropriateness, the agents will try to act according to the norms of what is appropriate in the structure they are embedded in (March and Olsen, 1989). However, this is not to say that the agents do not have agency to try to influence the structure. As agents, they also reproduce and attempt to change the structure. The difference is, according to Wendt (1999), that the state representatives are socialized to reproduce the collective knowledge of the state. The NGO

members do not have the same mandate to establish the structure, but they have agency to use within it.

To study whether the state enabled or constrained the NGO members in this meeting is a difficult task. That is because it was a short information meeting, and did not include much interaction between the structure and agents. It is thereby possible to interpret their communication. I interpreted the message of expectations to the NGO members as the state executing a low degree of control over the NGO members. Thus, it was seen as an enabling message. That was out of the space they were given for working out of their own organization's basis. This is a point that will be discussed further after seeing how the practices of the morning meetings were during CSW.

According to Giddens (1984) the transformation of a structure takes a long time. Thereby, it is interpreted as that the structure is to a higher degree being reproduced than transformed. This is in line with that one task was new for this year, indicating that the other tasks is the same. The new task takes the form of writing notes for the state to take back. The agent's are on consent operating in the state structure, and thus a part of the structure. As purposive agents, they have their own interests for participating. The obvious one, that I introduced earlier, is connected to their alignment and wish to advance the international framework of gender equality. However, that one NGO member communicated this task as involving, shows a desire to be more involved in the structure. For this NGO member this activity is therefore enabling.

The NGO members were encouraged to say that they are NGO members of the Norwegian delegation, and thus showing that they are from Norway. This can be interpreted as Norway being proud of including NGO members in their delegation. Tallberg et al. (2013) argues that democratic member states have contributed to spread the norm of participatory democracy in International Organizations (IOs). That NGO members visualize Norway also visualizes the Norwegian tradition of participatory democracy.

One example of Norway spreading the norm of participatory democracy through visualizing civil society was from a side- event during the 60th session of CSW. The BLD Minister participated on a side- event organized by the FOKUS member organization, Norwegian Women's Public Health

Association. Among others, the Ethiopian Equality Minister was present. The Norwegian BLD Minister communicated the importance of civil society. One part of what she said was: “It is important for us to involve NGOs in meetings where we discuss policy in informal settings. Why is it important? Because it makes our decisions better. We support NGOs. Their role is to be critical” (BLD Minister, observation, 14.03.16). This quote is directly on discussing policy in informal settings with NGOs, which the NGOs are taking part in during CSW. Thereby, I argue that the NGO members are part of exporting the Norwegian model of civil society cooperation that the state is proud of to the international arena.

5.1.4 The State Instruction and the NGO Document: Consensus- to what extent?

5.1.4.1 Introduction

When it comes to the nature of the Norwegian gender equality field, a high level of consensus has been one finding. Another finding points at NGO input being used as an inspiration for the state instruction. In addition, the FOKUS Executive Director believes that the government listens to the NGOs. To investigate in these findings, I conducted a document analysis of the two key documents mentioned so far; the state instruction and the NGO document. The process of the document analysis is covered in the chapter of research methods. This is a method of the trustworthiness criteria of credibility. This criteria is concerned with whether the findings really reflect the phenomena being studied.

The purpose of this section is to find out which topics are overlapping in the two documents and which are not. The first sub-section of this part is analyzing the overlapping points, and the second points the non-overlapping points.

5.1.4.2 Overlapping topics in the state instruction and NGO document

The majority of the points of the five pages NGO document *Norwegian Civil Society Priorities for the Agreed Conclusions* and the two- pages state instruction were overlapping. I will draw a brief picture of the aligned topics, not to go deeply in all the details included. This is because the aim is to show that there is a general consensus on topics, but also to point out the non-aligned points.

The points that overlap includes:

- To reaffirm earlier international conventions
- Women's economic and political rights and participation
- Combat all forms of violence (in the state instruction) and all forms of discrimination (in the NGO Forum document)
- Sexual and reproductive rights and health, lesbian, homosexual, bisexual and trans (LHBT) rights (in the state instruction), lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex (LBTI) organizations participation (in the NGO Forum document)
- Rights of women human rights activists.

In addition to this, the state instruction acknowledged civil society's importance by stating: "underline the civil society's significance and participation in the work for global gender equality. The delegation shall have dialogue and meeting points with civil society during the meeting [the CSW], also with civil society from the South". The evidence that a point on meeting points with civil society is included in the state instruction, shows that it is not only valued, but also operationalized. I argue that it is operationalized out of that civil society is included in the morning meetings of the delegation. Not only the NGO members, but also all Norwegian NGOs present at CSW and the South Partners of FOKUS. This will be shown from the evidence on the morning meetings during CSW.

5.1.4.3 Topics not overlapping in the state instruction and NGO document

I will now provide an insight into points that were not overlapping in the two documents. I do not argue that there is a non-alignment between the NGO document and the state instruction if a point is missing. The NGO document is based on key points that civil society representatives have highlighted, in addition to what the transnational network of women's organizations have highlighted. It is targeting the agreed conclusions directly. The Norwegian state instruction is briefly giving an indication of the state's focus during CSW. This does not mean that the points they have not included are points they will not highlight in the CSW negotiations.

All of the NGO document's points were included, except from refugee women in host countries, climate change affecting women disproportionately, and prostitution as sexual violence. On the

other hand, this is dependent on how the documents are read. The point of prostitution as sexual violence can be part of the overall point; combat all forms of violence against women. This point as written as: “combat all forms of violence, hereunder violence in close relations, forced and child marriages and female genital mutilation”. That some topics are specified for the broader topic of violence indicates that sexual violence was not one of the areas that the state representatives were given a mandate to focus on.

The point of refugee women in host countries could be read as being part of the rights of minority women. According to Oxford Dictionaries, minority is defined as “A small group of people within a community or country, differing from the main population in race, religion, language, or political persuasion”(Oxford Dictionaries¹, n.d.). Seen from one angle, a refugee woman will be included in this definition. However, I argue that it is not, since refugee women in host country’s has other concerns than minorities in general by the fact of having fled a war. In addition, I argue that out of that refugee woman in host country is not specified as a point in the state instruction.

The MFA representative stated that input has to be weighted against what the government’s policies are (personal communication, 3.02.16). In this case, the point of refugee women in host countries should be seen within the current national context. The government’s policies on refugees have been a source to an extensive debate on this topic in Norway. In addition, the government’s returning of refugees from Storskog in North Norway to Russia have got international critique, including from the UN. This could be seen as a reason for why the government does not want to front this nationally contentious point in the international arena.

The last point that was not included was the point of climate change and women. As I have argued above, the state instruction does not include all the government’s policies for CSW, but it gives an indication on that climate change and women is not prioritized as a point Norway will highlight from before the CSW has started.

5.1.4.4 The Missing Points the Other Way Around

In addition to compare the NGO document with the state instruction, I compared the state instruction with the NGO document on not covered points. It is important to keep in mind that the

state instruction was formed later, and that the NGO Forum dealt with the points they wanted the government to front. I include this part, because it gives an insight in the prioritizations of the organizations that formed the NGO document, and what was left out.

The NGO document did not include boys and men's role and participation in realizing gender equality. In addition, it did not include civil society's significance and participation in realizing gender equality. On the contrary, the NGO Forum outcome document addressed: "(...) women's and girl's leadership and the full involvement of women-led, feminist, lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex (LBTI) and human rights organizations and women human rights defenders ". Here, women activists' involvement is highlighted and specified, in addition to human rights organizations. This can be seen as a specified choice that targets women's organizations instead of using the broad concept 'civil society organizations'. I argue that the women's organizations desire to be recognized as central in the work on gender equality internationally is part of their choice of language in the NGO document. This can also be seen with the agent relegitimizing itself for the structure, by pointing out the importance of their work in the field of gender equality.

5.1.4.5 Summarizing the Findings

The findings in this part show a high alignment of topics included in the state instruction and NGO document. This supports the findings on this that I had from interviews with my informants and observation during the contact conference, NGO Forum and information meeting. I am not analyzing the findings here with the theoretical framework, as I did in the other part, since the findings are not of actual interaction between the agents and structure. The aim was to triangulate my findings, which I have done above. It is still interesting to note the non-overlapping points in the documents, as they will be brought up again to analyze the input given during the morning meetings.

The next part is concerned with practices of the delegation during CSW in the form of morning meetings over two weeks.

5.2 During CSW: Examining the Space for Civil Society

The second part presents findings of two weeks of observations of the delegation's practices. These practices were studied in the morning meetings during CSW. The morning meetings were the main access points for NGO members and state representatives during CSW. Other Norwegian civil society organizations were invited for two of the meetings, and South partners for one of the meetings. This part is first divided in by the morning meetings during week one and week two. That is because there was a change in the number and nature of the delegation from week one to week two at CSW.

The first week of morning meetings included more elements to study than the second week. This was because of more people present at CSW both from civil society and the state's side, and more happenings taking place. Therefore this part is divided in two. One on the state's practices of giving information. By examining what type of information the state is giving, I examine in what ways and what areas the state involve civil society. The next part is on FOKUS' input with examples of how the state representatives receive the input. This part investigates in how FOKUS perceives the practices of civil society involvement. FOKUS' concerns, how they front them to the state in form of input and how the state receives them, tells about the interaction between the structure and the agent. This will be analyzed by enabling and/or constraining practices in the delegation, to answer the research question.

5.2.1 Morning Meetings of the First Week: the State's Practices

All morning meetings during the first week included a briefing of the Minister and State Secretary's programs of the day and on official side-events. The most of the morning meetings lasted for 30 minutes. The exception was the second morning meeting with the BLD Minister heading the delegation, which lasted for over 1 hour. In addition to this information, the Minister and State Secretary opened up for input from the NGO members.

On the Monday morning meeting, the Minister's program of the day was presented. The Minister's program was open for all the NGO members to participate on. That was excluding a few closed invitations from other states and a possible meeting with the Executive Director of UN Women.

The finding of the Minister's program being open and communicated well, shows that the Minister does not participate at events or meetings that has to or should be kept secretly from the delegation participants. I argue this out of that her full program, without space for potential other meetings, was communicated. This points to a high degree of openness within the delegation when it comes to involving the NGO members in the official high-level program of the Norwegian state at CSW.

The second morning meeting was open for all Norwegian NGOs present at CSW, without any special requirements for entry. It lasted longer than the usual morning meetings, which was one hour, including 15 minutes for informal mingling with the participants. In addition to this, 15 minutes were reserved for meeting three of FOKUS' partner organizations from the South.

The usual information procedure of the morning meeting was kept during the second morning meeting. This was to present the Minister's official program of the day, official side- events and an opening for input from NGO members. In addition, the Minister thanked FOKUS and the Sami Parliament for the two side-events the day before. As I have already mentioned, the Norwegian Women's Public Health Association held one side- event in which the Minister participated on by holding a speech. In addition, she held a speech on the side-event that was organized by FOKUS secretariat and the Sami Parliament. This shows that the Minister, and with her other state representatives, participated on access points created by civil society

FOKUS picked out three of their 11 partner organizations present at CSW for meeting the Minister for 15 minutes. This is an institutionalized meeting point were the Minister meets with three partner organizations every year during one morning meeting. The South partners are funded by the Norwegian state's development aid budget and thus also partner organizations of the Norwegian state. One partner representative from Ethiopia and two from Tanzania were chosen. These are among the Norwegian state's prioritized countries for development cooperation (NORAD, n.d.). One of the South partners in this meeting was happy to meet the Minister. She said that the Minister asked relevant questions on their work on women's issues, in addition to how they can continue to be partners (South partner, personal communication,

18.03.16). This shows that this South partner perceives the meeting with Minister as an enabling practice.

The FOKUS Executive Director said in an interview that FOKUS has encouraged the state to meet civil society and the international partners during CSW (personal communication, 08.02.16). According to this finding, the state incorporate ideas from civil society by acting upon them. In this case, the scope also involves top politicians. This is a finding that points in the same direction as the main finding of part one of this chapter; that civil society's input is incorporated in the state representatives work. However, this exact finding is not triangulated by checking it to other sources. That is limiting its significance for this specific case.

From Wednesday to Thursday, the MFA State Secretary was the Head of the delegation. The meeting on Wednesday lasted for half an hour and was held for the delegation member. It included the usual information procedure.

The Thursday morning meeting was again open for all Norwegian NGOs present at CSW. This meeting started with information about the State Secretary's program of the day before. Then the word was given to one representative from NorwayUN to inform about the process of selecting a new general- secretary in the UN. Thereafter, the State Secretary asked a state representative for information about the agreed conclusions of the CSW negotiations. This was the first time the delegation provided information about the negotiations on their own initiative. The information was that Norway's input is included in the agreed conclusions. In addition, examples were given of language in alignment and in misalignment with Norway's perceptions of good language for the document of CSW. This is interpreted as a comprehensive overview of the negotiations.

After this information was given, it was opened up for input from civil society representatives. They were specifically asked for what they had participated on and input to the negotiations. In addition to be asked for oral input, the MFA representative asked for written arguments of the input the civil society representatives gave to the negotiations. This is interpreted as the state taking the input seriously, as their input was followed- up on.

That all Norwegian NGOs were present on the days that shared the negotiation information, is also a finding of openness. Seen from another angle, that the information on the negotiations are not only presented to the NGO members, also indicates that the NGO members of the delegation do not have special benefits of accessing some type of information from the state representatives. However, this is not to downsize that the NGO members acquire more access and possibilities to ask for information from the state. In addition, the NGO members were the only ones to get information on Friday about the negotiations.

5.2.1.1 Summarizing the Main Findings

The main findings from the morning meetings of the first week are that the state representatives engage the NGO members in the Minister and State Secretary's programs. In addition to official side- events. Information about the state representatives' activities on the negotiations were not given on their own initiative, until Thursday. From Thursday information about the negotiations were given. In this meeting, NGOs were encouraged to send written input to the MFA representative with arguments on their input.

Two of the meetings were open for all Norwegian NGOs, and it was no separation on the confidentiality of the information between information to all NGOs and the NGO members of the delegation. The last day included one evaluation initiated by the state. I will include the evaluation as a part of the sub-section of FOKUS input.

The next section will examine the input given by civil society closer. I have here chosen to limit the input to the one of FOKUS'. This is argued for in the chapter of research methods.

5.2.2 Morning Meetings: FOKUS' Input

By studying the input FOKUS gives and how the state receives it, I provide findings on the interaction between structure and agency. And how the agent uses the space provided by the structure. The findings from analyzing FOKUS' input from the first week is that it takes three main forms; questions on the negotiations when there were no updates from the state on Monday to Wednesday, knowledge-based input when there were updates, attempts to influence national

state budget when politicians were present, and attempts influence the agreed conclusion final document through targeting the state negotiators.

What type of input they were asked for by the Minister and State Secretary varied. Most of the days, they were asked for what they had participated on the day before of side- events or other activities. A few days it was not specified, but opened up for a round around the table. On Thursday, the first day with information given by the state on the negotiations, their input was asked for. I do not include information on what FOKUS attended of side-events and meetings, and limit it to the three points mentioned above.

5.2.2.1 Attempts to influence the national state budget when politicians present, and to influence the agreed conclusion

From the document analysis of the state instruction and the NGO document, it was evident that a few points were not overlapping. These points were brought up by the FOKUS Executive Director and constituency when the Minister and State Secretary were present in the open meeting on Tuesday, in addition to other days by the Executive Director. These two are national decision-makers, which is interpreted as why they are the main targets for Norway's policies.

I will now point out two examples of the mentioning of non-overlapping points in the open meeting. The Women's Front commented on the topic of prostitution, and that it should not be named sex work in the UN. This input can be seen in the context of an ongoing debate in the UN on the language of prostitution or sex work at that time. In addition, the Mira Center commented on refugee women in host countries, which was one of the other non-overlapping topics. The development aid budget was also a topic chosen by the FOKUS secretariat and the Norwegian Women's Public Health Association. They underlined the significance of development cooperation, and the importance of channeling development aid through women's organizations in the South. This can be linked to FOKUS' identity as a development aid partner of the state, with the main purpose of facilitating for Norwegian women's organizations' projects with women's organizations in the South.

I will now give an example of how the Minister received their input. The Minister acknowledged the importance of active women's organizations, but could not answer about the prioritizations in the state budget 2017. However, she mentioned that they had to split the budget on many organizations, and explicitly mentioned the importance of youth organizations. The Minister said, politely while smiling: "We will not take a budget discussion here now". Then she looked at FOKUS' Executive Director and said: "The engagement you show is important. It visualizes Norway" (BLD Minister, observation, 15.03.16).

There is two parts of the paragraph above that are interesting to look closer at. The first is the input of women's organizations. The other is the point of visualizing Norway.

For the first point, it is interesting to bring up the finding from the NGO document and that it explicitly mentioned the civil society actors they wanted to be prioritized in the work on the sustainable development goals. This was the 'full involvement of women-led, feminist, lesbian, bisexual, trans and intersex (LBTI) and human rights organizations and women human rights defenders'. This explicit formulation can be interpreted as a competition of getting funds and attention from the state, as there are many active NGOs and civil society partners of the state in Norway.

The Minister mentioned both 'engagement' and 'visualizing Norway' to the NGOs, which was also mentioned as the state's expectations in the information meeting. When the NGO representatives are presenting their concerns to the Minister, she cannot come with any concrete answers, since she is not deciding these policies alone. However, she gives the response that it is good that they are engaged in their work, and give input to the Minister on it. This is the Norwegian tradition. In addition, it is good to visualize Norwegian NGOs in the international arena. This can be seen in connection with the point of spreading the norm of participatory democracy in IOs, as argued before. However, I interpreted it as the FOKUS constituency present not being content with the answers of the Minister. The message was not perceived as receiving their input in a facilitating way, but rather in a way that spoke about the state's interest in them.

At the Thursday morning meeting, the second open morning meeting, several of FOKUS' members participated and backed up each other by bringing up the same topics. The topics were to have the phrase 'all women and girls' throughout the document, to reference to the participation of women's organizations more clearly and earlier in the agreed conclusions, and the importance of funding women's organizations. Especially the two last points were backed up.

That the FOKUS members and secretariat were coordinated in this was because they had met for an evening meeting the day before. In the FOKUS delegation's evaluation meeting, one of their member organizations referred to their evening meeting and that this enabled them to front their topics in a good way to the government:

We should all talk about women's organizations' funding. We could be a strong group in doing that. It was good that the Norwegian NGOs met Wednesday evening before the morning meeting on Thursday. Got together on topics and was able to frame it to our government. That was good.

(FOKUS' member organization, observation, 18.04.16)

The finding from this part is that FOKUS is both targeting the state politicians and negotiators, and attempt to influence both. The politicians are targeted to increase funding to women's organizations in Norway and development aid for women's organizations in the South. The state negotiators are targeted to get the preferred language in on participation and funding of women's organization for the implementation of the SDGs on gender equality. In addition to address 'all women and girls' throughout the document.

5.2.2.2 Questions on the negotiations when no updates, Monday to Wednesday

From the first morning meeting until Wednesday, FOKUS' Executive Director asked about the negotiations, and what the controversial issues of the negotiations were. She referred to the women's caucus on Sunday, where an international network for women's organizations met for a strategy meeting. The state negotiators, the MFA representative and the representative from NorwayUN, answered her questions briefly.

The Executive Director expressed frustration about not getting information about the negotiations in the FOKUS delegation's last meeting:

We are frustrated over whether the Norwegians consider and actually use our inputs. I have been pushing them [the state negotiators] by asking questions because they did not give any information. Wednesday evening we had a meeting with the Norwegian NGOs and discussed what we wanted to say to be able to give input yesterday at the Norwegian meeting. One of the chief negotiators from Norway ... said thank you and that the input is helpful and we will use it.

(FOKUS Executive Director, observation, 18.03.16)

The Executive Director expressed her action of asking questions about the negotiations as 'pushing' the state negotiators. This indicates that she did not think that they wanted to share information and thus had to push them. In addition, she says both that they are not sure whether Norway use their input, and that one of the state negotiators said that they would use it. The latter shows that the state negotiators receive the input in an accommodating way. They are saying that they will use it, but FOKUS is not convinced since the information is not shared openly about the negotiations.

5.2.2.3 Knowledge-based input

On Friday, the MFA representative headed the delegation on the morning meeting. This morning meeting started with going through the negotiations comprehensively. At this meeting the input from FOKUS' Executive Director took the form of knowledge-based input. It was evident that the input was based on her knowledge from participation on CSW for many years. In addition she was participating in an UN thematic working group during CSW and women's rights caucus' meetings during CSW, which also were channels of information. An example of the knowledge-based input from the Friday is:

What is important to remember is that UN Women has a cooperation agreement with ILO [International Labour Organization]. There is a link there that we can play on.

(FOKUS' Executive Director, observation, 18.04.16)

In addition to showing knowledge, this quote also shows that the word 'we' is used. This could indicate that when the negotiations are openly talked about, there is a closer cooperation and a team- feeling. To take the link to the input at the contact conference, the input there also used the word 'we'. This could indicate a partnership feeling, even though they have demands to the government. In an informal conversation, the FOKUS Executive Director said: "We separate between making demands to our government and to have a good relation to the ones who sit in the negotiations" (personal communication, 23.03.16).

5.2.3 Evaluation of the Delegation

After discussing the negotiations, it was opened up for a round around the table for evaluating the week with the delegation and highlights from CSW. One pattern found in the NGO members' evaluation input was that they were generally positively presented, and that most said that it was good with negotiation-updates on Thursday and Friday. Some of these mentioned that they would have liked updates on the negotiations before. The reason mentioned for why they would like update before Thursday, was that they could have contributed with suggestions and be more involved.

The most comprehensive evaluation input came from the FOKUS' Executive Director. She gave positive input on that the Norwegian MFA arranged a side- event that visualized women's human rights defenders, that there was a CSW arranged for youth before the CSW session and about the NGO side- events. With the last point she also indirectly critiqued the state representatives, by pointing out the low presence of member states at these meetings and saying that this is something she says every year. She said it was a pity that the state recommended them to participate on a Nordic Ministerial panel in New York, which she would prefer to get in one of the Nordic countries instead.

The last input to the state's official program, can be linked with the high degree of openness on the State's official program. Out of the input given by the Executive Director here it seemed like it is not in FOKUS' interest to participate on these meetings.

She also suggested a side-event arranged together by the Norwegian civil society and the Norwegian state. This was mentioned with the reason of less space given to civil society by many governments. This input makes it evident that the Executive Director does view the state as cooperative with civil society and want to visualize this on the international arena as well. This was also evident from an interview with her. In this interview I asked about the Norwegian state's cooperation with civil society. Her answer was positive. She mentioned that FOKUS tell their South partners about the way the state involve them. With this, she mentioned that their partners could refer to the Norwegian example when talking to their governments (FOKUS Executive Director, 8.02.16).

The last point was on the negotiations. The Executive Director mentioned that they already knew a lot about the negotiations on Sunday from a meeting with the women's rights caucus. She also suggested more briefings on the drafts of the agreed conclusions. On this point, one state representative was taking notes of what she said, and also followed up with a question about which drafts she ment. Another state representative received the input by expressing that FOKUS' input on Monday was useful. Both of these examples show that the state is receiving the input in a facilitating way.

The findings from the evaluation was that the NGO members spoke openly about what has been good, and what had potential of improvement. They also came with suggestion for more cooperation with the state, in form of a side-event. The state representative received the input in a cooperative and facilitative way. In addition the state representatives suggested for an evaluation meeting in Oslo, which shows that they want to follow up and take the NGO members seriously.

I will now make a transition to the second week, where the FOKUS Executive Director was the only one participating from the NGO members. As FOKUS input is included in the morning meetings of the second week as well, I sum up the findings and provide an analysis after the next section.

5.2.4 Morning Meetings of the Second Week

In the second week of the CSW, the morning meeting participants were two representatives from NorwayUN, one intern from NorwayUN, one representative from the MFA, one representative from the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (NORAD) and the FOKUS Executive Director. The Executive Director was not especially invited to participate for this week by the delegation, but stayed because of FOKUS own decision. It seemed like it was up to the NGO members to stay for the second week if they wanted and had funds for it themselves. Funds, because the NGO members covered their costs at CSW themselves.

This week the morning meetings started with an update on the negotiations, what Norway has given input about, about conflict lines and updates from UN thematic working groups Norway are working in. Thereafter the side-events and who will write notes from which side- events were gone through. This week writing notes were only done by the state representatives.

The discussions during this week were mostly about the negotiations, and the input from FOKUS was mostly in the form of knowledgeable input. The atmosphere was more relaxed than when the politicians were present. In addition to knowledgeable the Executive Director also used the platform to give input from the UN thematic working group she participated in. The input was in form of concrete language that pointed out a direction to one paragraph under negotiation. The MFA representative said she would follow it up with the group Norway was cooperating with.

In addition, it became apparent this week that the state representatives had listened to civil society's input. The week before this had been expressed as a concern by the women's organizations. This was evident since the MFA representative directly referred to that they had commented on having language on women's organizations and also faith-based organizations to one point in the negotiating document. These were points from the input that the MFA representative had asked to get as written input. In addition, the FOKUS Executive Director pointed at the language of 'all women and girls' were included, which she had pointed out the week before.

It was evident that the more recent negotiators at CSW valued the knowledge of civil society's input when it comes to telling about what has happened before. An example is: "Important for me to get knowledge from civil society who knows this better than me who is new" (Representative NorwayUN, personal communication, 23.03.16). They also expressed that knowledgeable and information input from civil society, from other meetings and networks, are useful.

The negotiators who had participated at CSW for many years, valued shorter and concise input from civil society about their concerns. In addition they were interested in updates from side-events and other meetings they had participated on. This is supported by the finding of asking for side-events on each morning meeting. The MFA representative also supported this, as she expressed the value of having a dialogue with civil society during CSW. The reason she mentioned was that civil society participate on different events, talks to colleagues from different countries and thus get knowledge about relevant discussions taking place, which can be useful input for the negotiations (MFA representative, personal communication, 03.02.16). That she highlights that civil society participates on different events, can be interpreted as that the state do not have time for this. The state has many parallel activities going on between the first and the second draft of the agreed conclusion is presented, which was from 9th to 18th of March. 18th being the Thursday they started talking about the negotiations. Among the activities happening within this period, one state representative listed up informal conversations with other countries about the agreed conclusions, parallel negotiations on other documents, high-level political program with organization around the politicians programs (representative NorwayUN, personal communication, 02.05.16).

However, as expressed during week one, the Executive Director did not feel that the state taking interested in using their competence and contacts for the negotiations. Rather she mentioned that updates from side-events took too much space of the morning meetings. Thus, it appears that FOKUS wants the state to use civil society more as resources that can help the negotiations move forward. This also by using their contacts, and giving information. She expressed this as:

It should be an added value for civil society to be part of the official delegation. The government representatives should also provide information about what is happening in the negotiations, and

not just for general rounds around the table with information about different side-events. ...Inclusion of civil society maybe too often becomes more symbolic than actual inclusion and use of competence and experience.

(FOKUS Executive Director, personal communication, 10.05.16)

The findings of this section are that the state does not cover the expenses of NGO members in the delegation. FOKUS is the only NGO member left, and information about the negotiations is shared openly in the morning meetings. This week the form of FOKUS' input is mostly knowledgeable input, and one input from a working group they participates in. The state mainly values input from side-events and other networks of civil society. This can point at the state having limited time for checking the discussions taking place, and have to focus on their member state responsibilities during CSW.

5.2.5 A Summary and Discussion: Information of the Morning Meeting

The findings from the morning meetings have shown that the state did not give information about the negotiations on their own initiative before Thursday during the first week. This was the last day that the State Secretary headed the delegation. As a reaction to this, questions were asked about the negotiations.

But why is it important for FOKUS to get updates from the state when they participate on the meetings of the women's rights caucus, and already had access to the agreed conclusions and what is happening in the negotiations? The answer of the Executive Director was that it is important to know what the Norwegian authorities are doing:

It is important to get information from Norwegian authorities to see how they work, what they are planning to be clear on, what is going on in informal meetings, and how others can contribute to push/influence....The strong network that Women's Rights Caucus constitutes is a resource that can be used to influence different countries on the same type of message on a more effective way than the member states often can.

(FOKUS Executive Director, personal communication, 10.05.16)

From what the Executive Director is saying here it is evident that they have an interest in pushing the negotiations forward. And thereby contribute to the same goal that the Norwegian state has. According to her, internal information from the state, in addition to strategy making with the state, could be a more effective means to the end.

Out of observations and interviews with the state representatives, it is clear that they value civil society's presence. From the morning meetings it became evident that the state mostly was interested in knowledge about the discussions taking place in the side-events and other events that the NGOs had attended. This shows that the state values civil society as an alternate source of information on discussions going on in the field of international gender equality. This is supported by what the MFA representative said in an interview:

To have contact with the organizations during CSW is also useful. The organizations participates on different events, they see what the discussions are about. They can come in and then we can have a dialogue on for example "now that you are starting the negotiations, we see that this is especially important because we have talked to civil society colleagues in that and that country".

(MFA representative, personal communication, 03.02.16)

This shows that the aim of the FOKUS Executive Director of closer cooperation with the state on the negotiations, is not in line with the way the state representative's perceive their role as NGO members. This can be interpreted as a conflict of interests based on the interpretations of the roles of NGOs and the state. Both parts agree on that the state values civil society that there are many access points to meet and that the state listens to civil society's input. I have shown the interest of the state is to get their views and information on discussions taking place. In addition, the NGO members get access to participate in the sessions of the negotiations, so they can see what is going on.

While FOKUS Executive Director wants to get more information about the state's plans, alliances and strategies, to cooperate more with the state on this, the state does not perceive this

as their task with civil society. The state makes strategies with other member states. During the first week of the CSW many parallel activities were going on. This is the time between the first and the second draft is being read by the moderator of the CSW, the 9th and the 18th of March. Among the state's activities in this period, the NorwayUN representative mentioned: "informal conversations with other countries about the agreed conclusions, parallel negotiations on other documents, high-level political program with organization around the politicians programs" (Representative NorwayUN, personal communication, 02.05.16).

The state also express that they value civil society's competence and that they are chosen on the basis of their organization's competence. However, as expressed during week one, the Executive Director did not feel that the state was so interested in using the NGO members' competence and contacts for the negotiations. Rather she mentioned that updates from side-events took too much space of the morning meetings. Thus, it appears that FOKUS wants the state to use civil society more as resources that can help the negotiations move forward. This also by using their contacts, and giving information. She expressed this as: "Inclusion of civil society maybe too often becomes more symbolic than actual inclusion and use of competence and experience" (FOKUS Executive Director, personal communication, 10.05.16).

5.3 A Summary and Analysis of the Main Findings

Civil society is provided with meaningful access points before CSW, the Contact conference and the NGO Forum, in which civil society can interact with the state. As these access points have power-wielding state representatives present and are institutionalized, they are meaningful, or enabling, for civil society according to Kriesi et al. (1992).

The state enables the agency of FOKUS as they are free to shape the content of the Contact conference, and NGO Forum according to their resources and purposes. The state representatives participate on the organization's given premises, as they shape the program. In addition, the state has institutionalized the process of sending them their input to Norway's prioritizations for CSW. This is seen as an inclusive dominant strategy by the state, according to Kriesi et al.'s (1992) theorizing. I argue that the meaningful access points are enabling for the participants because they can shape and confront state representatives with their concerns according to their interests.

As the document analysis showed, there was a high degree of alignment in the two documents. The perception of a high degree of consensus in the Norwegian field of gender equality, is interpreted as a factor that leads to a high alignment between Norwegian civil society's and the state's concerns in this field. However, that topics are overlapping are seen as enabling. In addition, the perception of FOKUS' Executive Director as civil society's input being included as a usual conduct by the state is also enabling. That is because the state is receiving their input cooperatively, in a way that civil society can count on every year.

The information meeting communicated the expectations of the state representatives for the NGO members during CSW. The messages given were interpreted as executing a low degree of control over the civil society actors. This was perceived as enabling the NGO members to act according to their organization's purposes. However, whether it is enabling or not depends on the NGO member's purpose of participating in the state delegation.

During the morning meetings, the Minister and State Secretary headed the delegation until Thursday. The state's practices of access to information on the programs of the Minister and State Secretary was deep in form of information about and broad in form of the possibility to participate on a range of their activities. That their programs are not restricted is enabling. Their program was also enabling as they participated on two side-events organized by FOKUS, the Sami Parliament and their constituency. The latter is enabling as the state representatives provide the civil society actors with a meaningful access point where they shape the agenda. However, to be informed about high-level meetings for Ministers was not the purpose of FOKUS to participate in the delegation. That it was not in line with their interests is not argued to be constraining, as they were not hindered to act according to their agency in other ways.

Access to information about the state's activities on the agreed conclusions was limited until Thursday. FOKUS' Executive Director interpreted this as the main constraining practice. The reason was that it did not enable them to use their agency in form of their resources. The main resource they wanted to use in their interaction with the state was their competence and their influential allies. They wanted to hear about the state's strategies and how they can contribute

through their networks to influence governments that are hindering what they view as progress in the negotiations. According to FOKUS, this type of interaction would have contributed to the overall purpose of the state and Norwegian civil society's participation at CSW: to advance women's rights. What is seen as constraining according to the Executive Director of FOKUS, is that the input is sent before the CSW has started. During CSW the Norwegian state has formulated their strategies. To be able to give input according to the Norwegian state's strategies, is perceived as more relevant for FOKUS and for their purposes of participating in the state delegation. Thus, this is interpreted as a constraining practice of the state. However, during the morning meetings at CSW NGO members did give input to the negotiations. During week two, it became evident that the state representatives had considered their concerns during CSW as well, as the language they argued for was included. Thus, the state is facilitating civil society's input throughout the process of CSW.

The state on their side expressed that they value civil society and their competence. The conflict was in the interpretation of their roles. FOKUS wanted added value for participating as an NGO member of the delegation, by being more involved in the state's planning of strategies for the negotiations. However, the state incorporated input from civil society in their work, which was an enabling practice. However, the strategies of the state are formed with other member states. Out of the state representatives' practices, they did not view it as their purpose to plan strategies with civil society or inform them about their informal meetings with their allies during the negotiations. This is according to March and Olsen's (1989) understanding of a political conflict: "Major political conflicts are focused on which set of rules should prevail when and where" (p.37). This can be understood as FOKUS and the state representatives acting according to the rules in the social systems that they identify themselves with. They identify themselves with the institutions they are socialized within. I do not argue that there was a major political conflict, but that it was a conflict in the state's practices and FOKUS and the states interpretations of the roles of civil society.

When information about the negotiations was given in the morning meetings, the Executive Director facilitates with knowledgeable input and information from other networks. When there were no updates they asked questions about the agreed conclusions. Their input was always in the

form of recommendations and not direct critique to the state. They are partners, and often use the word 'we' to invite the state to work closer. To work closer with the state is one of their purpose. The state is facilitative with civil society input, as they create meaningful access points where civil society can give input, they always open up for input, and let the civil society actors evaluate the practices of the delegation. This is seen as what Kriesi et al. (1992) theorize as an inclusive dominant strategy.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have studied the interaction between state representatives and civil society in their access points in Oslo and New York during the process of CSW. The overall aim of this chapter is to answer the research question and reflect over the study.

6.1 Answering the Research Question

I will answer the research question by first providing answer on the ways civil society is enabled by the state, and thereafter answers to the ways civil society is constrained.

The research question of this thesis is:

In what ways do the state representatives in the Norwegian delegation enable or constrain civil society in the meaningful access points provided before and during the 60th CSW session?

To answer this research question I have studied the selected state representatives practices of providing civil society with access. In addition, I have studied how FOKUS give input to the state and how the state receives the input. This has shown their interaction, and the aim of the study has been to analyze constraining and enabling practices towards civil society. The practices have been viewed in the light of Brockett's (1991) concept meaningful access points, and Giddens' (1984) understanding of a structure's constraining or enabling practices towards agent's agency. Kriesi et al.'s (1992) framework of how state's receive input, has also contributed in understanding whether the state representatives are enabling or constraining the agent's attempt to use their agency.

From the problem statement of this thesis, it was already evident that the Norwegian state has an accommodating and institutionalized cooperation with civil society (Kjellman, 2007; Tryggestad, 2014). According to Kriesi et al. (1992) the state tradition of involving civil society is in line with a long tradition within each country, which is distinct for each country.

My findings from the study, supports the established perception of the Norwegian state's institutionalized cooperation with civil society (Tryggestad, 2014). This is evident through the many meaningful access points provided to a broad range of civil society in the process of CSW,

including the Minister's meeting with South partners. In addition to this, it also supports that the Norwegian state is accommodative towards civil society input (Kjellman, 2007). This is supported by the findings from the document analysis of the state instruction and NGO document, which showed that the state incorporates civil society's input in the state instruction. In addition, the state receives civil society input in the morning meetings in a dominant inclusive way (Kriesi et al.,1992).

Civil society is enabled to express their prioritizations to the state through NGO Forum. It is also enabling as the state incorporate civil society's input, if they are seen as appropriate within the government's policies. The input was seen as appropriate to a high degree. That is because the Norwegian field of gender equality has a high-level of consensus on the principle of gender equality and prioritized topics for CSW, as my findings have shown.

Another way the state enables civil society is through providing civil society with meaningful access points that they themselves shape. This is done through funding FOKUS to make two meaningful access points for civil society. In addition the state participated on two of FOKUS and their constituency's side-events during CSW.

The Norwegian state representatives are enabling NGO members through giving them access to the negotiations. Civil society actors appreciate this as they get information and can report to other civil society actors without access.

The fact that information about the state's informal meetings and strategy planning is not shared until Thursday the first week is perceived as constraining. The same type of information was shared in the open morning meetings for all civil society organizations and only for NGO members. The NGO members are part of the delegation because of the knowledge, experience and the constituency they represent. FOKUS views their purpose as being in the delegation to contribute to pushing the negotiations forward together with the state. FOKUS perceive the late information as constraining, because their resources, their constituency, knowledge and influential allies, are not being involved actively in cooperation with the state to develop strategies. The reason is that the state mainly asks for input from side-events during the first

week. Therefore, the morning meetings are viewed as information sharing on mainly side-events. The state on the other hand express the value of getting information about discussions going on in side-events and among other activities civil society participates on.

However, the state divides between facilitating for civil society's input and incorporating civil society in their member state duties during CSW. One state representative underlined in an interview that it is the state that is going to be responsible for the policies. According to March and Olsen (1989) humans act according to what is appropriate in the institutions they are socialized in. As FOKUS and the state are two different institutions, they also have different understanding of which rules, procedures and strategies should prevail and at what time. Both parts are interested in collaboration to reach the goal of gender equality. The means to reach the goal are debated.

6.2 Concluding Remarks

This study investigates in the structure, the state, and analyzes its practices towards civil society as constraining and enabling. Thus, it leaves out the analysis of the agency of the state in the structure it is embedded in, the UN structure and the structure of the Norwegian state's policies. This study did not gather data on the rules and regulations of those structures, and enabling and constraining elements that affect the practices of the state representatives towards civil society. To study the structure- agency interaction on two levels, state representatives- civil society in addition to state representatives- UN structure and Norwegian state structure, could be suggested for a future thesis to place the practices in a bigger picture.

The organization chosen from civil society, FOKUS, has a long-standing partnership with the state on CSW. The findings showed that FOKUS was the NGO member that fronted the most opinions to the state in form of recommendations. In line with this, FOKUS could be, what Fangen (2004) conceptualizes as 'the extreme case' in the population of NGO members in the delegation. On the other hand, I argue that to study FOKUS provided interesting data and was rewarding as they were involved on many levels, and showed engagement and dedication throughout the CSW process. As this is a qualitative study, the findings are supposed to provide thick description on the case studied. The aim of this study was not to generalize the findings to

all in the delegation. Thereby, I also argue that if another NGO member was chosen as the case, the practices could have been perceived from another angle.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 : INTERVIEW GUIDE

This interview guide contains of the general topics being addressed in the semi-structured interviews before CSW with the MFA representative and FOKUS' Executive Director. The interview guide was adapted according to the informant interviewed.

1. What is your experience of the cooperation between the Norwegian state and civil society in the process of CSW?
2. Which Ministries and state actors are in charge of CSW and which organizations make up civil society in this process?
3. Which contact points exists between civil society and the state in the process of CSW? In which ways are civil society included in this process?
4. Have you noticed any changes in the cooperation between state and civil society in this process?
5. The United Nations (UN) give access to civil society to participate in UN conferences, and communicate that civil society participation is important. Would you say that Norway has contributed to this or do you perceive Norway as inspired by the UN?
6. What is your evaluation of the climate for civil society organizations' participation in UN negotiation processes now compared to earlier, and then especially since the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995?
7. How does FOKUS coordinate the input that civil society provide during NGO Forum?
8. How are the roles divided between civil society and the state in the Norwegian delegation during CSW?

APPENDIX 2: THE NGO DOCUMENT



60th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women, 14 – 24 March 2016 NORWEGIAN CIVIL SOCIETY PRIORITIES FOR THE AGREED CONCLUSIONS

The 60th session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW60) comes at a decisive moment, as the world is experiencing the biggest refugee crisis since the Second World War.¹ Conflicts and climate change are forcing people to leave their homes. Peace and security for *all* form a prerequisite for sustainable development. War, conflicts and climate change often disproportionately affect women and children. In light of the challenges posed by these developments and of the theme of the 60th session of the CSW, “Women’s empowerment and its link to sustainable development,” the Norwegian’ civil society has identified a set of priorities for the Agreed Conclusions of CSW60, focused on these key areas:

Overall comments to CSW 60 Agreed Conclusion:

- The Norwegian Civil Society recommends the consistent use of the phrase “realizing gender equality, human rights and empowerment of all women and girls” throughout the Agreed Conclusions, The aim of the Beijing Declaration and Platform is to achieve the full realization of women’s and girl’s human right, in addition to their equality and empowerment. The three concepts are invisible and should be reflected as such throughout the document.
- The phrase “all women and girls” should be used throughout the document to ensure that no specific group are left behind.

1. Reaffirmation of existing women’s human rights and sustainable development frameworks and recognition of the linkages between them

The Norwegian civil society calls for the CSW60 Agreed Conclusions to reaffirm the commitment made by all governments at Beijing in 1995 and to take immediate action to deliver on and implement existing women’s human rights, gender equality and sustainable development frameworks. The agreed language in these conventions provides a solid base to further build on and from which to hold governments accountable for the commitments made as we move towards implementation of the *2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development*.

The Agreed Conclusions therefore must:

- Reaffirm the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and the outcomes of subsequent reviews;
- Reaffirm that the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, its optional protocol, and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* are critical

¹ European Commission (ECHO), ‘ECHO Factsheet: Syria Crisis’: p 1, published in February 2016, available on

for the full realization of gender equality, and the human rights and empowerment of women and girls and the achievement of the *2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development*;

- Reaffirm the outcomes of other conferences that address gender equality, women's and girls' human rights and empowerment, including the Programme of Action of the *International Conference on Population and Development* and the *Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence*, the key actions for their further implementation and the outcomes of their reviews;
- Recognize the linkages between gender equality, the human rights and empowerment of women and girls and sustainable development, and the complementary nature of the *Beijing Platform for Action*, the *2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and the *Paris Agreement*;
- Recognize that preventing violations of women's human rights within conflict and post-conflict situations is an important prerequisite for sustainable development and the critical importance of women's participation in peace-building, state-building, post-conflict restructuring and peace-keeping, and therefore the need to fully implement Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and all other Security Council Resolutions on women, peace and security;
- Recognize that realizing gender equality, the human rights and empowerment of women and girls is only possible with women's and girls' leadership and the full involvement of women-led, feminist, LGBTI and human rights organizations and women human rights defenders and that this is a prerequisite for the implementation of the *2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development*;
- Reaffirm that the realization of gender equality, human rights and empowerment of all women and girls is not only a goal in itself but essential for sustainable development. Placing women's human rights at the center of transformative change in policies, practices and partnerships can create more just societies, inclusive economies and a sustainable planet. Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in a gender-responsive manner will contribute simultaneously to the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. Such implementation should enhance substantive equality for women and girls and target multiple and intersecting inequalities in order to leave no one behind;
- Women and girls must enjoy equal access to quality education, economic resources, including property and inheritance rights, and political participation as well as equal opportunities with men and boys for employment, leadership and decision-making at all levels. The Commission welcomes commitments to work for a significant

increase in investments to close the gender gap and strengthen support for institutions in relation to gender equality and the empowerment of women at the global, regional and national levels. The Commission also welcomes commitments to eliminate all forms of discrimination, violence and harmful practices such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation against women and girls, including through the engagement of men and boys; to recognize, reduce and redistribute women's unpaid care work, and to ensure their sexual and reproductive health and reproductive rights;

- Reaffirm, as critical to sustainable development and essential to the realization of social justice, commitments to a world of universal respect for all women's and girls' human rights and human dignity, justice, equality and non-discrimination; of respect for race, ethnicity and cultural diversity; and of equal opportunity permitting the full realization of all women's and girls' human rights and fundamental freedoms. A world which invests in young women and girls and in which every woman and girl grows up free from violence and exploitation. A World with no human trafficking and exploitation of adults or children in prostitution. A World which recognize prostitution as sexual violence. A World with no human trafficking and sexual exploitation of adults and children in prostitution. A world in which every woman and girl enjoys full gender equality and human rights, including sexual and reproductive rights, and where all legal, social and economic barriers to their empowerment have been removed. A just, equitable, tolerant, open and socially inclusive world in which the needs of the most vulnerable are met;
- Recognize that women's economic rights, economic empowerment and independence are central to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Commission further recognizes that achievement of the 2030 Agenda requires the full integration of women into the formal economy, in particular into economic decision-making, which means changing the current gender-based division of labour to ensure that household responsibilities and unpaid care work are equally shared, valued and recognized. The Commission recognize the ILO Convention no. 186 to secure the domestic workers rights and the need to implement this ILO Convention;
- End all forms of discrimination based on sex, gender, gender identity or expression, age, race, ethnicity, indigenous status, marital status, migration status, sexual orientation, disability, HIV or health status, income, geographic location, or other status and integrate an intersectional perspective in all national programmes, policies, legislation and initiatives to address the effects of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination experienced by women and girls;
- Develop, strengthen, and enforce laws and policies that respect, protect and fulfill the sexual and reproductive rights and guarantee universal access to HIV and sexual

and reproductive health services, information and education, including comprehensive sexuality education, free from coercion, discrimination and violence, and without third party consent;

- Repeal and modify laws and policies that restrict the activities of and otherwise punish women human rights defenders and women's, feminist, girls, youth and human rights organizations and other civil society groups in their exercise of rights to assembly, association and expression.

2. Recognition of the fact that combating climate change means empowering women

According to the most recent UNHCR estimates available, no less than 20 million people had been displaced by natural disasters in 2008 alone. Nine out of ten of these disasters have been identified as climate-related². Scientists predict the number of climate refugees may rise up to 250 million by 2050.³ Climate change disproportionately affects the poorest and most vulnerable groups - a majority of which are women and girls - and has to be recognized as a significant threat to global peace and security. Key to effectively combating climate change, is systemic change and the empowerment of women and girls, so that they can be transformed into agents of change, in their roles as i.a. leaders, scientists, entrepreneurs and food manufacturers.

The Agreed Conclusions therefore must:

- Commit to the appointment of a UN Special Rapporteur on Gender and Climate Change.
- Ensure that the terms and conditions for eligibility for benefiting from The Green Climate Fund are gender sensitive;
- Ensure that the SDG indicators by which progress is measured are gender sensitive, so that Member States may be held accountable for their commitment to women;
- Ensure that the data used to implement the promises made in climate change conventions are gender-differentiated so that the position of women and girls becomes explicit;
- Commit to supporting women as leaders, on all levels of decision-making, especially in the area of natural resource management;

² UNHCR, 'Climate Change, Natural Disasters and Human Displacement,' p. 3, published in 14 August 2009, available here: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/search?page=search&docid=4901e81a4&query=climate%20change> last accessed on 09 February 2016.

³ UNHCR, 'Top UNHCR Official Warns about Displacement from Climate Change,' published 09 December 2008, available here: <http://www.unhcr.org/493e9bd94.html>, last accessed on 09 February 2016.

- Ensure that sufficient resources are dedicated to innovation for adaptation to climate change and actively involve women and girls in the development of new (gender sensitive) technologies and strategies;
- Support sustainable female entrepreneurship;

Call on Member States to ensure that rural women have access to and control over resources and the expertise and funding required to efficiently and sustainably cultivate the land they live on, as well as to ownership over aforementioned land and resources.

3. Development of a gender perspective on the refugee crisis

Both women and men are victims of war and conflict, and flee their homes. However, women and girls do not have the same opportunities as men and boys to cross borders and are more often left behind in conflict areas or refugee camps. Personal circumstances can make the journey more difficult for women and girls, such as breastfeeding, menstruation and pregnancy, or responsibility for children and other family members. Lack of documentation, required to prove their citizenship, deprive refugees (more often women refugees and children than men) of access to education and health care.⁴ Additionally, refugee women and girls and LGBTI people are more prone to falling victim to (sexual) violence, exploitation and human trafficking than men.⁵ Within host countries refugee shelters are often insufficiently equipped to deal with (trauma of) sexual or culturally related violence. In the process of integration, even progressive, host countries sustain traditional gender patterns.

Although refugee women have a more vulnerable position than men, states should acknowledge and make use of the added value of migrant women to their economies. As shown in a recent ILO report, specifically migrant women's labour participation rate is higher compared to that of migrant men.⁶ The Norwegian' civil society thus calls upon all stakeholders to address the inhumane situation for women and girls fleeing war and conflict, while at the same time recognizing their strength and potential.

The Agreed Conclusions therefore must:

- Ensure a gender perspective in all refugee policies, actions in fragile states and conflict zones, refugee camps and during asylum and integration processes in host

⁴ Women's Refugee Commission, 'No Safety for Refugee Women on the European Route: Report from the Balkans,' p. 7, published on 16 January 2016, available here: <https://www.womensrefugeecommission.org/issues/gender-based-violence/research-and-resources/1265-balkans-2016>, last accessed on 09 February 2016.

⁵ Amnesty International, 'Female Refugees Face Physical Assault, Exploitation and Sexual Harassment on their Journey to Europe,' published on 18 January 2016, available here: <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2016/01/female-refugees-face-physical-assault-exploitation-and-sexual-harassment-on-their-journey-through-europe/>, last accessed on 09 February 2016.

⁶ ILO, 'ILO Estimates on Migrant Workers: Results and Methodology,' published on 15 December 2015, available here: http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/labour-migration/publications/WCMS_436343/lang--en/index.htm, last accessed on 09 February 2016.

countries. The particularly vulnerable situation for women and girls has to be addressed;

- Allocate additional resources for women's and girls' necessities and take urgent action to combat sexual abuse and trafficking in conflict areas and refugee camps;
- Ensure the active participation of women and girls in peace processes and peacekeeping in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on 'Women, Peace and Security' and its subsequent resolutions (e.g. 1889);
- Ensure support for refugee women civil society activists and organizations to participate in processes necessary to achieve sustainable peace, democratic change and transitional justice;
- Call on Member States to ensure access to inclusive and quality (mental) health care for refugee women and girls;
- Call on Member States to ensure refugee women's and girls' sexual and reproductive health and rights, through the provision of comprehensive sexual education, access to contraceptives and the distribution of emergency reproductive health kits, regardless of age and marital status;
- Call on Member States to ensure access to local labour markets for refugee women and girls;
- Call on Member States to ensure inclusive, non-gender stereotyped, integration policies in host countries which allows families to be reunited within a short period of time.