

**STATEMENT**  
**65<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women**  
**Parallel Event**  
**Dr. Ross Rusty Butler**  
**Main Representative at ECOSOC**  
**Russian Academy of Natural Sciences**

It is my pleasure and honor to greet the delegation from Utah Valley University and Orem Rotary at this parallel event on behalf of the Russian Academy of Natural Sciences (RANS), one of among over 5,000 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in active Consultative Status with ECOSOC. The Academy has the highest standing, «General Consultative Status», with ECOSOC.

Since 2016 the Academy and UVU have jointly promoted three mountain targets adopted for implementation of the Sustainable Mountain Development agenda within the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Since then, we also support efforts of members of the Utah International Mountain Forum, a coalition of student clubs at UVU which advocate for mountain women and families during sessions of the Commission on the Status of Women and other fora of the UN ECOSOC.

Through an inclusive, student-engaged learning (SEL) model students, especially non-traditional learners gain professional skills by addressing real-world problems of mountain communities as a group with faculty serving as mentors.

UIMF members as Russian Academy representatives reported UVU's contribution in support of mountain women and girls by co-hosting with the Academy a parallel event during the 62<sup>nd</sup> and 63<sup>rd</sup> sessions of the UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in March 2018 and 2019. Written statements of the Academy highlighting the UVU SEL model and the state of Utah as a model of sustainable development have been distributed as official UN documents during those gender fora.

During the 2018 High-Level Political Forum of ECOSOC on sustainable development, the Academy was selected among only seven NGOs with Consultative Status worldwide to speak during general debates. This allowed three UVU students for the first time to make oral statements about challenges experienced by mountain communities during the Ministerial Forum on July 19, 2018.

During the 68th United Nations Civil Society Conference held in Salt Lake City on August 26-28, 2019 UIMF and the Academy were able for the first time to have mountain communities highlighted in the Outcome Document of that forum.

The triannual United Nations Secretary General's Report on Sustainable Mountain Development A/74/209, from July 22, 2019 highlighted for the first-time advocacy efforts of UIMF and the Academy during the 62<sup>nd</sup> session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Today's event provides 11 UVU students a unique opportunity to raise their voices in support of mountain women and girls. I sincerely wish them and all of you success in pursuing this noble goal.