

STEP IT UP

Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:
A COMMITMENT TO ACTION



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STEP IT UP

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SEPTEMBER

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1995

BACKGRO AND INTRODU

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SEPTEMBER

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2015

Twenty years ago, in September 1995, the world came together in Beijing, China, for the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Adopted on that occasion, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action articulated a powerful vision for women and girls to have equal rights and opportunities and to live their lives free from want, fear and violence. To this day, the Platform for Action remains the inspiring roadmap and foundational global normative framework for realizing gender equality, the empowerment of women, and the human rights of women and girls.

On the occasion of this anniversary, the People's Republic of China and UN Women co-organized and co-hosted the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Commitment to Action, on 27 September 2015 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Global Leaders' Meeting was convened in conjunction with the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (A/RES/70/1).

The Global Leaders' Meeting aimed to build support and renew political commitment, at the highest level, for the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It also aimed to galvanize implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls –, and the gender-specific targets across the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Global Leaders' Meeting provided an opportunity for Heads of State and Government to pledge concrete steps and measures, at the national, regional or global level, to overcome persistent obstacles and galvanize all societies into action. Through UN Women's initiative Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it Up for Gender Equality, political leaders at the highest level were called

upon to make commitments to address the gender equality gaps identified in the 20-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. They were invited to Step It Up to make equality a lived reality for all women and girls, everywhere, with significant progress in the next five years, and full gender equality by 2030.

The Global Leaders' Meeting was chaired by Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, and Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General, as well as Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico, the host country of the First World Conference on Women held in 1975, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark, the host country of the Second World Conference on Women held in 1980, and Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, the host country of the Third World Conference on Women held in 1985. Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, Prime Minister of Iceland, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of Croatia, and Michelle Bachelet, President of Chile, also contributed to chairing the event. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, opened the meeting and made closing remarks.

In total, 140 countries participated in the Global Leaders' Meeting: 64 Heads of State and Government, eight Deputy Heads of State and Government, and leaders of four regional organizations made commitments. Four civil society representatives, including the former Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women and one youth advocate, called on Governments to take action. One private sector representative and one philanthropist pledged their support for gender equality and women's empowerment.

In addition to Member States, representatives from civil society, the private sector and eminent persons witnessed the event. The event was extensively covered by the media, including press and social media.



INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

XI
JINPING

PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations and the 20th anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, it is of great significance for us to convene this Global Leaders' Meeting to reaffirm our commitment to gender equality and women's development and make plans for a better future.

Women are creators of material and spiritual wealth and represent an important force driving social development and progress. Without women there would be no continuity of the human race or the human society.

The pursuit of gender equality is a great cause. A review of history shows that without women's liberation and progress, the liberation and progress of mankind would not be attainable. To achieve the lofty goal of gender equality, we have gone through an extraordinary and uphill journey. From the publication of the Declaration of the Rights of Woman over 200 years ago to the observance of the International Women's Day on 8 March, from the establishment of the Commission on the Status of Women to the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, every step taken to promote women's cause has been a giant step forward for the progress of human civilization.

Twenty years ago, the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing adopted

Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, delivers his opening remarks. On his right, Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico and Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark; on his left, co-chairs Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, and Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women.





the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, laying down strategic goals and policy frameworks for promoting gender equality and ensuring women's rights. Today, the spirit championed by the Beijing Conference has catalysed positive changes. The consensus among countries on pursuing gender equality is strengthening. More diversified actions have been taken to promote women's development. And the social context for women's life and development is improving. In this regard,

for women to have access to education and freedom of marriage and employment.

In many parts of the world, however, disparities remain in the level of women's development, and inequality still exists between men and women in rights, opportunities and access to resources. People have yet to fully recognize women's potential, talent and contribution. Women account for over half of the 800 million

**“We still have a long way
gender equality. We must
broaden the prospect for**

XI XINPING, PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

UN Women should be fully recognized for the tremendous work it has done.

Thanks to persistent efforts over the years, dreams that were once beyond reach have come true: 143 countries have enshrined gender equality in their laws, thus removing legal barriers to women's participation in political and economic activities, and it has become a public consensus across the world

impoverished population of the world. They tend to bear the brunt of wars and epidemics and suffer deeply from terrorism and violence.

As we speak, various forms of discrimination against women are still taking place. Abuses and inhuman treatment of women continue to occur from time to time.

All this shows that we still have a long way to go in achieving gender equality. We must

work tirelessly to broaden the prospect for women's cause.

In the Post-2015 Development Agenda we have just adopted, gender perspective has been included in all the items on the agenda. Let us reaffirm the spirit of the Beijing Conference with renewed commitment and pledge greater efforts to promote gender equality and women's all-round development.

be updated to stimulate women's potential and raise their participation in the process of social and economic development. China's experiences show that a higher level of social and economic participation by women helps to raise their status, and it also boosts social productivity and invigorates the economy.

Second, we should protect women's rights and interests. Women's rights and interests are basic human rights. They must be protected

**to go in achieving
work tirelessly to
women's cause.”**

First, we should strive for women's development in tandem with social and economic progress. Development cannot be achieved without women, and its benefit must be shared by all people, women included. We need to come up with more well-rounded development strategies that take into account national realities, gender differences and the special needs of women and aim to ensure women's equal share in the fruits of development. Policy measures should

by laws and regulations and integrated into national and social rules and norms. We must build up women's capacity of playing their part in the society and economy, involve women in higher levels of decision-making and support them in becoming leaders in political, business and academic fields. We must ensure sufficient basic medical services for women, and pay particular attention to the health needs of rural women, women with



disabilities, migrant women, middle-aged and senior women and women of ethnic minorities. We must ensure that school is affordable and safe for every girl, and develop vocational and life-long education for women to help them better adapt to changes in society and the job market.

Third, we should make efforts to build harmonious and inclusive societies. Men and women live in the same one world. A society with less discrimination or prejudice against women is often more inclusive and dynamic. We must eradicate all forms of violence against women, including domestic violence. We should focus on gender equality and dismiss outdated mentalities and customs inhibiting women's development. I appreciate Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's "He for She" Initiative, and hope more men will join in the action.

Fourth, we should foster a global environment favourable for women's development. Women and children are the ones who suffer most when peace or tranquility is disrupted. We must stand firmly for peace, development and win-win cooperation, cherish peace dearly and uphold it so that every woman and child will enjoy the sunshine of happiness and tranquility.

Women's organizations in different countries should strengthen interactions with each other to enhance friendship, pursue development and make progress together. We should continue to carry out

Crown Princess Mary of Denmark was among the many dignitaries gathered at the Global Leaders Meeting.

“

LET US (...) PLEDGE GREATER EFFORTS TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY:

FIRST

**Strive for women's development
with social and economic progress.**

SECOND

**Protect women's rights and
interests.**

THIRD

**Make efforts to build harmonious
and inclusive societies.**

FOURTH

**Foster a global environment
favorable for women's development.**

”

XI XINPING,
PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



women-related international development cooperation. Developed countries should scale up financial and technological assistance to developing countries and narrow the development gap among women in different countries.

Let us work hand in hand to move faster to build a better world for women and for all of us.

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, greets participants at the end of the event.

**“Let us work
to move faster
world for women”**

XI XINPING, PRESIDENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA



**Work hand in hand
together to build a better
world for women and for all of us.”**



INTRODUCTORY STATEMENT

BAN
KI-MOON

SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

“We need a 50:50 Planet by 2030. Let’s Step it up for Gender Equality.”

BAN KI-MOON, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Today, world leaders are signalling their personal responsibility for gender equality and women’s empowerment. This is as it should be. We need leadership from the top and engagement throughout society to achieve our bold agenda for sustainable development. A human rights-based approach demands a world that is just, equitable and inclusive for all.

I commend the leadership of President Xi Jinping, and I thank the Government of China and UN Women for organizing this event. It marks the culmination of the 20th anniversary review of the implementation of

the Beijing Platform for Action. The review showed that, while we have progressed in many areas, we still have a long way to go. Far too many women and girls continue to be discriminated against, subjected to violence, denied equal opportunities in education and employment, and excluded from positions of leadership and decision-making.

We cannot achieve our 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development without full and equal rights for half of the world’s population, in law and in practice. We cannot effectively respond to humanitarian

“You have the power and the responsibility to ensure that gender equality is (...) a national priority.”

BAN KI-MOON, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

emergencies without ensuring women and girls are protected and their needs prioritized.

That is why I have committed to mainstreaming gender equality at all levels across the United Nations. I am proud that the General Assembly created UN Women during my time as Secretary-General. And I am proud to have been able to appoint more women to senior UN positions than ever before.

Today, I call on all leaders to make tangible commitments that will secure true gender

equality throughout the world. This means urgently addressing structural barriers, such as unequal pay. It means recognizing and alleviating women’s unpaid care burden. It means realizing the right of women and girls to govern their sexual and reproductive health. It means ending violence against women and girls. And it means equality in political participation and in women’s representation in humanitarian response, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

We need a safe and enabling environment for civil society, women’s organizations and human rights defenders as they work

“

**I SEE THREE AREAS
WHERE YOU CAN
HELP TO TRANSFORM
OUR SOCIETIES:**

FIRST

**Create and energetically implement
coherent gender equality policies.**

SECOND

**Provide significant financing for
gender equality.**

THIRD

**Monitor progress so that all
governments will hold themselves
and each other accountable.**

”

BAN KI-MOON,
SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, co-chaired the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment.





“This is the birthright of every woman, man, girl and boy. It is the foundation of a sustainable and peaceful world.”

BAN KI-MOON, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UNITED NATIONS

with us to drive the 2030 Agenda forward. And we also encourage the private sector to take transformative actions to promote gender equality in the boardroom and the workplace.

We need a 50:50 Planet by 2030. Let's Step it up for Gender Equality.

As Heads of State and Government, you have the power and the responsibility to ensure that gender equality is – and remains – a national priority.

I see three areas where you can help transform our societies. First, create and energetically implement coherent



gender equality policies. Second, provide significant financing for gender equality. And third, monitor progress so that all governments will hold themselves and each other accountable.

Let this not be the last meeting of its kind on this essential topic. As we look ahead

to 2030, let us be able to say that today marked a milestone in the quest to realize full and lasting gender equality.

This is the birthright of every woman, man, girl and boy. It is the foundation of a sustainable and peaceful world.

Chancellor of Germany Angela Merkel speaks to François Hollande, President of France, seated next to Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of Gabon, during the Global Leaders' Meeting.



STEP IT UP!

KEY MESSAGES



Michelle Bachelet, President of Chile and former Executive Director of UN Women, was among the 64 Heads of State and Government who personally committed to ending discrimination against women by 2030, and announced concrete actions to kick-start rapid change in their countries.

LEADERS AGREED

Melinda Gates, Co-chair of the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and Jack Ma, Executive Chairman of the Alibaba Group, pledged their support for gender equality and women's empowerment.



Leaders agreed on the seminal importance of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the Beijing Platform for Action. They welcomed the progress made since 1995 but also recognized that more work remained to be done to realize gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. They voiced concern that progress for women and girls was uneven among countries and regions and that women and girls continued to face discrimination and violence. They were

concerned that barriers remained to the enjoyment of rights, opportunities and access to resources. Such barriers prevented women from reaching their full potential and from effectively contributing to the development and well-being of societies and nations. Leaders also voiced concern about the violation of women's rights in conflict situations. They underlined that realizing gender equality is not a women's issue alone but a common responsibility of all, for the benefit of all.



LEADERS REAFFIRMED

Leaders reaffirmed their countries' commitment to the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action together with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and especially Sustainable Development Goal 5, Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and the gender-specific targets across the entire Agenda. The 2030 Agenda offered a new opportunity to strengthen and consolidate ongoing efforts to implement the Beijing Platform for Action, and leaders called on all Member States, and all stakeholders to seize the momentum for change.

“Progress
for women is
progress for all.”

UHURU KENYATTA, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF KENYA

The delegation of the Plurinational State of Bolivia was one of 140 Member States delegations that attended the Global Leaders' Meeting.







LEADERS CALLED FOR ACTION

Leaders called for action to implement the Platform for Action and all its critical areas of concern, for increased investment in gender equality and women's empowerment, and for more equal sharing of resources. They called for strong legal frameworks, comprehensive policy measures, and accountable and gender-sensitive institutions.

Stepped-up action was needed to create equal rights and opportunities for women and girls to participate in and contribute to the development of their communities and countries. Women's leadership and decision-making at all levels were seen as essential for achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

On top

Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico, speaks at the meeting, next to Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China.

At the bottom

Gertrude Mongella (right), former Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women, and Ruxandra Diaconescu, youth advocate, were among the civil society representatives who spoke at the Global Leaders' Meeting.

“Commitments are good. Action is better. Let us take action!”

ANGELA MERKEL, CHANCELLOR OF GERMANY



Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender

A COMMITMENT

THE EVENT IN NUMBERS

76

64 Heads of State and Government, 8 Deputy Heads of State and Government and leaders of 4 regional organizations made commitments.



140

140 countries participated in the Global Leaders' Meeting.

76 MILLION

The hashtag #Planet5050 was used in 42,000 tweets by 19,000 different users, and reached 76 million unique users.



STEP IT UP!

COMMITMENTS



Leaders committed to a broad range of actions to accelerate realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls in their own countries, and through global and regional cooperation.

Commitments were made in a number of areas, which are summarized in the following pages.

1. Ending all forms of violence against women.

LEADERS COMMITTED TO TAKE ACTION BY:

- Enhancing national laws and action plans
- Enhancing services for survivors of violence against women and girls
- Stopping trafficking of women
- Ending female genital mutilation
- Improving collaboration among stakeholders
- Ratifying and implementing the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence

2. Increasing women's leadership and participation in decision-making at all levels.

LEADERS COMMITTED TO TAKE ACTION BY:

- Setting numerical goals for women in leadership positions, by a specific date
- Setting numerical goals for women in elected positions, including in parliament and at local levels, by a specific date
- Strengthening constitutions in support of women's participation and leadership in politics and public life
- Creating and supporting mentoring and funding programmes for women in leadership roles

3. Strengthening women's economic empowerment and leadership.

LEADERS COMMITTED TO TAKE ACTION BY:

- Addressing the gender pay gap
- Securing women's right to property and inheritance
- enhancing the enabling environment for women's participation in the labour market
- Promoting women's entrepreneurship and business activities
- Promoting women's access to financial services
- Reducing women's unemployment and increasing women's labour force participation
- Addressing and redistributing women's unpaid care work
- Providing quality care services to free up women's time for paid work and other activities
- Expanding skills training opportunities for women to facilitate entry into the labour market
- Ensuring women's representation on corporate boards through mandatory quotas
- Tackling poverty among women

4. Improving girls' and women's access to and completion of quality education, at primary, secondary and tertiary levels.

LEADERS COMMITTED TO TAKE ACTION BY:

- Increasing investment in education and providing free education, especially for girls
- Increasing the number of girls and women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)
- Ending early marriage
- Preventing early pregnancies as an impediment to young women's further education

5. Strengthening women's leadership and participation in all aspects of peace and security.

LEADERS COMMITTED TO TAKE ACTION BY:

- Implementing national action plans on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on Women, Peace and Security
- Training women mediators and promoting women to take part in peacebuilding processes
- Increasing support to women during and after conflict

6. Integrating gender equality in planning and budgeting processes and ensuring adequate means for implementation of commitments.

LEADERS COMMITTED TO TAKE ACTION BY:

- Strengthening the integration of gender equality in national development plans
- Enhancing gender mainstreaming across all sectors, especially in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Strengthening gender-responsive budgeting
- Expanding training on gender-responsive budgeting for public administration and agencies
- Strengthening the collection and disaggregation of data, especially by sex and age
- Investing in and strengthening national gender equality mechanisms and women's organizations

7. Addressing intersecting grounds of discrimination and expanding support for vulnerable women and girls.

LEADERS COMMITTED TO TAKE ACTION IN SUPPORT OF:

- Migrant women
- Refugees and displaced women and girls
- Women belonging to ethnic minorities
- Women living with HIV
- Rural women
- Women with disabilities
- Single mothers and female headed households
- LGBTI persons

Commitments were also made regarding:

-
- Provision of sexual and reproductive health care services
 - Reduction of maternal mortality
 - The engagement of men and boys to change gender stereotypes
 - Participation in the HeForShe campaign
 - Working with male leaders, religious leaders and other groups to champion gender equality
 - Traditional patterns of production and consumption that affect women disproportionately

“The highest leaders
in the land are
taking personal
responsibility for
their commitment to
gender equality.”

PHUMZILE MLAMBO-NGCUKA,

UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL AND UN WOMEN EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



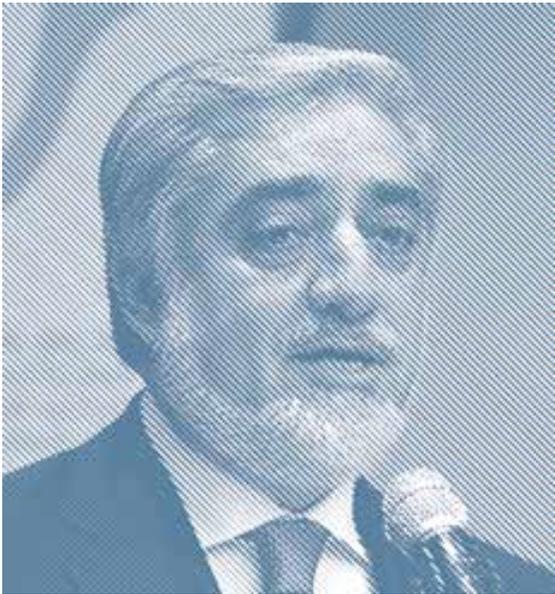
THE 76

COMMITMENTS





AFGHANISTAN STEPS IT UP



ABDULLAH ABDULLAH, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF AFGHANISTAN

Commits to implement anti-violence law and national action plan

“WE WELCOME THE FACT THAT THE POST-2015 DEVELOPMENT AGENDA CONTAINS A STAND-ALONE GOAL ON ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY (...). AFGHANISTAN WILL DO ITS PART TO REACH THE GOALS SET FOR 2030.”

Afghanistan commits to gender equality and women’s empowerment by protecting constitutional rights and conducting comprehensive reforms in security, legal and judicial institutions to fight impunity. It will take action to fully implement

the Law on Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women, the National Action Plan for the Women of Afghanistan and commitments under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

ALBANIA

STEPS IT UP



EDI RAMA, PRIME MINISTER OF ALBANIA

More women in decision-making and the labour market

“THE GOVERNMENT THAT I LEAD HAS PLACED GENDER EQUALITY AT THE CENTRE OF ITS AGENDA.”

Promising the effective engagement of all institutions responsible for taking action on gender equality and women’s empowerment, Albania vows to take action on women’s economic empowerment, ending violence against women and increasing their role in decision-making. This will include increasing and improving women’s access to credit, and promoting and expanding employment programmes for women and girls, towards upping the participation of women in labour markets. The country

will take steps to prevent and reduce violence against women, and eliminate gender discrimination in education and health services and in the media. Stronger legal and institutional mechanisms will seek to better protect women’s rights, and improved monitoring and evaluation mechanisms will keep progress towards gender equality on track. Efforts to increase the number of women in decision-making will cover central and local positions across public administration, including the police and armed forces.

ARGENTINA STEPS IT UP



CRISTINA FERNÁNDEZ, PRESIDENT OF ARGENTINA

Commits to breaking cultural barriers, ending prejudice

“WE NEED TO BREAK CULTURAL BARRIERS THAT HAVE CONSIDERED WOMEN AS LESSER BEINGS. POLICIES MUST BE AIMED AT [TRANSFORMING] CULTURES.”

Argentina commits to sustain its active programmes and policies for social inclusion. It will use its gender equality laws to protect women and do more to increase their access to political decision-making. Argentina will seek to break cultural barriers that assign women inferior roles, and aim to empower

women not only as a matter of obligation under conventions or international treaties, but through a deep conviction that it is time to end taboos and prejudice. Argentina equally pledges to ensure that its current high degree of equality will be extended to youth and other sectors of society.

AUSTRIA

STEPS IT UP



HEINZ FISCHER, PRESIDENT OF AUSTRIA

Address gender pay gaps, encourage women candidates and board members

“THIS NEW POLITICAL IMPETUS WILL REINVIGORATE AND STREAMLINE OUR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE WOMEN’S AND GIRLS’ RIGHTS AND TO GIVE THEM THEIR RIGHTFUL PLACE IN OUR GLOBAL SOCIETY.”

Vowing to tackle gender stereotypes, Austria will expand gender-sensitive vocational orientation and educational guidance, and encourage women in science and technology. Ongoing implementation of the National Action Plan on Gender Equality in the Labour Market will address the high gender pay gap and strengthen income transparency. Other actions will aim to reconcile family work, for women and men, and extend child-care facilities. Intensified mentoring

and training programmes will encourage women to stand for elections on all political levels, while women’s roles in company management and board positions will also be promoted. Austria will continue measures to prevent and protect women and girls from all forms of violence. Internationally, it remains committed to the work of UN Women, and will back activities in the fields of women, peace and security, violence against women and access to justice.

BANGLADESH

STEPS IT UP



SHEIKH HASINA, PRIME MINISTER OF BANGLADESH

More opportunities to participate, and an end to child marriage by 2041

“THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AGENDA OFFERS US ADDED IMPETUS TO BRING POSITIVE CHANGE IN THE LIVES OF OUR WOMEN AND GIRLS. WE SHOULD SEIZE THIS OPPORTUNITY.”

Through continued commitment to work towards the social, economic and political empowerment of women and girls, including in higher education, Bangladesh pledges to create more opportunities for women to participate in politics, business and government. It will act to end all forms of

discrimination and violence against women, and foster a safer environment for women and girls to thrive as agents of change, in part through eliminating child marriage by 2041. The country will maintain efforts around maternal health and nutrition, and increase skilled birth attendance.

BELGIUM STEPS IT UP



CHARLES MICHEL, PRIME MINISTER OF BELGIUM

25 commitments to action, in external and internal policies

“TWENTY YEARS AFTER THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION, THE TIME FOR BALANCE SHEETS IS OVER; WE HAVE TO MOVE TOWARDS CONCRETE AND ACCELERATED IMPLEMENTATION.”

With 25 commitments to act, covering both its external and internal policies, Belgium steps it up for gender equality and women’s empowerment. While continuing its strategic partnership with UN Women, Belgium will adopt a new gender strategy for its development cooperation. Domestically, all government levels will adopt, implement and evaluate gender mainstreaming legislation or methods. Furthermore, a sixth national action plan on the fight against gender-based violence

is being developed in line with the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. This Convention will be ratified by Belgium as soon as possible and without formulating any reservations. Legislation on gender discrimination will be evaluated and adapted, and awareness-raising campaigns on gender discrimination and stereotypes and their consequences will be launched.

BENIN

STEPS IT UP



THOMAS BONI YAYI, PRESIDENT OF BENIN

Commits to ongoing programmes for women in political and private sector leadership

"I HAVE COME TO EXPRESS OUR COMMITMENT AGAIN, NOT ONLY TO THE WOMEN OF MY COUNTRY, BUT OF AFRICA AND THE ENTIRE WORLD."

Committing to action at the highest level of the State, and to transformative leadership accompanied by effective policies and legislative measures, Benin commits to achieving gender equality and the empowerment of

women. The country will ensure that women are involved in productive work and decision-making, including through programmes fostering their leadership roles in political parties and the private sector, among others.

BHUTAN STEPS IT UP



LYONCHHEN TSHERING TOBGAY, PRIME MINISTER OF BHUTAN

Will accelerate implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda gender equality goal

“THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY HAS A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO ENSURE THAT (...) GENDER ISSUES REMAIN AT THE FOREFRONT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.”

Pledging its full commitment to the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development gender equality goal, Bhutan steps it up. It will continue backing initiatives to increase women's representation in governance and decision-making at all levels, including through nationwide consultations on measures to encourage participation. The

country commits to stronger programmes for economic empowerment to address women's persistent poverty and remove economic inequalities. Enhanced investment will go towards equal access to education and training, and health care. Bhutan promises full support to organizations combating violence against women and girls, as well as programmes and policies bolstering women's roles in managing natural resources and the environment.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

A GLOBAL PANDEMIC IN MANY FORMS

Whether at home, on the streets or during war, violence against women is a GLOBAL PANDEMIC that takes place in PUBLIC and PRIVATE spaces.

FORMS OF VIOLENCE



PHYSICAL



SEXUAL



PSYCHOLOGICAL

INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

FAST FACTS



1 in 3 women worldwide have experienced physical or sexual violence – mostly by an intimate partner.



In 2012, 1 in 2 women killed worldwide were killed by their partners or family. Only 1 out of 20 of all men murdered were killed in such circumstances.

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexually violent acts can take place in different circumstances and settings. These include, for example:



Rape (within marriage and relationships, by strangers and during armed conflict)



Unwanted sexual advances or sexual harassment, including demanding sex in return for favours



Sexual abuse of children



Forced marriage or cohabitation, including child marriage

FAST FACTS



In some countries, up to one-third of adolescent girls report their first sexual experience as being forced.



In the European Union, 45% to 55% of women have experienced sexual harassment since the age of 15.

AND GIRLS

FEMALE GENITAL MUTILATION (FGM)

WHAT IS FGM?



FGM includes procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. Beyond extreme physical and psychological pain, the practice carries many health risks, including death.

FAST FACTS

200 MILLION



girls and women alive today have undergone FGM in the 30 countries where the practice is more common. In most countries, the majority were cut before the age of five.

1/3 LOWER



Overall, the chance that a girl will be cut today is about one-third lower than it was 30 years ago.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?



Human trafficking is the acquisition and exploitation of people, through means such as force, fraud or deception. The practice ensnares millions of women and girls into modern-day slavery; many are sexually exploited.

FAST FACTS

4.5 MILLION

of the estimated 21 million people in forced labour are victims of sexual exploitation.

98%

of them are women and girls.

CHILD MARRIAGE



Child marriage usually means an end to a girl's education, vocation and right to make life choices. Research confirms that girls who marry in childhood are at greater risk for intimate partner violence than girls of the same age who marry later.

FAST FACTS

700 MILLION

women alive today were married before 18; more than one-third were married before 15.

2.5X

Poor girls are 2.5 times more likely to marry in childhood than wealthy ones.

BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA STEPS IT UP



DRAGAN ČOVIĆ, CHAIR OF THE PRESIDENCY
OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

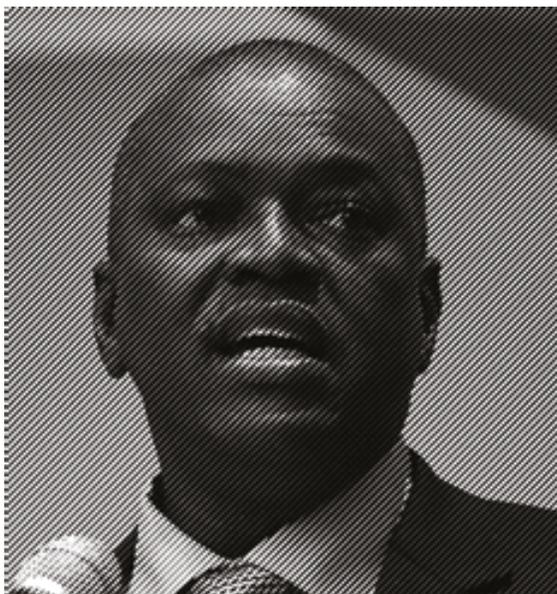
Pledges implementation of the Istanbul Convention

“OUR CONTINUED DEDICATION TO ISSUES OF WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT AND ADVANCEMENT IS A WAY OF HEALING OUR SOCIETY (...) AND PROVIDING FOR ITS FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.”

Committing to gender equality and the empowerment of women on the national and international levels, Bosnia and Herzegovina will build on a solid legal and institutional framework for the advancement of gender equality, requiring affirmative measures by the State aimed at achieving gender equality. It will act in line with its Gender Action Plan 2013-2017 and 1325 Action Plan 2014-2017.

It pledges to implement the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. Three areas it will address in particular include greater inclusion of women and reduction of labour market segregation; prevention of domestic violence; and support for women survivors of conflict-related sexual violence.

BOTSWANA STEPS IT UP



MOKGWEETSI E.K. MASISI, VICE-PRESIDENT OF BOTSWANA

Remains committed to the principle of elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against women

“I WISH TO REAFFIRM BOTSWANA’S UNWAVERING COMMITMENT TO THE ACHIEVEMENT OF GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT.”

Through firm commitment to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women, Botswana vows to step it up. Its National Policy on Gender and Development will serve as a springboard for implementing the gender equality goal in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and all other

goals to improve the dignity and status of women. The National Gender-Based Violence Strategy 2015-2020 will guide multiple, integrated actions to eliminate gender-based violence. A men’s sector under the ministry responsible for gender will engage men as critical partners in promoting gender equality.

BRAZIL STEPS IT UP



DILMA ROUSSEFF, PRESIDENT OF BRAZIL

Commits to realizing women's rights on all fronts

"I BRING YOU A MESSAGE OF UNWAVERING AND FIRM COMMITMENT TO IMPLEMENTING THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION."

Brazil affirms its unwavering commitment to uphold gender equality, to empower women and to realize women's rights on all fronts. It will ensure that all women in situations of violence find protection and support, and take further actions to engage women in policies. It will support women's development at all educational levels. Maternal health care and assistance to girls will be strengthened.

Brazil had previously committed to: establish a new plan for the care provided to victims of sexual violence by public safety and health professionals, establish a working group on health for women with disabilities, grant six months of maternity leave to military women, allow women to register the birth of their children without the father's presence, and impose harsher penalties for those who harm or kill women or girls with a new "Femicide/Feminicide" law.

BRUNEI DARUSSALAM STEPS IT UP



HAJI HASSANAL BOLKIAH, SULTAN AND YANG DI-PERTUAN
OF BRUNEI DARUSSALAM

Reaffirms commitment to implement the Beijing Platform for Action

“I’M PLEASED TO REAFFIRM OUR COMMITMENT TOWARDS IMPLEMENTING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION.”

Brunei Darussalam’s long-standing policy to provide universal access to education has given girls and women equal opportunities to upgrade their knowledge and skills, and attain employment in various professional fields. The country will continue making efforts to protect women’s rights through legislation and plans of action, and will review these as necessary. It serves on

a regional commission on promoting and protecting the rights of women and children, and pledges efforts to fulfil international responsibilities as demonstrated by its commitment to the Millennium Development Goals and the Sustainable Development Goals as well as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

BULGARIA

STEPS IT UP



ROSEN PLEVNELIEV, PRESIDENT OF BULGARIA

Will adopt a gender equality law and aim to achieve full equality in 15 years

“WE NEED TO TURN WORDS INTO ACTIONS IN ORDER TO BE TRUE TO THE COMMITMENTS WE ALL MADE WHEN ADOPTING THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION.”

Bulgaria views gender equality as a key priority in the national human rights agenda and an absolute necessity for the full realization of human rights. To achieve full gender equality in the next 15 years, it plans to adopt a new specialized law on gender equality that has already been drafted, and will ensure that a gender perspective is mainstreamed

into all policies. The Government has committed to further developing and updating the national strategy on gender equality. It is determined to abolish the gender wage gap, and committed to combatting all forms of violence against women. Within the UN system, it will support the inclusion of women in all aspects of decision-making.

BURUNDI STEPS IT UP



JOSEPH BUTORE, VICE-PRESIDENT OF BURUNDI

Commits to reinforcing gains and supporting gender equality under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

“[WE] SUPPORT THE REINFORCEMENT OF EQUALITY (...) AND [EFFORTS] TO HELP WOMEN AND YOUNG GIRLS TO MAKE SURE THEY ARE EMPOWERED AND NOT DISCRIMINATED AGAINST.”

Free schooling for basic education has helped Burundi improve equality between boys and girls. A gender-based violence law has been adopted, and women’s participation in national and local decision-making has seen remarkable progress. Socioeconomic problems persist, however, exacerbated by limited funding. Burundi commits

to the Beijing Platform for Action to reinforce gains that have been made in the lives of women and girls. It affirms support for gender equality and women’s empowerment in development programmes under the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and pledges continued efforts to help ensure women and young girls do not experience discrimination.

CAMBODIA

STEPS IT UP



HUN SEN, PRIME MINISTER OF CAMBODIA

More investment in gender equality, stronger accountability for progress

“THIS MEETING WILL INDEED SERVE AS AN IMPORTANT PLATFORM FOR US TO FURTHER TIGHTEN OUR EFFORTS AND [RESOLVE] TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY.”

Cambodia has been committed to progress in major areas such as reducing violence against women and girls, promoting gender equality in education, empowering women in the economy, achieving the MDG target on maternal mortality, and backing the engagement of women in political affairs and decision-making. Moving forward, major priorities will comprise increased investment in gender equality, especially through reviewing fiscal policies to generate and raise public

spending, and using gender-responsive budgeting to analyse and monitor impacts on gender equality. Other steps will boost protection of women’s rights, and aim for the full and equal participation of women in decision-making at all levels. Stronger accountability for gender equality will come through equipping government institutions with effective means to monitor progress. There will be a continued push for women’s involvement in the economy and financial inclusion.

CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC STEPS IT UP



CATHERINE SAMBA-PANZA, PRESIDENT OF THE
CENTRAL AFRICAN REPUBLIC

**Will promote
women candidates;
calls for bold
policy to improve
women's lives**

“I CONTINUE TO PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE THE NOMINATION AND CANDIDATURE OF WOMEN FOR THE NEXT PRESIDENTIAL AND LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS.”

For the 2015 presidential and legislative elections, the Central African Republic will promote and encourage women candidates. It reaffirms its commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment, and reiterates an appeal to the international community to mobilize their

forces for the peace and security of the people of the Central African Republic, including to support lasting efforts towards transition and women's empowerment. New and bolder policy will improve living conditions of women everywhere in the world.

WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND

1979

CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN (CEDAW)

The "Women's Bill of Rights" obliges countries to take concrete measures for the advancement of women. This includes eliminating discrimination against women in political and public life.

1995

FOURTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON WOMEN

Reports little progress on the 30% target. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is adopted. A stipulation includes the aim of "gender balance" and having the same proportion of both sexes in governmental and public administration positions.

1990

ECOSOC RESOLUTION 1990/15

Recommends a target of 30% women in leadership posts by 1995 and 50% by 2000.

2000

UN SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1325 ON WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY

Recognizes that war impacts women differently, and reaffirms the need to increase women's role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution.

2011

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 66/130 ON WOMEN AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

Recalls the commitments made in Beijing to establish the goal of gender balance, and encourages the acceleration of the achievement of equality between men and women in political participation.

PARTICIPATION

WOMEN'S EQUAL PARTICIPATION IN DECISION-MAKING IS A QUESTION OF JUSTICE AND DEMOCRACY. IT IS ALSO IMPORTANT TO REFLECT EVERYBODY'S NEEDS.

WOMEN MUST BE INVOLVED AS



Political leaders



Election officials



Parliamentarians



CEOs & senior managers



Household decision makers



Research & knowledge experts in academia



Judges



Negotiators in trade unions and employers' organizations



Influencers in NGOs, global organizations & civil society

PROGRESS SO FAR

1995

2015

Women in parliament
(World average for both houses combined)



Female Heads of State



OUT OF 149



OUT OF 152

Female Heads of Government



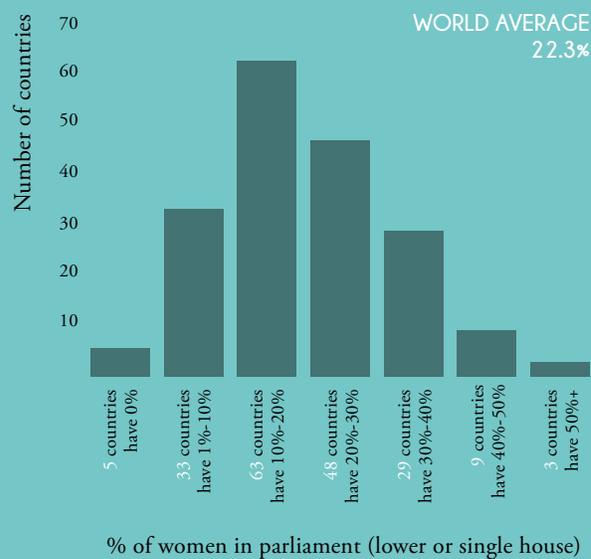
OUT OF 190



OUT OF 193

In some countries, a Head of State is also a Head of Government. The combined number of female Heads of State or Government in 1995 was 10; on 1 January 2015, this number totaled 19.

MOST PARLIAMENTS ARE STILL BELOW 30%



BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING

In Rwanda, women hold an unprecedented 63.8% of the lower house's seats. In 2014, gender parity was also surpassed in the Plurinational State of Bolivia, where women now comprise 53.1% of the lower house.

DO QUOTAS MATTER?

34 of the 41 single or lower house chambers with more than 30% women have set some form of temporary special measure or quota. There is no quota or target set in most of the 38 single or lower houses with less than 10% women.

CHILE STEPS IT UP



MICHELLE BACHELET, PRESIDENT OF CHILE

Champions women's leadership in politics and aims for women to direct 40 per cent of public enterprises by 2018

“FOR GENDER EQUALITY TO BE EFFECTIVE, WE ALSO HAVE TO LOOK AT THE DECISION-MAKING AREA, IN SOCIAL AND POLITICAL SPHERES.”

Chile intends to train 300,000 women for highly skilled jobs and empower women entrepreneurs. It will improve the ability of women to negotiate as workers, including in organizations representing the labour force, with a focus on reducing the wage gap between men and women. A national action plan against violence against women has been implemented, and more centres assist survivors of abuse. Programmes train community leaders and government officials to prevent and halt violence against

women. The new Chilean electoral system for the first time has a quota system whereby at least 40 per cent of candidates standing for Parliament must be women. As incentives to comply, any party with less than 40 per cent cannot register candidates, and those meeting the quota receive economic incentives. By 2018, Chile aims to have 40 per cent of public enterprises directed by women. It will support equality, empowerment and solidarity between spouses.

CHINA STEPS IT UP



XI JINPING, PRESIDENT OF CHINA

USD 10 million commitment to UN Women, assistance for other developing countries to build 100 health projects for women and children

“CHINA WILL DO MORE TO ENHANCE GENDER EQUALITY AS ITS BASIC STATE POLICY, GIVE PLAY TO WOMEN’S IMPORTANT ROLE AS ‘HALF OF THE SKY’ AND SUPPORT THEM IN REALIZING THEIR OWN DREAMS.”

Every Chinese woman has the opportunities to excel in life and make her dream come true. Through their own development, Chinese women will also play a greater part in the global women’s movement and make a greater contribution to gender equality in the world. To support women’s development worldwide and the work of UN Women, China will donate USD 10 million to UN Women for the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the realization of the related goals in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. In the coming five years, China will help

other developing countries build 100 health projects for women and children, send teams of medical experts to provide services, and implement 100 happy campus projects to finance the schooling of poor girls and raise girls’ school enrolment rates. It will also host 30,000 women from developing countries for training programmes in China, and provide 100,000 skills-training opportunities in local communities of other developing countries. Under a related fund co-sponsored by China and the United Nations, there will be special capacity-building programmes for women from developing countries.

COMOROS STEPS IT UP



IKILOU DHOININE, PRESIDENT OF COMOROS

Pledges continued support for reproductive health and expanded economic roles for women

“WOMEN ARE [FULL-FLEDGED ACTORS] LEVERAGING THEIR CAPABILITIES TO DELIVER DEVELOPMENT. THEREFORE, THEIR EMPOWERMENT NEEDS TO BE STRONGLY PROMOTED.”

Comoros seeks a social fabric where women can take their rightful place. Women’s empowerment needs to be strongly promoted, and Comoros reiterates its commitment to the swift implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. It will continue building on its 2011 policy on preschool attendance in public schools, which has resulted in the enrolment of some 6,000 children. Stepped-up measures will extend appropriate services to women during pregnancy, delivery and after

birth. Reproductive health is a priority in the national health strategy, under which maternal mortality rates fell from 381 to 170 deaths per 100,000 live births between 2007 and 2012. Comoros pledges to beef up its multisectoral strategy on HIV and continue actions to bring more women into key decision-making posts across national institutions. Women’s enhanced access to microcredit will bolster their key role in the national economy.

COSTA RICA

STEPS IT UP



LUIS GUILLERMO SOLÍS RIVERA, PRESIDENT OF COSTA RICA

Plans to embrace shared caregiving, promote women's equality in the workplace

"[WE COMMIT OURSELVES] TO PLACE AT THE CENTRE OF PUBLIC POLICY THE SHARED RESPONSIBILITY FOR CAREGIVING AS AN ENGINE FOR CULTURAL CHANGE."

Costa Rica intends to put shared responsibility for caregiving at the centre of public policy as an engine for cultural change. It will promote instruments that generate scientific evidence on barriers to using women's talent. Job creation through affirmative action for women will occur through public/private partnerships, and job creation programmes with

affirmative action will benefit youth, women and persons with disabilities. It will create and implement a seal of quality to check and certify gender equality in businesses and institutions, while guaranteeing the effective implementation of inspections in places of work. Within the framework of the United Nations, it will help uphold promises and commitments.

CROATIA STEPS IT UP



KOLINDA GRABAR-KITAROVIĆ, PRESIDENT OF CROATIA

Will support women's empowerment both domestically and internationally, combat stereotypes and aim for better work-life balance

“THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION REMAINS AS RELEVANT TODAY AS IT WAS ON THE HISTORIC DAY OF ITS ADOPTION. WE STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO TO FULL IMPLEMENTATION.”

The notion that women's progress represents human progress lies at the core of Croatia's national policy for gender equality, and it will continue to support women's empowerment both domestically and internationally. This is and will remain one of Croatia's major foreign policy priorities, with a focus on conflict and post-conflict societies. It will actively support efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against women, and devote further

work in Croatia and globally to vigorously combatting gender stereotypes, and raising public knowledge and awareness of gender equality. Also essential is to enable women to balance private and professional obligations, including through increasing the provision of child care services. Croatia will continue to work closely with other members of the Equal Futures Partnership and take an active role as a member of UN Women's Executive Board.

CUBA STEPS IT UP



RAÚL CASTRO, PRESIDENT OF CUBA

Ongoing efforts to equalize women's and men's roles at home and numbers of women in government decision-making

“POLITICAL WILL IS MUCH NEEDED TO AVOID TURNING THE RESULTS OBTAINED SO FAR INTO OUR GOALS INSTEAD OF MAKING THEM A STARTING POINT AND A PLEDGE TO ACHIEVE TRUE EQUALITY FOR WOMEN.”

While Cuban women have a life expectancy close to 81 years of age, the direct maternal mortality rate is one of the lowest in the world, and women make up 66.8 per cent of the labour force, Cuba recognizes it still has much to do. It will continue to work to change cultural patterns so that men and women share the care of their family. It pledges to increase the number of

women in decision-making positions in government. Some achievements have been made but are fragile and insufficient. The full realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women requires a more just and equitable international order that eradicates poverty and hunger, puts an end to conflicts, favours human beings above capital and preserves the environment.

CYPRUS STEPS IT UP



NICOS ANASTASIADES, PRESIDENT OF CYPRUS

Scaled-up support for gender equality rooted in a new national action plan

“THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN THE PROMOTION OF RECONCILIATION AND PEACE IS INVALUABLE.”

A new national action plan on equality between women and men for 2014-2017 is a flagship national policy signalling continued strong support for achieving gender equality and realizing the human rights of women and girls. Cyprus reaffirms its commitment to relevant legal action plans and directives, and all relevant international instruments combatting all forms of violence against women. Promoting women’s economic empowerment and eliminating deeply rooted gender stereotypes are among its priorities, as is combatting trafficking in human beings. Cyprus

signed the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combatting violence against women and domestic violence. It has established a technical committee on gender equality and commits to backing full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Cyprus will also prepare a Green Book for Mass Media practitioners to provide guiding principles on promoting gender equality through the media, including how to cover violence against women and avoid gender stereotypes.

DENMARK STEPS IT UP



LARS LØKKE RASMUSSEN, PRIME MINISTER OF DENMARK

Committed to equal opportunities in education and work, and to combatting domestic violence

“WE REMAIN COMMITTED TO INTENSIFYING OUR EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT ALL WOMEN AND GIRLS HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES TO PURSUE THE EDUCATION AND CAREER THEY WANT.”

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development sets out new and ambitious goals that Denmark welcomes. It will continue its long-standing acts of support for gender equality. It remains committed to intensifying efforts to ensure that all women and girls

have equal opportunities to pursue the education and career they want, and have free and equal access to the labour market. Further, it is determined to combat domestic violence and proud to organize the next *Women Deliver* conference in 2016 in Copenhagen.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC STEPS IT UP



DANILO MEDINA SÁNCHEZ, PRESIDENT OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

A plan to extend early childhood services and financing for women's businesses

“WE WANT TO WORK TO PREVENT WOMEN FROM (...) NOT ACHIEVING EMPOWERMENT BECAUSE OF ECONOMIC FACTORS (...) [AND] WE WANT TO ERADICATE VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.”

Having achieved some important targets in education, the Dominican Republic is developing a plan for early childhood. This is helping hundreds of free community and other centres that assist women every day. The country pledges to expand financing for women's businesses, with 70 per cent of loans granted by the country's solidarity bank already going to women to

set up microenterprises and cooperatives that increase their income. It will take steps to ensure that economic factors in general do not become barriers to women's empowerment, and aspires to eradicate violence against women. Political resolve is strong to continue every effort to achieve human well-being and a more just society.

ESTONIA STEPS IT UP



TOOMAS HENDRIK ILVES, PRESIDENT OF ESTONIA

Under the first national gender equality action plan, will reduce the gender pay gap and protect against discrimination

“ESTONIA HAS TAKEN UPON ITSELF TO CONCENTRATE ON WOMEN’S HUMAN RIGHTS, GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN ALSO IN DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION.”

Estonia is committed to promoting women’s rights and gender equality at the national and global levels. A financial supporter of UN Women since its creation, it will continue its assistance. Towards full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it will actively work to reduce its national gender pay gap, seek to prevent and reduce violence against women around the world, and continue to advocate for women’s rights and gender equality globally as a key component of its development

cooperation. Estonia is preparing its first action plan for gender equality to promote economic equality, achieve balanced participation at all levels of decision-making and management, and tackle the negative impacts of gender stereotypes. The action plan will help diminish the gender pay gap, guarantee efficient legal protection against gender-based discrimination and support institutional capacities to reduce gender inequality. Estonia also intends to improve services for victims of violence, including gender-based violence.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOW

BARRIERS WORLDWIDE

128

COUNTRIES OUT OF 143 EVALUATED WITH AT LEAST ONE LEGAL DIFFERENCE RESTRICTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

WHAT ARE LEGAL DIFFERENCES?

These include barriers women face that restrict their full economic potential. Some of the many examples are:



Owning, using & inheriting property



Having access to maternity & paternity leave



Earning equal pay with men for work of comparable worth



Obtaining an ID card or passport



Opening bank accounts & accessing credit



Accessing justice for domestic violence & sexual harassment

28

NUMBER OF ECONOMIES WITH 10 OR MORE LEGAL DIFFERENCES RESTRICTING WOMEN'S ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

15

NUMBER OF ECONOMIES WHERE HUSBANDS CAN OBJECT TO THEIR WIVES WORKING AND PREVENT THEM FROM ACCEPTING JOBS

ERMENT

SENIOR MANAGEMENT

25

women CEOs led Fortune 500 companies
in 2014 compared to only 1 in 1998.



But this is a mere
5%
OF ALL CEOs
on the list.



WAGES

50%

of the
world's working-age women
are in the labour
force, compared
to over

75%

of working-age men.



And globally women earn
24%
less than men.



LAND & OTHER RESOURCES

IN 26 OF 143 COUNTRIES

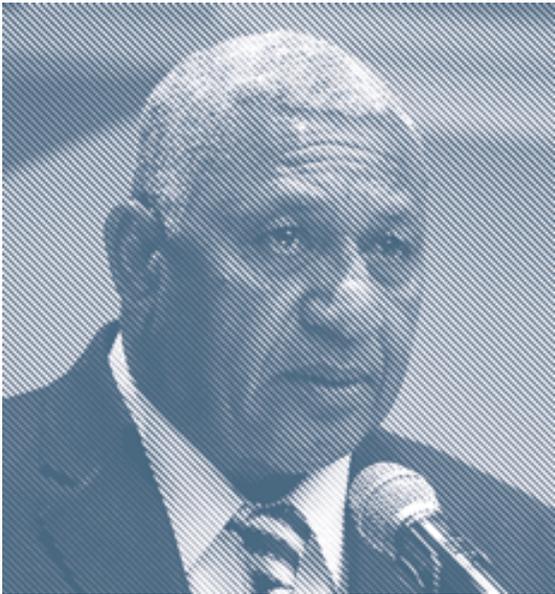
statutory inheritance laws (i.e. written laws passed by legislatures)
differentiate between women and men.



IMPACT

Increased vulnerability to poverty and food insecurity;
limited or no access to resources and credit; dependency on men to secure livelihoods.

FII STEPS IT UP



JOSIA VOREQE BAINIMARAMA, PRIME MINISTER OF FIJI

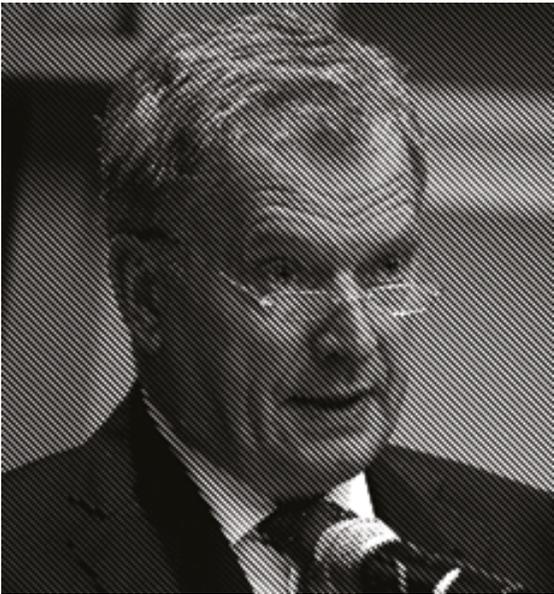
Pledges to develop gender-inclusive policies and laws, improve protections against gender-based violence

“WE ARE LEAVING NO STONE UNTURNED TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF OUR NATIONAL GENDER POLICY AND ENSURE THAT GENDER EQUALITY IS A STRONG THREAD WOVEN THROUGH ALL OUR WORK.”

Fiji has a gender-responsive and socially inclusive Constitution, and now, for the first time, a female speaker leads Parliament and four women possess significant ministerial portfolios. Over the last seven years, the Government has increased funding to the national women’s machinery by some 320 per cent. With adequate funding and human resources, it will continue to strengthen gender-disaggregated data to better influence policies. It intends to amend criminal laws to make them modern

and gender inclusive, with family laws already amended to recognize the rights of women in de facto relationships, and provide legal protection in terms of spousal maintenance and property rights. A domestic violence law that allows any person to apply for a domestic violence restraining order has been introduced, while the police are now legally obligated to enforce measures to promote the safety and well-being of victims of domestic violence, particularly women and children.

FINLAND STEPS IT UP



SAULI NIINISTÖ, PRESIDENT OF FINLAND

A plan to reduce cases of violence, and a boost for women mediators and training for peacekeepers

“GENDER EQUALITY, THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS AND THE FULL REALIZATION OF THEIR RIGHTS ARE KEY PRIORITIES IN OUR FOREIGN AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY.”

One of the largest donors to UN Women, Finland has initiated preparation of a new National Action Plan for Gender Equality, with gender mainstreaming at its core. In its foreign and development policy, gender equality, the empowerment of women and girls, and the full realization of their rights are key priorities. Recognizing that violence against women and girls is one of the most prevalent human rights violations in the world, Finland has endorsed a national goal of substantially decreasing the

number of cases of violence perpetrated by young men, including through educating all conscripts on the issue. It plans to support an increased number of women mediators, and gender training for all peace operations personnel. To succeed in the fight against impunity, it calls on all men and boys together with women and girls to build equal and sustainable societies. A particular goal is to have gender aspects included in the new international climate agreement.

FRANCE STEPS IT UP



FRANÇOIS HOLLANDE, PRESIDENT OF FRANCE

Pledges to advocate financing for women as a priority in climate talks

“THE GOAL IS TO ENABLE ALL GIRLS IN THE WORLD TO FREELY GO TO SCHOOL, TO HAVE ACCESS TO WORK, TO ALSO BE ABLE TO FOUND THEIR OWN BUSINESSES, AND TO BE ABLE TO BE AUTONOMOUS AND INDEPENDENT IN THEIR LIVES.”

France commits to a goal of enabling all women and girls in the world to freely go to school, to have access to work, to found their own businesses and to lead independent lives. A second goal is to promote the place of women in peace. Having noted that climate injustices deepen inequalities, and that women can be among the most capable in finding solutions to global warming and preserving the environment, France urges that financing for women be a priority in the Paris climate negotiations.

It calls for the universal ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, noting that to promote the equality of women is to act for dignity. For the Sustainable Development Goals to truly become the global order, France will advocate for women to have more responsibility in countries that make up the international community, and for measures to ensure equality at all levels of administration and politics.

GEORGIA STEPS IT UP



IRAKLI GARIBASHVILI, PRIME MINISTER OF GEORGIA

Legal reforms to tighten provisions for non-discrimination, campaigns to combat early marriages

“GEORGIA’S COMMITMENTS HAVE TAKEN US A LONG WAY, BUT THERE CAN BE NO CAUSE FOR COMPLACENCY.”

With 2015 the year of women in Georgia, it commits to continuing to update, enhance and develop action plans on gender equality, domestic violence, and women, peace and security. It will enhance institutional mechanisms by setting up an interministerial commission on gender equality. Ongoing legal reforms will encompass amending the labour code to protect women’s employment rights, and revising the gender equality law to address cases of gender discrimination in line with the newly adopted non-discrimination law. Georgia will ratify and implement the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on

preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, and work with development partners to prevent early marriages, with activities on this issue coordinated by an intersectoral taskforce. Dedicated awareness-raising campaigns will combat violence against women and girls and aim at stopping early marriages. Georgia will continue to adhere to human rights standards and implement international commitments to women’s rights, particularly those in the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action.

GERMANY STEPS IT UP



ANGELA MERKEL, CHANCELLOR OF GERMANY

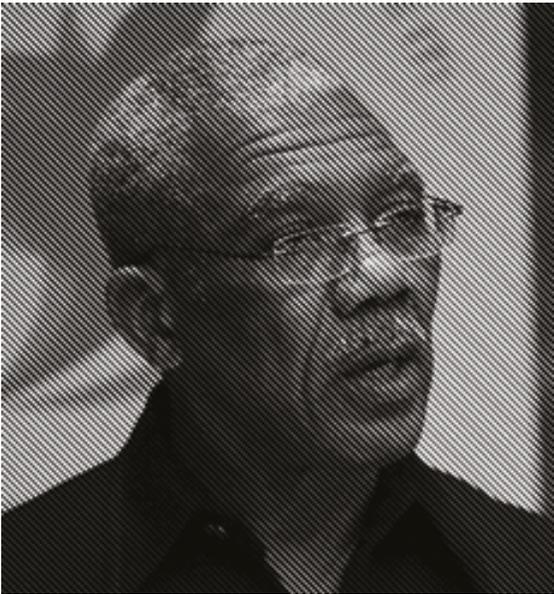
Will expand support for women's professional skills in developing countries, and require corporate boards at home to apply a 30 per cent quota for women

"WE ALL COMMITTED OURSELVES IN 1995 TO IMPLEMENT THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION. NOW WE ARE MAKING A NEW COMMITMENT WITH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 5. COMMITMENTS ARE GOOD. ACTION IS BETTER. LET US TAKE ACTION!"

Calling for women to play a more prominent role in politics, the economy and society, Germany commits to launching an initiative to bolster women's professional qualifications in developing countries and promote women's entrepreneurial empowerment. It recognizes that there is still room for improvement in Germany, and

has taken steps forward by enhancing options for child care and passing a law on women in leadership positions. Germany had previously committed to requiring stocklisted and fully co-determined companies in 2016 to reserve at least 30 per cent of supervisory seats on their boards for women.

GUYANA STEPS IT UP



DAVID A. GRANGER, PRESIDENT OF GUYANA

Commits to safety and protection from violence, offers full support to SDG 5

“WE SEEK TO BUILD A COUNTRY IN WHICH WOMEN AND GIRLS CAN EXPECT TO LIVE IN SAFETY, TO BE PROTECTED FROM ABUSE, SUCH AS TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS, DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND WORKPLACE HAZARDS.”

Guyana seeks to build a country in which women and girls live in safety, and are protected from different forms of abuse, such as trafficking in persons, domestic violence and workplace hazards. It continues to make great strides towards achievement of the internationally agreed development goals relative to gender equality and women’s empowerment, particularly

in mainstreaming a gender perspective into policies and programmes, ensuring equal pay for equal work, enhancing education and training opportunities for women and girls, and increasing women in leadership positions. It will fully support Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals, on achieving gender equality and empowering all women and girls.

HONDURAS STEPS IT UP



JUAN ORLANDO HERNÁNDEZ, PRESIDENT OF HONDURAS

Will apply parity to political parties and systematically implement the national gender plan

“TWO DECADES PAST THE ADOPTION OF THE BEIJING PLATFORM FOR ACTION, MY COUNTRY, HONDURAS, HAS MADE SIGNIFICANT INROADS IN THE PROMOTION OF GENDER EQUALITY AND EQUITY.”

Improved living conditions and housing, and proactive State employment programmes are among the measures Honduras has used and will continue to deploy to advance gender equality. To reduce maternal mortality, it has made the issue one of the main planks in health system reforms. Starting in 2016, Honduras will apply the principle of parity to managerial positions within political parties and elected posts. Since domestic violence

and femicide are among the main constraints to gender equity in the country, it commits to initiatives aimed at better understanding these phenomena, their impact on policies to promote gender equality and the development of effective strategies to tackle them. Implementation of its new Gender Equality and Equity Plan will begin through guidelines for integration of related activities in the strategic planning of all State institutions.

ICELAND STEPS IT UP



SIGMUNDUR DAVÍÐ GUNNLAUGSSON, PRIME MINISTER OF ICELAND

Aims to close gender pay gap, provide grants for international equality efforts

“MEN CANNOT SIT IDLY BY WHEN ISSUES SUCH AS GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AND THE GENDER PAY GAP ARE BEING DISCUSSED. THESE ARE NOT ONLY WOMEN’S ISSUES. THESE ARE ISSUES OF GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS.”

Iceland is committed to closing the gender pay gap by 2022, building on its proven track record on advancing gender equality. Its new session of Parliament has the highest share of women parliamentarians yet, at about 45 per cent, and 6 per cent of Icelandic men are HeForShe champions. Iceland is determined to encourage more of its countrymen to sign up, and will also encourage

males around the world to do so and engage in achieving gender equality. Parliament has confirmed a huge increase for funding issues of equality. To celebrate the 100th anniversary of women’s rights to vote and stand in parliamentary elections, Iceland has set up a five-year equality fund, and pledges that over half the grants will be awarded to international equality efforts.

INDONESIA

STEPS IT UP



JUSUF KALLA, VICE-PRESIDENT OF INDONESIA

Intent on more women leaders, fewer maternal deaths and eliminating gender-based violence

“WE ARE MORE THAN EAGER TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE OF WOMEN. WE MUST ENSURE THAT WOMEN HAVE EQUAL AND INCLUSIVE ACCESS TO GREATER PARTICIPATION IN AS WELL AS BETTER CONTROL OF AND BENEFIT FROM ALL SECTORS.”

Towards improving women’s quality of life and ensuring their equal and inclusive participation in all arenas, Indonesia is focusing on three key issues. First, it aims to increase the participation and representation of women in decision-making processes, including by promoting them in senior leadership positions. Second, it intends to reduce maternal mortality by expanding access to reproductive

health services. And third, it seeks to eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls by informing all stakeholders in the family and community, including men, about combatting this heinous crime. Indonesia believes that stronger commitment, improved means of implementation and better cooperation are essential to overcoming current and future challenges.

IRELAND STEPS IT UP



MICHAEL D. HIGGINS, PRESIDENT OF IRELAND

Gender equality a foreign policy priority in the push for the Sustainable Development Goals

“WE SHOULD NOT HAVE TO WAIT 15 YEARS TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS; ANY PARADIGM OF GENDER EQUALITY IS NOT THE GIFT OF MEN, EITHER GENEROUSLY OR RELUCTANTLY GIVEN.”

Gender equality is a priority area of Ireland’s foreign policy. It takes every opportunity to highlight the right of all girls in every country to quality education, the centrality of women’s participation in decision-making at all levels, and the importance of eradicating harmful practices, especially female genital mutilation. Ireland remains firmly dedicated to implementation of UN Security Council resolution

1325 on women, peace and security. Another priority is the prevention of and response to gender-based violence, which undermines the health, well-being and livelihoods of millions of women. Since without gender equality, the world cannot achieve the new Sustainable Development Goals, Ireland pledges to help maintain momentum behind both.

ACCESSING AND COMPLETING

WOMEN IN SCIENCE

Gender gaps continue to persist in specific fields of education, especially in the field of science. Let's take a closer look.

PERCENTAGE OF WOMEN RESEARCHERS IN NATURAL SCIENCES, ENGINEERING AND TECHNOLOGY, MEDICAL AND HEALTH SCIENCES, AGRICULTURAL SCIENCES, SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES



Just 1/5 of countries have achieved gender parity, meaning 45% to 55% of researchers are women

WHY EDUCATION MATTERS

EDUCATED WOMEN & GIRLS = EMPOWERED SOCIETIES

Educating women and girls is a driving force against poverty worldwide and is the key to empowered societies and strong economies. When women and girls have equal access to education, they can make more informed decisions within their homes and communities, make healthier choices for themselves and their families, and have increased opportunities to secure stable and gainful employment. Here's a brief glimpse on why education matters:



Children's health: If all women completed primary education in low and lower-middle income countries, the under-5 mortality rate would fall by 15%. If all women completed secondary education, it would fall by 49%, equal to around 2.8 million lives saved.



Violence against women: If all girls completed primary school in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, the number of girls getting married by age 15 would fall by 14%; with secondary education, 64% fewer girls would get married.



Women's health: If all women completed primary education, there would be 66% fewer maternal deaths, saving 189,000 lives per year.

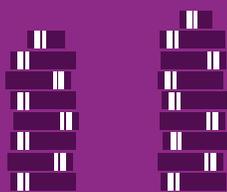


Education: For each additional year of mothers' education, a child spends an extra 0.32 years in school. For girls the benefit is slightly larger.

QUALITY EDUCATION

LITERACY

The adult literacy rate
has risen from
76% TO 85%



1990

2013



But women account
for
OVER 60%
of the world's illiterate.

ADULT LITERACY RATE (WOMEN) 2013



99%

developed
countries

77%

developing
countries

53%

least developed
countries

EDUCATION

All developing regions
have or have almost
**ACHIEVED
GENDER PARITY**
in primary education.



But the
**GENDER DISPARITY
WIDENS**

at the secondary and
tertiary school levels in many countries.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the gender gap is



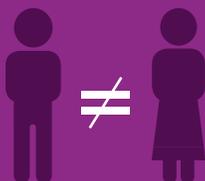
at the tertiary level.

INTERNET



AROUND 40%

of people worldwide can connect
to the Internet.



The gender gap is more
pronounced in the
developing world.

In sub-Saharan Africa, the gender gap is



women than men use the Internet,
compared with only 2% fewer women
than men in the developed world.

ITALY STEPS IT UP



MATTEO RENZI, PRIME MINISTER OF ITALY

New resources of up to 50 million euros will advance gender equality and women's rights

“WHEN WE ADOPT THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, WE PLEDGE TO LEAVE NO ONE BEHIND. DESPITE PROGRESS, MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE.”

Italy considers the Beijing Platform for Action the blueprint for advancing women's rights and a more sustainable future for everyone, and remains fully committed to the Platform's implementation. It will continue to back multilateral initiatives to eliminate harmful practices, especially female genital mutilation, and child, early and forced marriage. New

resources of up to 50 million Euros in the next two years will be dedicated to advancing gender equality, and ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights by women and girls. Italy commits to continued strong support to UN Women and the UN Population Fund by maintaining high levels of national contributions to resources and programmes.

JAPAN STEPS IT UP



SHINZŌ ABE, PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN

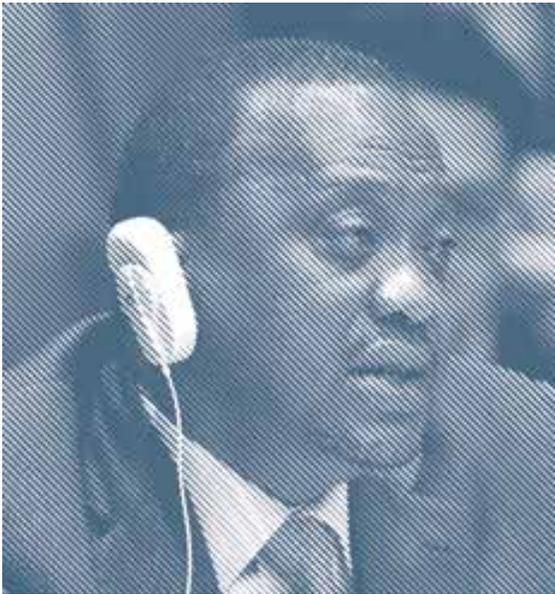
Pledges a big boost in women's leadership and development assistance for gender equality

“SINCE I BECAME PRIME MINISTER OF JAPAN, THE FUNDAMENTAL PILLAR OF MY POLICY HAS BEEN THE REALIZATION OF A SOCIETY WHERE WOMEN SHINE.”

A fundamental pillar of Japanese policy has been the realization of a society where women shine. As a result, in the past three years, more than 90,000 women have entered the Japanese labour market. A goal for women to occupy about 30 per cent of leadership positions by 2020 has already been exceeded among newly hired national public servants. Japan has enacted a new law to promote the active engagement of women in society,

making it commonplace for both men and women to share responsibility for work, household chores and child rearing. Internationally, its donation to UN Women has increased tenfold in the past two years. Over the next three years, Japan pledges to contribute more than 42 billion yen in official development assistance towards continued actions to resolve challenges to gender equality, development and peace.

KENYA STEPS IT UP



UHURU KENYATTA, PRESIDENT OF KENYA

Aims for universal access to sexual and reproductive health, progressive action towards economic empowerment

“WE COMMIT TO ENSURING WOMEN’S FULL AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADERSHIP AT ALL LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING IN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND PUBLIC LIFE.”

To safeguard gains realized by women under a new Constitution, Kenya will enact appropriate legislation and policies, and commits to implementation and effective monitoring. It aims for accelerated progress on achieving the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, including through universal access to sexual and reproductive health. It will allocate adequate resources for gender equality and strengthen mechanisms for gender-sensitive budgeting. Towards women’s economic empowerment, the public procurement policy will be refined to open opportunities for women. Progressive action will improve women’s access to

decent work and address the gender wage gap. Accelerated implementation of national policies and laws on gender-based violence will encompass continued engagement of men and boys, and continued commitment to eradicating all harmful practices, including female genital mutilation and child marriages. Kenya aims to ensure women can fully and effectively participate in all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life. It will take steps to ensure equal access to quality education for boys and girls, and to encourage women to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC STEPS IT UP



THONGLOUN SISOULITH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC

Takes steps to stop violence, commits to continued action on gender equality in national plans

"I WOULD LIKE TO REITERATE THE COMMITMENT OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TO CONTINUE WORKING CLOSELY WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO PROMOTE AND ADVANCE THE ROLE AND STATUS OF WOMEN."

Lao People's Democratic Republic has established a national institution to promote gender equality and women's advancement. Gender equality has advanced, including in education and health, where the maternal mortality rate has declined. A National Plan of Action on Violence against Women and

Violence against Children and a law on preventing violence have both been endorsed. Through 2030, Lao People's Democratic Republic commits to continued implementation of its gender equality policy, including through national socioeconomic development plans.

LATVIA STEPS IT UP



RAIMONDS VĒJONIS, PRESIDENT OF LATVIA

Will bolster laws and support partners to fight violence

“WE WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SUPPORT TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND CIVIL SOCIETY IN CENTRAL ASIA (...) TO FIGHT ALL FORMS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN.”

By 2018, Latvia agrees to strengthen its legal framework and accede to the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence. It

will continue supporting other partner countries, including to provide support to local authorities and civil society in Central Asia to fight all forms of violence against women.

LIBERIA STEPS IT UP



ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF, PRESIDENT OF LIBERIA

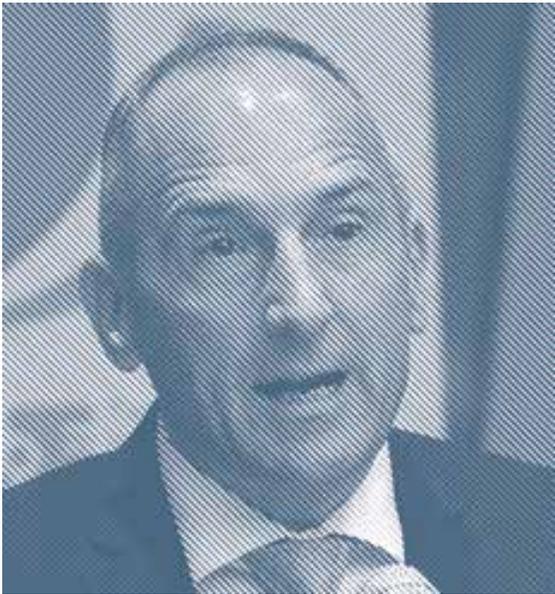
Pledges to pass domestic violence bill and press for an end to female genital mutilation

“MY GOVERNMENT COMMITS TO IMPROVING THE LIVING AND WORKING CONDITIONS OF WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR, WHO PROVIDE THE RESILIENCE OF OUR ECONOMY AND ARE THE MOST DISADVANTAGED.”

Liberia commits to passing its Domestic Violence Bill, and to sustaining enforcement of the law that denies bail to those who commit rape. It will continue to uphold rights and laws to ensure children’s access to quality education, and will provide training and better working conditions for health-care workers to improve health-care delivery, given recent experience with Ebola.

Despite much difficulty, it will press for laws to abolish female genital mutilation as well as actions to enforce a ban on the practice. Other efforts will improve the living and working conditions of vulnerable women in informal jobs. An ongoing constitutional review process will guarantee women’s full participation in governance and national affairs on a priority basis.

LIECHTENSTEIN STEPS IT UP



ADRIAN HASLER, PRIME MINISTER OF LIECHTENSTEIN

Affirms commitment to gender issues in international criminal justice, promises more action to end violence

“THE FULL INCLUSION AND PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IS NOT A MATTER OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS, BUT RATHER AN INDISPENSABLE ELEMENT OF SUCCESS.”

Committed to the full implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Liechtenstein endorses the Political Declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women earlier this year. Its commitment to international criminal justice has a strong focus on gender issues, and it affirms additional efforts to reach goals for political

participation and ensure equal pay for equal work, noting in this regard the calls to action by the UN Global Compact and others. Liechtenstein will pay special attention to ending violence against women, and to this end has already strengthened national legislation and run a successful government campaign to raise awareness.

LUXEMBOURG

STEPS IT UP



XAVIER BETTEL, PRIME MINISTER OF LUXEMBOURG

Aims for 40 per cent participation of women on boards and among candidates

“IT IS TIME FOR ACTION. WE WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONSOLIDATION OF EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN.”

To eliminate inequalities in decision-making, especially in the political and economic spheres, Luxembourg expects to implement a very robust policy to achieve, by 2019, a minimum quota of 40 per cent of women on all executive boards in public establishments, and among stakeholders and shareholders of large enterprises and private businesses. Further, 40 per cent of candidates on party lists for elections will be women. Luxembourg intends to make family and professional life more compatible, including by involving men, and will

ratify the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence as soon as possible. Women and girls must have access to the same educational opportunities as men, especially in sciences and math, so awareness-raising campaigns will work to deconstruct stereotypes in the educational sphere. Luxembourg commits to ending all forms of discrimination at the national and international levels, and will sustain contributions to gender equality at the United Nations and UN Women.

MALAWI STEPS IT UP



ARTHUR PETER MUTHARIKA, PRESIDENT OF MALAWI

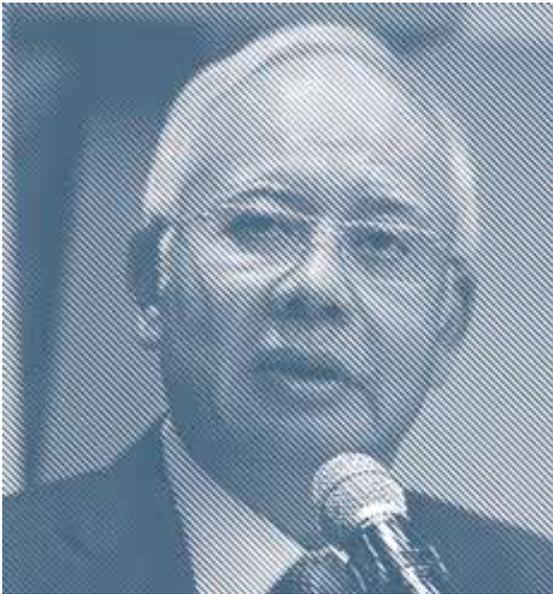
Will act to end child marriage, make gender equality integral to national growth and development

“MY GOVERNMENT AND I PERSONALLY [ARE] COMMITTED TO THE ACCELERATED IMPLEMENTATION OF ACTIONS AND ACTIVITIES WHICH AIM TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN MALAWI.”

Malawi commits to the accelerated implementation of actions to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls. A National Plan of Action on Gender-Based Violence has been developed to end the epidemic, and the HeforShe Campaign has led to nationwide sensitization on the issue, including by mobilizing men. Subsequently, Malawi enacted the ground-breaking Marriage, Divorce and Family Relations Law that puts the age of marriage at 18 years. Traditional leaders established a Chief’s Gender Council to support

a campaign on ending child marriage. Malawi has identified gender equality and women’s empowerment as core priorities of the revised Malawi Growth and Development Strategy, and integrated gender-responsive budgeting in the national budget. Close work with banks, microfinance institutions and other stakeholders will continue to increase women’s access to financial services and productive resources. New legislation is aimed at bringing women’s representation in politics and decision-making to a minimum level of 40 per cent.

MALAYSIA STEPS IT UP



NAJIB RAZAK, PRIME MINISTER OF MALAYSIA

Aims for more women in the workforce and greater support for single mothers

“WE AIM TO ACHIEVE HIGH-INCOME NATION STATUS BY 2020. BUT WE CANNOT DO THIS WITHOUT WOMEN BEING EQUAL PARTNERS, AND WE NEED THEM TO BE DRIVERS OF GROWTH.”

Malaysia stands by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It aims to achieve high-income status by 2020, but cannot do this without women being equal partners and drivers of growth and prosperity for all citizens. Its most recent budget made upholding the role of women a core strategy, and it aims to boost the female labour participation rate from 54 per cent as of

last year to 59 per cent by 2020. By 2016, all Malaysian public companies will be required to disclose their level of gender diversity in their annual reports. Since single mothers and female-headed households are often socially and economically disadvantaged, particularly in rural areas, Malaysia has developed a national action plan to empower them.

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY



“WOMEN ARE THE BEST DRIVERS OF GROWTH, THE BEST HOPE FOR RECONCILIATION IN CONFLICT AND THE BEST BUFFER AGAINST THE RADICALIZATION OF YOUTH AND THE REPETITION OF CYCLES OF VIOLENCE.”



Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, UN Women Executive Director

POWERFUL WOMEN, POWERFUL PEACE

SUSTAINABLE PEACE NEEDS WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP AND REPRESENTATION AT ALL LEVELS OF DECISION-MAKING.

Women must be full participants in:

PEACE NEGOTIATIONS

PEACEKEEPING MISSIONS

MONITORING & IMPLEMENTATION OF PEACE AGREEMENTS

TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

ADMINISTRATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES

RECOVERY PROGRAMMES

POST-CONFLICT PLANNING

GOVERNMENTS & PARLIAMENTS

SECURITY & JUSTICE SECTORS



PROTECTING AND EMPOWERING WOMEN DURING AND AFTER CONFLICTS IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CHALLENGES OF OUR TIME



Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations

THE DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS OF CONFLICT ON WOMEN AND GIRLS:

A SNAPSHOT



Women and girls bear the brunt of many of the harmful consequences of armed violence. In the last two decades, the use of violence against women and girls during conflicts, and especially sexual violence, has become more visible. But aside from increased sexual violence, conflict exacerbates many inequalities that can last well after a war ends.



Here are just a few examples.

MATERNAL MORTALITY

Deaths per 100,000 livebirths, 2013

Conflict & Post-conflict



531

Global Rate



210

LAND RIGHTS

Percentage of women with legal titles to land, 2014

Conflict & Post-conflict

Aggregate figure for 7 conflict and post-conflict countries

9%



Global Rate

Aggregate figure for 74 developed and developing countries

19%

EDUCATION

Adjusted net enrolment ratio in primary school for girls, 2013

Conflict & Post-conflict



76%

Global Rate



91%

SCHOOL

CHILD MARRIAGE



Child marriage rates are among the world's highest in many conflict countries.

Percentage of women aged 20-24 who were married before age 18, 2014

45%

Somalia

52%

Guinea

55%

Mali

68%

Central African Republic

MAURITANIA

STEPS IT UP



MOHAMED OULD ABDEL AZIZ, PRESIDENT OF MAURITANIA

Will continue to empower women in all arenas as an absolute necessity

“ONE CANNOT IMAGINE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF ANY DEVELOPMENT THAT EXCLUDES THE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN AND THEIR CONTRIBUTION TO THE PROGRESS OF [HUMANKIND].”

Through national policies, Mauritania has sought to empower women in all arenas and positions of leadership, including in legislative, judicial and executive institutions, as well as political parties, civil society organizations, military and security

agencies, and businesses. Women have become influential actors who cannot be bypassed in national life. Mauritania remains committed to gender equality as an absolute necessity that it will continue to work to achieve.

MEXICO

STEPS IT UP



ENRIQUE PEÑA NIETO, PRESIDENT OF MEXICO

Better coordination of national gender equality actions, scaled up measures on reproductive health

“THE SUSTAINED DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORLD COULD BE ACHIEVED IF WOMEN HAVE THE SAME OPPORTUNITIES AS MEN, FOR HEALTH, STUDY, WORK, DECISION-MAKING AND IN BUILDING THEIR OWN LIVES.”

Mexico has integrated gender across its strategy guiding international support for development, and put gender equality at the core of the national development plan. Political reform committing parties to ensuring that women fill 50 per cent of legislative candidacies led to women winning 42 per cent of seats in the recently elected Chamber of Deputies. To continue moving towards greater

equality, the Government will implement three important measures. At the ministerial level, it will coordinate national work on the equality of men and women. It will promote more shared responsibility between men and women to improve the distribution of work in the home. And it will scale up actions to prevent adolescent pregnancies and reduce maternal mortality.

MICRONESIA

STEPS IT UP



PETER CHRISTIAN, PRESIDENT OF THE FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

Finishing unfinished business and aiming for women's participation in all areas of nation-building

“LET US COMMIT OURSELVES TO ANOTHER HOMEWORK IN ADDITION TO THOSE ALREADY SUGGESTED AND THAT IS THAT WE REACH OUR GOAL BEFORE ITS TIME.”

Micronesia's strategic development plan started in 2004 and will end in 2023. It encompasses the participation of women in all spheres of nation-building, guided by a Gender Strategic Planning Matrix. The Government of the Federated States of Micronesia will pursue with more vigour the unfinished work of the Millennium

Development Goals (MDGs), while focusing on Sustainable Development Goal 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment, and its cross-cutting effects. As part of the collective commitment to move forward, it stresses the need for adequate resources and human capacities.

MONTENEGRO

STEPS IT UP



FILIP VUJANOVIĆ, PRESIDENT OF MONTENEGRO

Commits to implementing national plan and law towards equality in all areas

“I AM CONFIDENT THAT THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT MARKS THE TURNING POINT FOR THE FUTURE EFFORTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY TO ADDRESS THE ISSUE OF GENDER EQUALITY.”

Montenegro is committed to ensuring that women and girls have equal rights and opportunities in all spheres of life and live free of violence, including through its National Plan for Achieving Gender Equality, which is based on the Beijing Platform for Action. It commits to implementation of the plan and to carrying forward the amended national law on gender equality to ensure women’s full participation in decision-making. It will undertake regular awareness-

raising and educational campaigns on ending violence against women, including by engaging men and boys. Montenegro was a strong advocate for the stand-alone Sustainable Development Goal on gender equality and women’s empowerment, along with all gender-related targets and indicators in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It stands behind all national and international standards guiding the achievement of gender equality.

MOZAMBIQUE

STEPS IT UP



FILIFE JACINTO NYUSI, PRESIDENT OF MOZAMBIQUE

Stands firm in combatting harmful traditional practices, will expand social protection and access to productive resources

“[WE ARE] FIRM IN COMBATTING HARMFUL GENDER PRACTICES THAT VIOLATE HUMAN RIGHTS SUCH AS EARLY MARRIAGE, SEXUAL ABUSE AND TRAFFICKING OF CHILDREN.”

National planning guidelines in Mozambique will have a strong gender dimension, accompanied by technical support and capacity-building for public institutions to meet related objectives. The country stands firm in combatting harmful gender practices that violate human rights, such as early marriage, sexual abuse and trafficking of children. A national strategy on these issues is underway as well as a review

of the current gender policy and its implementation strategy to end discriminatory practices. Mozambique also commits to expansion of social protection and access to productive resources for women as well as funding income-generation activities for them. It supports the principles of the African Union and the United Nations concerning gender equality and women’s rights.

NAMIBIA STEPS IT UP



NETUMBO NANDI-NDAITWAH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF NAMIBIA

Aims for equal access to services, roles for women as agents of peace

“NAMIBIA COMMITS HERSELF TO CONTINUE TO SENSITIZE OUR PEOPLE TO FULLY EMBRACE THE CRITICAL ROLE WOMEN PLAY IN SOCIETY.”

Namibia has paid special attention to women’s empowerment and gender equality, an integral part of its Constitution. Significant targets have been met, such as an increase in the number of girls in primary and secondary school, and a boost in the share of women in the National Assembly to 46 per cent in 2015. Still, challenges remain, so Namibia commits to women’s empowerment and

ensuring that women’s rights are protected in all areas, and to ensuring that women have access to services for education, health and employment, among others. It will fight gender-based violence, and make sure women can play their roles as agents of peace at the community and national levels. Namibian women in uniform will continue to serve in UN peacekeeping.

NEPAL STEPS IT UP



PRAKASH MAN SINGH, DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OF NEPAL

Advances guarantees of rights related to reproduction, property and political participation

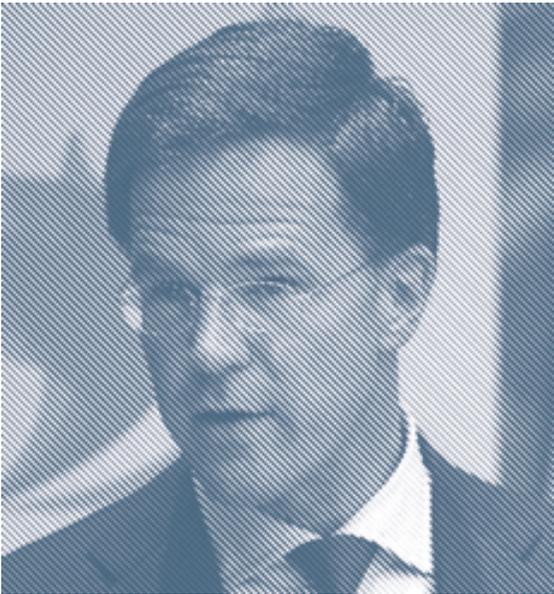
“WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT THROUGH THEIR FULL AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION IN ALL SPHERES OF SOCIETY AND ELIMINATION OF VIOLENCE AND DISCRIMINATION CONSTITUTE THE KEY TO SOCIOECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ON A SUSTAINABLE BASIS.”

Substantive efforts to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment in Nepal include affirmative policies and laws, mandatory participation of women in all civil and security agencies, and a zero-tolerance policy on sexual and domestic violence. The national women’s commission has constitutional status, and gender features across all development policies and programmes, including through a gender-responsive budgeting system that

covers 22 per cent of the total budget. Women enjoy all fundamental rights and freedoms enshrined in Nepal’s new Constitution, with Article 43 devoted to rights to lineage, safe maternity and reproduction, protection against all forms of exploitation, and equality in family matters and property. The Constitution ensures at least 33 per cent of parliamentarians are women, and requires the president and the vice-president to be different genders.

NETHERLANDS

STEPS IT UP



MARK RUTTE, PRIME MINISTER OF THE NETHERLANDS

Two new funds back advances in economic and political participation, combat violence, support sexual and reproductive rights

“EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IS ALSO A GUIDING PRINCIPLE OF OUR FOREIGN AND DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS BECAUSE GENDER EQUALITY PROVIDES A BASIS FOR STABILITY AND ECONOMIC PROSPERITY.”

The Netherlands remains committed to increasing women’s economic independence and financial self-sufficiency. Equality between women and men is a guiding principle of foreign and development efforts, providing a basis for stability and economic prosperity. In 2016, the Netherlands plans to launch a programme called Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women to support women’s economic and political

participation, and combat violence against women and girls in low-income and lower-middle-income countries. It will be the world’s largest fund of its kind. Another major fund will support advances in sexual and reproductive health and rights, since for women to have a voice and economic opportunities, they need to be able to make their own choices about sexuality and family planning.

NORWAY STEPS IT UP



ERNA SOLBERG, PRIME MINISTER OF NORWAY

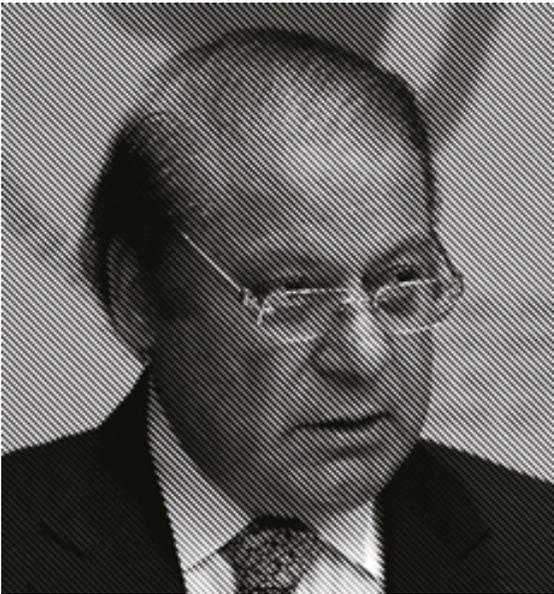
Plans long-term efforts to speed up action on gender equality, including through strong laws

“UN MEMBER STATES FORMALLY AGREED ON THE [2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT], WHICH SETS 2030 AS AN EXPIRATION DATE FOR GENDER INEQUALITY. SOME SAY THAT THIS IS TOO AMBITIOUS. I SAY, ‘LET’S SPEED IT UP.’”

A white paper to the Norwegian Parliament on gender equality will lay the foundation for long-term targeted efforts for equality between women and men, with a focus on education, work and the business world, as well as health, violence and abuse. Since a strong legal framework is essential for combatting discrimination,

including gender discrimination, Norway pledges to develop a renewed comprehensive equality act and discrimination bill. It calls for speeding up action on gender equality as a question of human rights, and accelerating implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

PAKISTAN STEPS IT UP



MUHAMMAD NAWAZ SHARIF, PRIME MINISTER OF PAKISTAN

Determined that women will have central roles in political, economic and other spheres

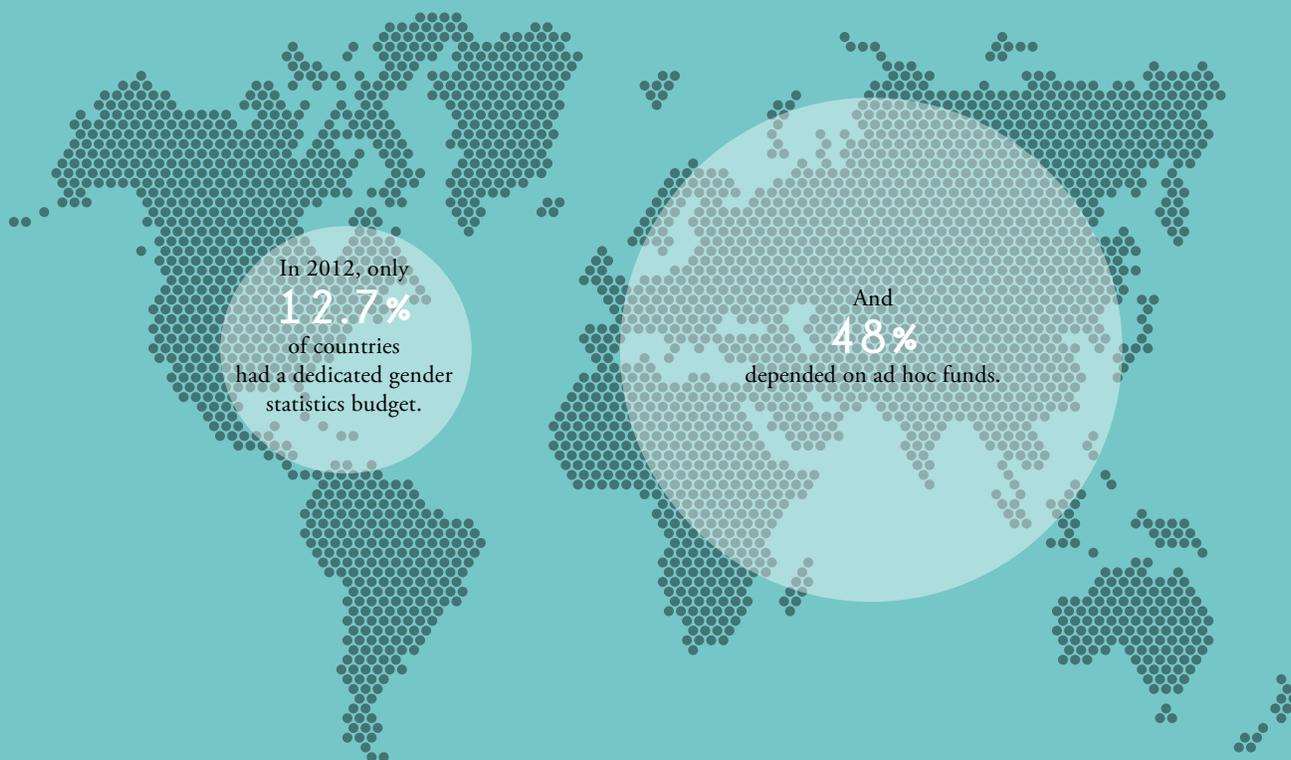
“ALL COUNTRIES STAND TO BENEFIT FROM EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN. WE ARE THEREFORE DETERMINED TO ENSURE A MORE CENTRAL ROLE FOR WOMEN IN THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND OTHER SPHERES OF OUR NATIONAL LIFE.”

Pakistan welcomes a stand-alone goal on gender equality and women’s empowerment in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and calls for investing sufficient resources and adopting appropriate policies to ensure its realization. Pakistan’s initiatives have included the establishment of national and provincial commissions on the status of women that are led by women, and contribute to legislation and policies for women’s empowerment

and gender equality. It has strengthened the national policy for development and empowerment of women, and enacted and implemented pro-women legislation, including through amending the criminal law. Women’s empowerment is the first pillar of a key national planning document, Vision 2025, signaling determination to ensure a more central role for women in political, economic and other spheres of national life.

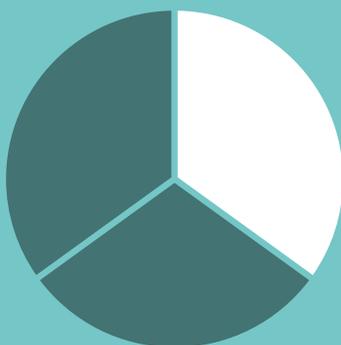
GENDER EQUALITY IN PLAN

GENDER STATISTICS



Although focal points or desks for gender statistics in national statistical offices existed in over

2/3
OF COUNTRIES
in 2012.



Only

31%
OF COUNTRIES
had a dedicated office for gender statistics within the national statistical office.

FINANCING AND BUDGETING

PLANS & BUDGETS

Governments worldwide increasingly use **GENDER-RESPONSIVE BUDGETING** to ensure implementation of gender equality policies and action plans.



But the costing of selected national action plans shows financing deficits as high as

90%



HUMANITARIAN FUNDING

In 2014, the total humanitarian funding for UN-wide crisis response totaled **USD 9.4 BILLION**



But the share allocated to programmes contributing significantly to gender equality was only

12%

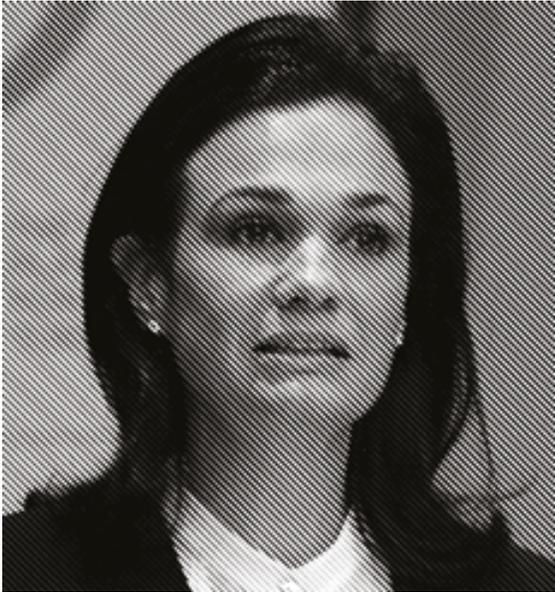


BUDGET

According to a 2013 study, **23%** of foundations' human rights funding in 2010 was allocated for women's and girls' priorities.



PANAMA STEPS IT UP



ISABEL SAINT MALO DE ALVAREDO, VICE-PRESIDENT OF PANAMA

Commits to greater political participation and the eradication of violence against women

“SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IS ONLY POSSIBLE IF THE 50 PER CENT OF THE POPULATION WE REPRESENT IS FULLY INCORPORATED IN THE TRANSFORMATION THAT THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT SEEKS TO ACHIEVE.”

Panama is a country where women have been protagonists and propellers of the development of a plural and diverse nation, loving and respectful of peace and human rights. Panama pledges to continue working to strengthen its electoral system in terms of women's greater representation. It is determined to make headway in taking steps to promote the rights of women and girls, close gender gaps in the labour force

and in social inclusion, and ensure women play a full and equal role in the country's development. Moreover, Panama reiterates its commitment to eradicate violence against women, calling on all UN Member States to devote greater resources to combating human trafficking rings, as well as to develop public policies to combat femicide and violence against women in all its forms.

ROMANIA STEPS IT UP



KLAUS WERNER IOHANNIS, PRESIDENT OF ROMANIA

Will launch an integrated system to prevent all forms of violence and encourage a cadre of gender equality experts

“NON-DISCRIMINATION, INCLUDING ON GENDER CRITERIA, IS ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT VALUES OF ANY MODERN SOCIETY, AS EQUALITY BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN IS NOT ONLY A HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, BUT ALSO A PREREQUISITE FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE.”

Romania will continue to be fully committed to the protection and promotion of all of women’s rights as well as to the implementation of international legal instruments, such as the Beijing Platform for Action, the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence,

and UN Security Council resolution 1325. It plans to launch a new integrated system to track, report and prevent all forms of violence, and will create a professional cadre of gender equality experts. Programmes to engage girls and boys in political, social and economic life will aim at creating the next generation of leaders.

SAMOA STEPS IT UP



TUILAEPA SAILELE MALIELEGAOI, PRIME MINISTER OF SAMOA

Gender equality and women's empowerment policies will feature in all areas of government

“WE ARE ACUTELY AWARE THAT WE MUST MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO DEVELOP AND RELEASE THE FULL POTENTIAL OF OUR WOMEN WHO MAKE UP AT LEAST 50 PER CENT OF SAMOA'S POPULATION. IT IS ECONOMICALLY SENSIBLE!”

Having made important strides in women's education and employment opportunities, Samoa recognizes that much remains to be done. It is committed to integrating policies on gender equality and women's empowerment across all areas of government, including national climate resilience and disaster prevention and response policies and operations. Salaries for village women representatives were

recently raised to close a gender pay gap, while the Constitutional Amendment Act of 2013, which reserves a minimum of 10 per cent of seats for women in the national Parliament, will open permanent space for women representatives. Samoa remains committed to advancing the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action within the next development agenda.

SENEGAL STEPS IT UP



MACKY SALL, PRESIDENT OF SENEGAL

Enacts legal and policy reforms, commits to meaningful empowerment and true equality

“WE ARE COMMITTED TO GIVING MEANING TO THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (...) WE WANT TO ENSURE THAT THE PRESENCE OF WOMEN IS NOT JUST SHOWN IN TERMS OF QUANTITY BUT IN TERMS OF QUALITY, SO THAT WE HAVE TRUE EQUALITY.”

Legal reform in Senegal has included a law on equality in elected public bodies and a stipulation that Senegalese women can pass their citizenship to their foreign spouse and children. New policies provide free caesarean operations in public hospitals and extend social security grants to help the most vulnerable. An essential plank of

the emergency community development programme is to lighten burdens on women working in rural areas. Senegal is committed to giving meaning to the empowerment of women, ensuring that women’s participation in society is not measured just in terms of numbers, but in terms of quality so that true equality is achieved.

SIERRA LEONE STEPS IT UP



ERNEST BAI KOROMA, PRESIDENT OF SIERRA LEONE

Legal reforms, education for all and universal access to reproductive health empower women and girls

“I REAFFIRM SIERRA LEONE’S COMMITMENT TO DEEPEN AND ENHANCE THE SPACE FOR WOMEN’S PARTICIPATION IN ALL SPHERES OF SOCIETY AND GOVERNANCE.”

Legislative reform in Sierra Leone aims to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, including through mainstreaming gender in the national Agenda for Prosperity (2013-2017) and through greater protections against domestic violence and sexual offences. Knowing that education is key, Sierra Leone has established gender-sensitive curricula and focused on achieving gender parity at the primary level, while providing free education through secondary schools to girls in the Northern and Eastern Regions. Towards the aim of universal reproductive health care, pregnant women, lactating mothers and children under five can access free services.

Sierra Leone had previously committed to implement the African Charter on Human and People’s Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol), including taking legal action against female genital mutilation; pledged to strengthen legislation on women’s and children’s rights, including the right to take part in political leadership and decision-making processes, and improve women’s reproductive rights; and is establishing a Legal Aid Board to provide accessible, affordable, credible and sustainable legal aid services for all.

SLOVENIA STEPS IT UP



MIROSLAV CERAR, PRIME MINISTER OF SLOVENIA

Will challenge traditional norms, call on men and boys as agents of change and pursue equality by 2020

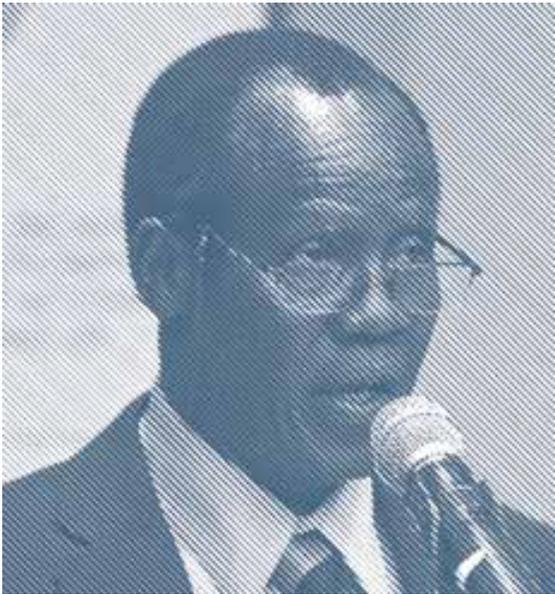
“INEQUALITIES BETWEEN WOMEN AND MEN STILL EXIST, AND NO COUNTRY IS IMMUNE TO THIS. WE PLEDGE AND CALL ON OTHERS TO (...) FURTHER CHALLENGE TRADITIONAL NOTIONS OF MASCULINITIES.”

Fully committed to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Slovenia affirms the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, calling for each and every goal to involve the equal participation and equal enjoyment of rights for women and girls. Gender equality requires the active involvement of men and boys, which is why leading officials have joined the HeForShe campaign. Slovenia will continue to promote the roles and responsibilities of men and boys as allies

and agents of change. Having kept the issue of violence against women and girls high on the political agenda, and becoming a party to the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, Slovenia has made significant progress on prevention and response. It further affirms its commitment to foster gender equality by planning to adopt a national programme for equality between women and men by 2020.

SOUTH SUDAN

STEPS IT UP



JAMES WANI IGGA, VICE-PRESIDENT OF SOUTH SUDAN

Envisions keeping gender equality at the centre of public policy and ending inequality by 2040

“GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT HAVE BEEN AT THE CENTRE OF OUR GOVERNMENT’S POLICY AND INITIATIVES. WE ARE COMMITTED TO THAT.”

South Sudan remains committed to gender equality and women’s empowerment, which are at the centre of public policy and initiatives. Even though it says it is lagging behind on many indicators around women’s empowerment, the country has taken steps

to catch up with the rest of the world. Women’s health facilities have been built across the country, leading to a marked reduction in maternal and infant mortality rates. The vision and policy is to end gender inequality by 2040.

SRI LANKA STEPS IT UP



MAITHRIPALA SIRISENA, PRESIDENT OF SRI LANKA

Will update national action plan, and sustain firm commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment

"WE REMAIN FIRM IN OUR COMMITMENT TO STRIVE CONTINUOUSLY WITH DILIGENCE TO ACHIEVE GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT."

Since the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action, Sri Lanka's steps to achieve gender equality have comprised reforms to domestic laws and the integration of gender-related priorities into government action plans. It is currently updating a national action plan on women and

has a dedicated ministry on women's matters. It intends to take the promotion and protection of the rights of women very seriously, remaining firm in a commitment to strive continuously and with diligence to achieve gender equality and women's empowerment.

SWEDEN STEPS IT UP



STEFAN LÖFVEN, PRIME MINISTER OF SWEDEN

All national policies, budgets and international aid to contribute to gender equality

“GENDER EQUALITY IS A FUNDAMENTAL MATTER OF HUMAN RIGHTS BUT IT IS ALSO SMART ECONOMICS (...) WE CAN DOUBLE THE TALENT POOL AND UNLOCK ENORMOUS POTENTIAL FOR PROSPERITY.”

Sweden pledges to ensure that national policies and budget allocations contribute to gender equality, and that development and humanitarian aid are gender-sensitive across all areas. A proclaimed feminist Government, Sweden has set a gender equality policy goal and committed to implement gender mainstreaming and gender-responsive budgeting. Equal employment and pay, representation and health will be three specific focus areas for the Government. With the Beijing Platform for Action and the new 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development providing powerful action

plans for equality, development and peace, Sweden will take action to strengthen women’s contributions to peace and security. It intends to develop a network of women mediators that within two years will be ready to assist peace efforts wherever they occur. The aim of this initiative is not only to develop Sweden’s own capabilities, but more importantly, to cooperate with female mediation networks from the global South. With women’s participation at all levels vital to the success and sustainability of peace and peacebuilding efforts, proactive leadership is needed to promote and include women.

SWITZERLAND STEPS IT UP



SIMONETTA SOMMARUGA, PRESIDENT OF SWITZERLAND

Will combat wage discrimination, achieve a better work-family balance and act against domestic violence

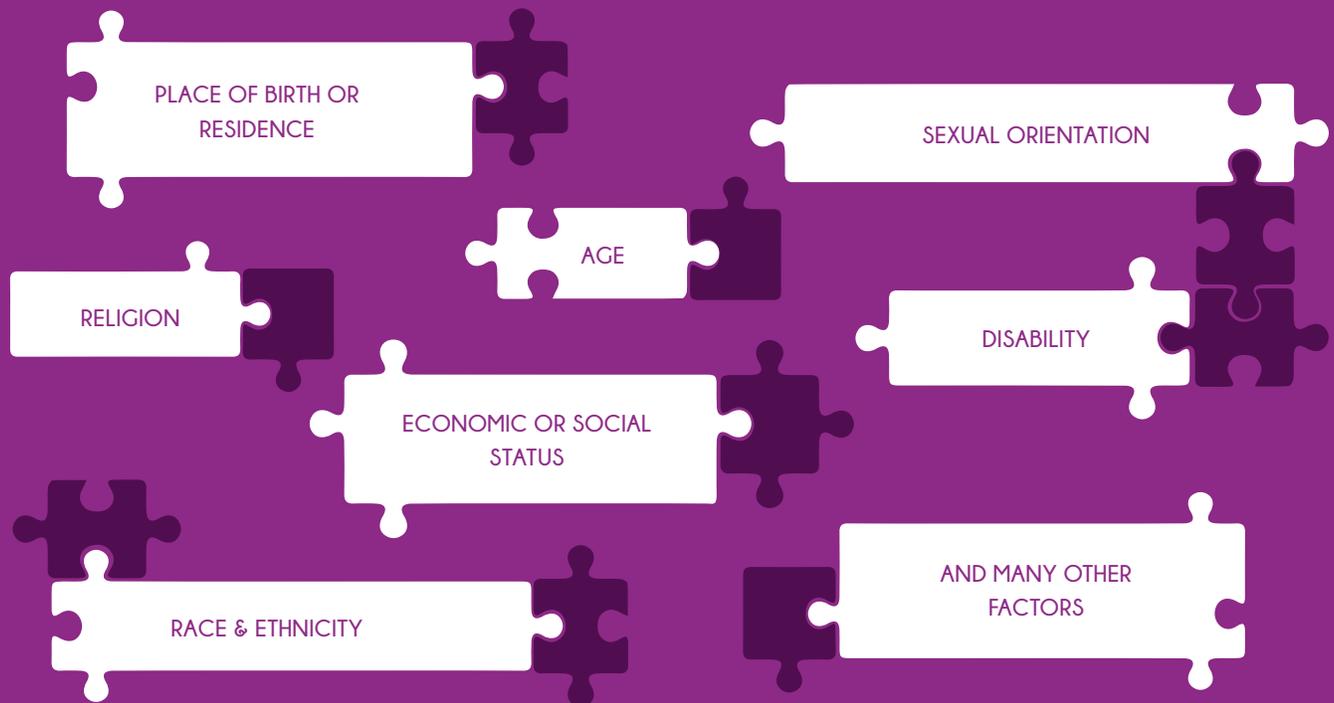
“TRUE TO ITS COMMITMENT TO THE PROTECTION OF THOSE WHO DEFEND WOMEN’S RIGHTS, SWITZERLAND WILL PURSUE THE PROMOTION OF THEIR FREEDOM OF ACTION AND OF EXPRESSION, WITHOUT FEAR OF REPRISAL.”

Switzerland will promote women’s freedom of action and of expression, and seek to connect implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to move forward complementary goals. The translation of related actions into internal policies remains a priority. It intends in particular to combat wage discrimination, achieve a better work-family balance and act against domestic violence. Switzerland pledges to continue supporting

UN Women and will increase its contribution to almost US \$50 million for the 2015 to 2017 period. It calls on all other UN entities whose mandates it supports to integrate gender into their respective activities. Since international commitments must be accompanied by strong follow-up, Switzerland emphasizes the central role of the Commission on the Status of Women, due to its responsibility in the follow-up and implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action.

MULTIPLE FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION

WOMEN ARE NOT A HOMOGENOUS GROUP AND MAY NOT EXPERIENCE DISCRIMINATION IN THE SAME WAY. THEY MAY FACE MULTIPLE AND INTERSECTING FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION BASED ON, FOR INSTANCE:



GENDER DISCRIMINATION MANIFESTS ITSELF IN A NUMBER OF AREAS, BOTH IN LAW AND IN PRACTICE:

SEXUAL ORIENTATION & GENDER IDENTITY

77
countries criminalize
same-sex relationships.



IMPACT



Increased vulnerability to violence; arbitrary arrest and detention; violations of the right to privacy and non-discrimination.

MINIATION AGAINST WOMEN



83%

of domestic workers worldwide are women.

DOMESTIC WORKERS

are among the most vulnerable groups in the global workforce, facing a number of human rights abuses and labour rights violations ranging from deplorable working conditions and unequal pay to sexual violence.

CONVENTION AND DOMESTIC WORKERS



In 2013, ILO Convention 189 setting standards to improve the lives of domestic workers went into force.

Uruguay was the first to ratify the Convention.

REFUGEES & IDPs

CASE EXAMPLE: SYRIA

7.6 M

INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS (IDPS)

3.9 M

REFUGEES

As of March 2015, more than half of all Syrians have been forced to flee their homes, with 7.6 million people displaced within the country and 3.9 million people living as refugees in neighbouring countries.



HALF MILLION

As with all humanitarian emergencies, women and girls are among the most vulnerable. Nearly half a million Syrian women, including refugees and those still in Syria, are pregnant and in need of maternal care.

HIV & AIDS

16 M

WOMEN LIVING WITH HIV



50%

OF ALL ADULTS LIVING WITH HIV

Globally, there are 16 million women living with HIV, constituting 50% of all adults living with HIV.

According to the WHO, HIV/AIDS is the leading cause of death among women of reproductive age, worldwide.



In 2013, almost 60% of all new HIV infections among young persons occurred among adolescent girls and young women; this translates into almost 1,000 young women newly infected with HIV every day.

THAILAND

STEPS IT UP



PRAYUT CHAN-O-CHA, PRIME MINISTER OF THAILAND

Education to cultivate acceptance of gender equality, data to monitor progress, training to promote gender-responsive budgeting

“PROMOTING GENDER EQUALITY IS NOT A MATTER THAT LIES ONLY IN THE HANDS OF WOMEN. MEN AND BOYS MUST ALSO DO THEIR PART TO FOSTER POSITIVE ATTITUDES ON GENDER ROLES.”

Thailand’s 2015 Gender Equality Act protects all individuals from gender-based discrimination. Thailand is resolved to move forward on gender equality by developing a curriculum on gender roles that cultivates positive attitudes and acceptance of gender equality in children from an early age. It will collect sex-disaggregated data, for analytical purposes and for formulating gender-sensitive policies, as well as for monitoring progress

made to achieve gender equality. In providing training to relevant national public agencies, it will promote gender-responsive budgeting. Thailand’s next national economic and social development plan will focus on people-centred, inclusive development and on reducing social inequality, providing further opportunities for women to participate even more equally in national development.

TIMOR-LESTE STEPS IT UP



RUI MARIA DE ARAÚJO, PRIME MINISTER OF TIMOR-LESTE

Ending gender discrimination an ongoing priority in commitment to the SDGs and Beijing Platform for Action

“WE CONSIDER THE POSITION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN OUR COUNTRY A KEY TEST OF OUR DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS, WHICH MEANS WE MUST IMPROVE THE SITUATION OF WOMEN AND ADDRESS PERVASIVE GENDER DISCRIMINATION IF WE ARE TO MEET OUR DEVELOPMENT GOALS.”

In its Constitution, Timor-Leste provides that men and women must be treated equally in all aspects of life, and it pledges to continue prioritizing actions to end gender discrimination and stop gender-based violence. Women actively participated in Timor-Leste’s struggle for independence, and now, at 38 per cent, the country has

one of the greatest proportions of women parliamentarians in the world and the highest in the Asia-Pacific region. Timor-Leste fully supports Sustainable Development Goal 5 on achieving gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and recommits to implementing the Beijing Platform for Action.

TUNISIA STEPS IT UP



HABIB ESSID, PRIME MINISTER OF TUNISIA

With transition demonstrating the benefits of women in office, seeks to expand their participation

“OUR EXPERIENCE IN DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION RECENTLY IS WITNESS TO THE FACT THAT WOMEN SHOULD BE REPRESENTED IN ALL LEGISLATIVE BODIES. HENCE, WE ENHANCE WOMEN’S ABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN POLITICS AND IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS.”

Gender equality principles have been enhanced in Tunisian law, including its Constitution. Progress towards gender equality is evident in many indicators, including increased school enrolment, enhanced services for training and greater women’s participation in all walks of life. Tunisia is committed to protecting women and

overcoming all attempts against modern society. Its recent experience in democratic transition bears witness to the fact that women should be represented in all legislative bodies, and it commits to women’s expanded ability to participate in politics and in public affairs, including through a 50 per cent quota for candidate lists in elections.

UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA STEPS IT UP



JAKAYA MRISHO KIKWETE, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA

Intends to amend all laws with discriminatory provisions and leverage economic growth to advance women's equality

"TANZANIA COMMITS ITSELF TO ENSURE THAT ECONOMIC GROWTH IS LEVERAGED TO SUPPORT WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN ECONOMIC EQUALITY (...) WHICH RECOGNIZES THEIR CRITICAL IMPORTANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT."

The United Republic of Tanzania affirms it will do everything in its power to implement Sustainable Development Goal 5 on women's empowerment and other key gender equality targets and indicators in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will ensure the full integration within national law of all women's rights treaties, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. All remaining laws with discriminatory provisions will be amended, specifically those related to marriage, property

and inheritance, and a stand-alone act on ending violence against women will be developed. The United Republic of Tanzania will support financing of gender equality in line with the Addis Ababa Financing for Development Agenda, implement the principle of 50/50, collect sex-disaggregated data, and put in place effective mechanisms to monitor and propel progress on women's rights commitments. It will seek to leverage economic growth to support women's rights and advance equal economic opportunities, which are critical to sustainable development.

VIET NAM STEPS IT UP



TRƯƠNG TẤN SANG, PRESIDENT OF VIET NAM

Will devote all necessary resource to close gender gaps, extend employment and other services for women in remote areas

“GENDER EQUALITY IS NOT MERELY A GOAL BUT RATHER THE COMMON THREAD OF THE 2030 AGENDA FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.”

Viet Nam pledges to devote all resources needed to bridge the gender gap in all domains. It will intensify awareness-raising campaigns on gender equality, and work to ensure that all radio and television stations broadcast gender equality programmes. It plans to further improve women’s access, especially in underserved or remote areas, to health-care, education and employment services, committing to targets, by

2020, of 50 per cent of rural women having access to various forms of vocational training, and 95 per cent of women aged 15-40 in remote areas being literate. It will spare no efforts to gradually eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls, and has set a target for at least 50 per cent of all reported survivors of domestic violence to be provided with health care and counselling services.

ZAMBIA STEPS IT UP



EDGAR CHAGWA LUNGU, PRESIDENT OF ZAMBIA

Dedicated to fighting the scourge of gender-based violence and investing in women's economic empowerment

"I BELIEVE A LOT MORE REMAINS TO BE DONE. I THEREFORE WISH TO COMMIT MYSELF AND THE PEOPLE OF ZAMBIA TO ENSURING THAT (...) WILL TRULY BE DONE."

Twenty years since the Beijing Platform for Action and 15 years since the Millennium Declaration, much has been accomplished, but more must be done, and Zambia is dedicated to ensuring that this happens. It aims to address persistent gender [in]equalities and empower women in the pursuit of national development. It will fight the continued scourge of violence against women and girls, and invest in

women's economic empowerment, such as through the facilitation of access to and control of land and other resources, and enhanced credit for small to medium businesses. It envisions a government with full participation of men and women in decision-making processes, and aspires for sustainable development where no one is left behind on account of sex, age, social or economic and health status.

AFRICAN UNION STEPS IT UP



NKOSAZANA DLAMINI-ZUMA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE AFRICAN UNION COMMISSION

Plans to modernize agriculture where women dominate the workforce, and involve more women in business

“IN AFRICA, THIS IS THE YEAR OF WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT. WE HAVE JUST (...) ADOPTED AGENDA 2063, WHICH IS THE AFRICA WE WANT IN LINE WITH OUR PRIORITIES.”

The African Union has just adopted Agenda 2063, a vision of its priorities. These include the education of girls and the modernization of agriculture, where 70 per cent of workers are women. Another priority is involving more women in business, which makes sense as a right, and in terms of economic benefits since half the population can contribute more to

national development. Since the Beijing Platform for Action was agreed, 22 African countries have achieved a share of women in Parliament of 30 per cent or more. Progress has been made in other areas, but more needs to be done, as exemplified in very strong campaigns against child marriages and human trafficking.

EUROPEAN UNION STEPS IT UP



FRANS TIMMERMANS, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION

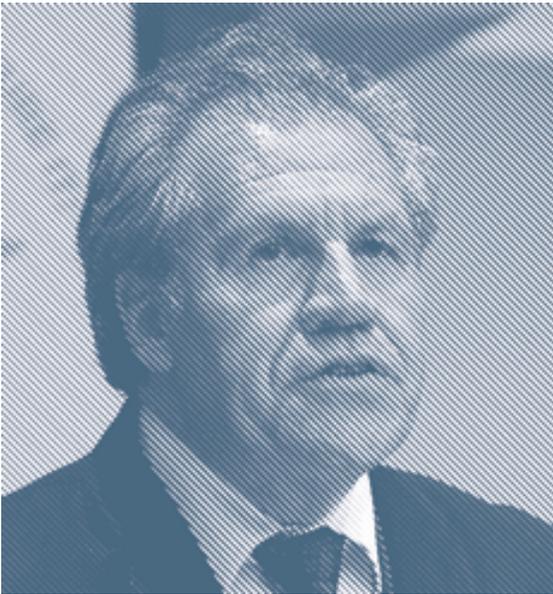
Intends to back equal care responsibilities, ramp up anti-violence measures and put more women on corporate boards

“TRUE POLITICAL LEADERSHIP CAN MAKE THE BIGGEST DIFFERENCE FOR A WORLD WHERE MEN AND WOMEN CAN LEAD THE LIVES THEY WANT, RATHER THAN LIVES EXPECTED OF THEM.”

In working with partner countries, the European Union pledges to stop all kinds of gender violence, empower women economically and socially, and support their louder voice in public life. As the world’s largest aid donor, it is committed to systematically screening development funding to ensure that assistance helps transform the lives of girls and women worldwide. Through a new initiative for working parents, with an emphasis on the role of fathers, it will promote women’s economic independence and the equal sharing of care responsibilities between women

and men. Efforts to stop violence against women will involve prevention, protection and prosecution. The European Union will put its full weight behind the Council of Europe [Istanbul] Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, and if legally possible will accede to it. To put more women in top positions influencing decisions, the European Union is in the final stages of setting a legally binding objective for 40 per cent of listed company board members to be women by 2020.

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES STEPS IT UP



LUIS ALMAGRO LEMES, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES

Commits to broadening the scope and reach of protections of women's rights

"IF WOMEN DON'T ENJOY THEIR RIGHTS TO LIFE, THEIR HUMAN RIGHTS TO LIFE, IF WOMEN DON'T HAVE RIGHT TO HEALTH AND TO ACCESS PUBLIC HEALTH, THEN WE ARE TOO FAR BEHIND."

The region has made important strides in strengthening laws for women's rights and gender equality, showcasing some of the strongest legal protection frameworks in the world. The Organization of American States is committed to broadening rights for more people the region. In terms of women's rights, there are still

limitations on their scope and reach, with the region retaining restrictive laws on sexual and reproductive rights and freedoms, a reality that has to change. Other matters that need to be addressed relate to why women comprise a larger share of the unemployed and have lower salaries.

SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION STEPS IT UP



ARJUN BAHADUR THAPA, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE SOUTH ASIAN ASSOCIATION FOR REGIONAL COOPERATION

Aims to act in line with the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

“IT IS OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE FOR US TO AIM HIGHER AND FURTHER AND ALTOGETHER TO ALTER THE STATUS QUO IN TERMS OF GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.”

The South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation maintains it is of paramount importance to aim higher and alter the status quo in terms of gender equality and women’s empowerment. It has established a gender policy advocacy group as a regional mechanism to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment, including

through engagement of civil society representatives as key partners. The Association has a crucial role to play in increasing resources to increase gender equality, and is committed to acting in line with the Beijing Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

REFLECT

OTHER PA

CTIONS BY

PARTNERS

CIVIL SOCIETY



TARCILA RIVERA ZEA, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CIVIL SOCIETY
CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' CULTURES OF PERU
(CHIRAPAQ)

Calls for 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development to build on Beijing Platform for Action

“YOUR COMMITMENTS NEED TO TRANSLATE INTO ACTIONS TO MAKE OUR DREAM OF PEACE, HUMAN RIGHTS, JUSTICE AND GENDER EQUALITY COME TRUE”

“Representation of women around the world, and in particular indigenous women, is important because I think it is indigenous women who are most impacted by climate change. We need the leaders of the world to commit and invest in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to ensure that the content of the 2030 Agenda seeks to build upon and further support

the unmet goals and commitments under the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. Such political will and such drive will allow us to deliver gender equality, and stamp out remaining inequalities and injustices including violence, discrimination and exclusion from social spheres. An exclusion which still has a female face.”



BANDANA RANA, GLOBAL NETWORK OF WOMEN
PEACEBUILDERS

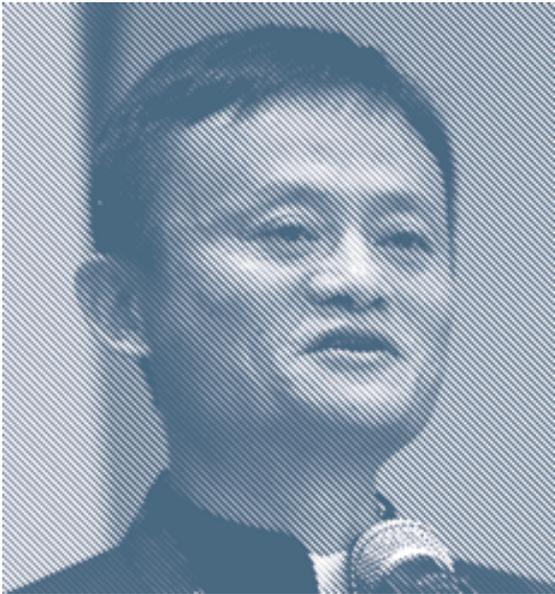
Challenges leaders to address funding gap, sustain funding to make gender equality a reality

“TODAY MORE THAN EVER, THE CONTRIBUTION OF CIVIL SOCIETY AND WOMEN’S ORGANIZATIONS WILL BE KEY TO THE IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING OF THE 2030 AGENDA”

“The links between gender-based violence and impunity, militarization, military spending, forced migration, displacement, and the prevalence of small arms must be addressed if meaningful gains are to be made. The contribution of civil society and women’s organizations at the grass-roots level will be key to the implementation and monitoring of the 2030 Agenda. Your political will must address the funding gap with increased, sustained and secure funding to make gender equality a reality. As we move ahead

to transform the world with the 2030 development agenda, let us commit to a world where every family rejoices at the birth of a girl; where women and girls no longer face any form of discrimination; where women and girls do not have to live in fear of being sexually and physically abused in homes or on the streets; where care responsibilities are shared equitably and women’s work is valued; where women are equally represented in leadership positions, and have their voice heard by decision-makers.”

PRIVATE SECTOR, FOUNDATIONS



JACK MA, EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN, ALIBABA GROUP

Builds on strong representation of women in business

“PEOPLE KEEP ASKING ME WHY WITHIN 15 YEARS ALIBABA CAN GROW SO FAST: [IT IS] BECAUSE WE HAVE A LOT OF WOMEN”

“People keep asking me why within 15 years Alibaba can grow so fast. People think it is some miracle, but I want to tell you, [it is] because we have a lot of women: 35 per cent of our founders are women, [as are] 34 per cent of the senior management [and] more than 52 per cent of

the employees. I am much more than optimistic [that] in the future that women can do much better. More than 30 companies and 10 philanthropic foundations came together to contribute USD 20 million in support of UN Women [to] close the gender gap by 2030.”



MELINDA GATES, CO-CHAIR, BILL & MELINDA GATES
FOUNDATION

Commits to partner with UN Women in assisting and augmenting its work

“THE NEXT PRIORITY IS TO MAKE SURE THAT WOMEN AND GIRLS NOT ONLY SURVIVE, BUT THRIVE. TO MAKE SURE THAT FORMAL POLITICAL EQUALITY BECOMES A REAL-LIFE, DAY-TO-DAY EQUALITY”

“We understand we’re not going to reach the Sustainable Development Goals unless you put women and girls at the very centre of every piece of this agenda. And the world is recognizing this fact. When I meet women around the world they’re powerful, they are strong. You give them their voices and a little bit of economic opportunity or a chance to make decisions and they are strong. They will not just empower themselves, they empower their families. If we can make sure they’re equipped

with the right tools in health, decision-making, and economic opportunities, it starts a virtuous cycle of change for them. I represent a foundation [which aims to] be catalysts to work with you. The last 20 years have seen stunning progress but we have so much more to do. When we all sit in this room 15 years from now, I hope we can say we have not just talked about women, we took action on behalf of women. Because if you invest in a woman you invest in everyone else.”



PHUMZILE
MLAMBO-N

UNITED NATIONS UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL AND UN WOMEN EXECUTIVE

CLOSING

REMARKS

I thank all the Presidents, the Prime Ministers, the Heads of State, the Deputy Prime Ministers, the heads of regional organizations, the development banks, and the representatives of civil society and the private sector who joined us today.

I thank His Excellency the President of China for his role as co-host, for his commitment to UN Women, and for more support to the women of China and for women in developing countries. I thank President Michele Bachelet both for co-chairing, and for giving birth to UN Women as the first Executive Director. It is the first time we had our leaders with us in this fashion and I hope you agree that it should not be the last time.

Today is really the start of the journey towards 25 September 2030. Today we made sure that gender issues are part of the business

of our leaders, of the Heads of State and Government, and are fully mainstreamed. With our leaders on the podium all talking about women and girls, we looked into the future we want: where women are not treated as a small interest group but as the majority issue that is mainstreamed in every facet of life and at the highest tables.

Today, leaders brought the Beijing Platform for Action to life and recommitted to it. Leaders took charge and showed their strong responsibility for gender equality and women's empowerment. Leaders also committed to meet the objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals and to "step it up for gender equality," so that we have substantive equality by 2030.

The work starts now. We cannot waste any time before we start implementation.

NGCUKA

DIRECTOR

On the 24th of September, we met the civil society thought leaders who called on all of us to “Step It Up.” They called on us to create a new economic model that works for Agenda 2030 because the current model will not achieve what we want by 2030. They called for a new economic model that works for women. They called on us to ask leaders to do everything in their power to end wars. Ms. Gertrude Mongella passionately called on our leaders to do all that needs to be done to give women peace and prosperity. Our

only gave us support of the sort that the Government of China has announced, but committed to the agenda.

Among all our leaders, we have heard a growing consensus across critical areas for gender equality and women’s empowerment. We can clearly see common threads of concern among all those who spoke today, whether from developed countries, middle-income countries or least developed countries.

“I hope that this starts the end of gender inequ

civil society leaders on the 24th also called for attention to the shrinking space for non-governmental organizations, and they called for time-bound law reforms to end all forms of discrimination.

On the 26th of September, we invited leaders from the private sector and philanthropists to give their support to Goal 5, to the whole Agenda 2030 and to UN Women specifically. Their response, as you have heard from two of our speakers, Melinda Gates and Jack Ma, our co-chairs of that event, was enthusiastic. We had a full house of leaders who not

One common theme that we heard today was the need to work harder to end violence against women. Almost every country, from the richest to the poorest, mentioned the issue of violence against women and girls, from Bangladesh to Timor-Leste, from the European Union to Georgia. Many countries highlighted ending child and early marriages, and I was moved to hear how many countries committed themselves to ending female genital mutilation. We heard many countries talking about the importance of prosecution, to ensure the rule of law, and that women are protected, as Bandana Rana from the

Global Network of Women Peace Builders also highlighted.

Many countries committed to issues of women, peace and security, importantly dedicating efforts to support this all across the world because “we are not yet there,” as Chancellor Angela Merkel said. She, and many other countries, called on the world to end impunity. We heard many of you make strong commitments to strengthen and prioritize your national Action Plans on the implementation

Unpaid care work emerged as a key theme, from commitments to quality child care to commitments to paternity leave in other countries. Issues of poverty, especially the poverty of women, were raised. Unequal pay came up time and again, with commitment to deal with this through legislation and advocacy.

We therefore feel that we have quite a handful of issues that will allow us to kick start Agenda 2030, tomorrow. From today onwards, for this Agenda to succeed, there can be no

the beginning of equality.”

of UN Security Council Resolution 1325. Sweden committed to develop and train a network of women mediators, which within two years will be ready to assist peace efforts wherever they occur. That was music to our ears as this will provide a pool of resources.

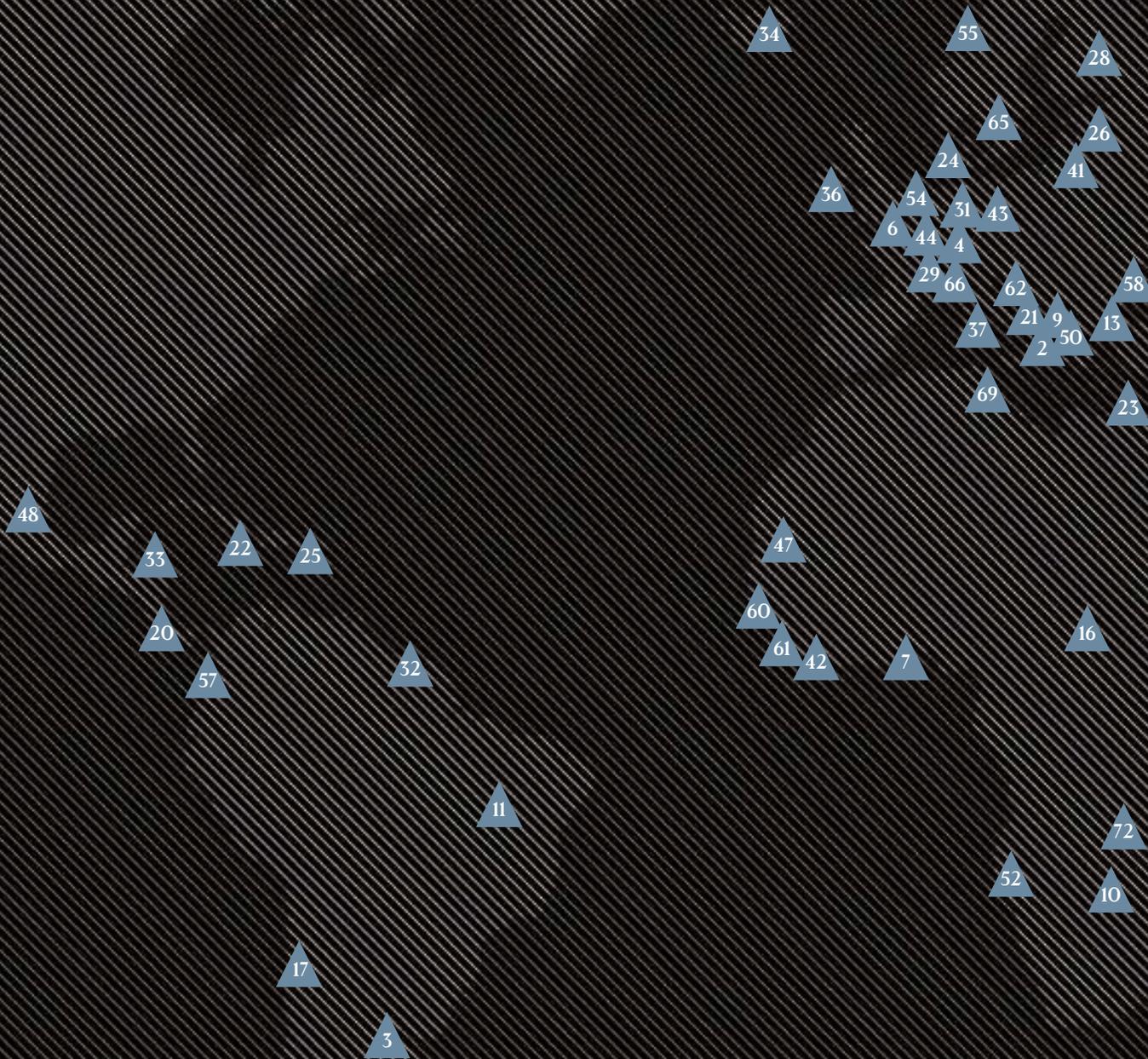
Across the board you have acknowledged the importance of economic empowerment, both in gender-sensitive legislation that is needed, and in support for women entrepreneurs. There was a strong call for gender-responsive budgeting and shared experience of countries that are already attempting to implement this.

“business as usual.” We have to Step It Up. We have to make sure that we achieve some of these targets and goals before 2030. We therefore are also setting for ourselves the date of 2020 as a time for us to evaluate thoroughly that we are going in the right direction. We therefore urge you not just to think about 2030 but about 2016, 2017, 2018, because every year we will report on the progress that we are making. I would like to thank everyone who has made this day possible, from the staff here, to the guest speakers, to the Heads of State and Government. I hope that this starts the beginning of the end of gender inequality.

THE WORLD COMMITTS

1. Afghanistan
2. Albania
3. Argentina
4. Austria
5. Bangladesh
6. Belgium
7. Benin
8. Bhutan
9. Bosnia
10. Botswana
11. Brazil
12. Brunei Darussalam
13. Bulgaria
14. Burundi
15. Cambodia
16. Central African Republic
17. Chile
18. China
19. Comoros
20. Costa Rica
21. Croatia
22. Cuba
23. Cyprus
24. Denmark
25. Dominican Republic
26. Estonia
27. Fiji
28. Finland
29. France
30. Georgia
31. Germany
32. Guyana
33. Honduras
34. Iceland
35. Indonesia
36. Ireland
37. Italy
38. Japan
39. Kenya
40. Lao People's
Democratic Republic
41. Latvia

42. Liberia
 43. Liechtenstein
 44. Luxembourg
 45. Malawi
 46. Malaysia
 47. Mauritania
 48. Mexico
 49. Micronesia
(Federated States of)
 50. Montenegro
 51. Mozambique
 52. Namibia
 53. Nepal
 54. Netherlands
 55. Norway
 56. Pakistan
 57. Panama
 58. Romania
 59. Samoa
 60. Senegal
 61. Sierra Leone
 62. Slovenia
 63. South Sudan
 64. Sri Lanka
 65. Sweden
 66. Switzerland
 67. Thailand
 68. Timor-Leste
 69. Tunisia
 70. United Republic of
Tanzania
 71. Viet Nam
 72. Zambia
- African Union
 - European Union
 - Organization of
American States
 - South Asian Association for
Regional Cooperation





For the full text of the speeches made at the Global Leaders' Meeting, please visit:

unwomen.org/stepitup

UN WOMEN

UN Women is the UN organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women. A global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide.

UN Women supports UN Member States as they set global standards for achieving gender equality, and works with governments and civil society to design laws, policies, programmes and services needed to implement these standards. It stands behind women's equal participation in all aspects of life, focusing on five priority areas: increasing women's leadership and participation; ending violence against women; engaging women in all aspects of peace and security processes; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and making gender equality central to national development planning and budgeting. UN Women also coordinates and promotes the UN system's work in advancing gender equality.



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