

PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF ALGERIA

**MEETING ON GENDER EQUALITY
ADDRESS OF MRS MOUNIA MESLEM SI AMER
MINISTER OF NATIONAL SOLIDARITY, THE FAMILY AND THE
STATUS OF WOMEN**

NEW YORK

27 SEPTEMBER 2015

Submitted in the context of the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, but not delivered in person.

**Your Excellence Mr Xi Jinping, Present of the People’s Republic of China,
Mr Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Mrs Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women,
Mrs Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference
on Women,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Honourable audience,**

Please allow me to express Algeria’s pleasure at the decision taken to organise a summit at the United Nations for the purpose of examining the progress achieved since the fourth world conference on women held in Beijing in September 1995 under the heading “Equality, Development and Peace”.

This meeting provides us with the opportunity to share our experiences on the implementation of the action plan which our countries adopted at that time, allows us to assess the progress made and to pinpoint the difficulties which continue to hinder the promotion of women and their empowerment.

The decisions and resolutions adopted 20 years ago marked a very important stage and served as a catalyst to the evolution of the status of women in many countries.

However, I will focus my address on the measures taken by Algeria to put into practice the commitments our country made in various areas, including on the subject of young girls, which cannot be separated from that of the family, and on the action taken by Algeria on a regional and global level to support the upholding of peace and international security.

In terms of *Equality*, a colossal investment has been made, based on the conviction that education, in particular education of young girls is linked to the political will to change mentalities as to the essentially complimentary nature of the roles of each of the genders within society.

In this regard, we cannot conceal the considerable efforts which have been made, and the positive results on the process of social and professional integration of women which can be witnessed today. Algeria can be proud of the real growth in employment of female managers in all sectors linked to this policy of equality which we committed to, and which has been developed in terms of training and access to knowledge.

These efforts are equally centred on the areas of legislation and regulations which have regularly seen reforms based on women’s expectations and claims by civil society bodies, opening the way for women’s participation in decision-making.

The latter has notably translated into strong progression in the elected assemblies, above all in the People's National Assembly in which 31.6% of the seats have been held by women since 2012, that is, nearly four times more than in the previous parliamentary term. Henceforth, Algerian women are contributing in a very real manner to the updating of the country's legislation.

Equality has also been strengthened by the sharing of parental responsibility giving, by way of the amendment of the Family Code and the Code of Nationality, Algerian women the possibility of exercising their powers as regards their children who are minors, notably in divorce cases or in marriages with foreigners.

The principle was expanded to include divorced women by the setting-up of a maintenance payment designed to protect them from all forms of violence and safeguard the best interests of the child by mitigating the incapacity or refusal by ex-husbands to honour their duties.

Equality was also established through the amendment of the Criminal Code to include a precise definition of violence carried out against women in order to end it in all its forms, including in public places and financial abuse.

In terms of *Development* it must be stated that further progress has been made for the empowerment of women in Algeria through the diversification of employment, in other words, the creation of revenue-generating activities and their simplification.

The recent gains highlight the adoption of a Working Woman's Charter which aims to reconcile family and professional obligations and the participation of women in company management bodies as well as their representation in trade unions.

The national strategy on the matter has a double objective: To ensure the full participation of women in the creation of national wealth and to guarantee their own economic independence to protect them from the effects of insecurity.

As regards, *Peace*, Algeria has striven constantly since its independence, to maintain its stability. As a reminder, during the Beijing conference in 1995, my country was living through a tragic period, due to violent extremism and terrorism.

The Algerian delegation insisted, at that time, on the need to combat these two scourges.

Further to that, on the initiative of the President of the Republic, Abdelaziz Bouteflika and his inclusive and participative policy, which received the support of the Algerian people thanks to the mobilization of women against terrorism, the

National Peace and Reconciliation Charter was adopted on 29 September 2005, as a result of a referendum.

In this area, the efforts of the Government and the people are both ongoing and resolute. They are based on the policy of de-radicalization which consists essentially of promoting the civilising values of peace and tolerance.

The creation of advisory bodies on religion charged with explaining to women the rights conferred upon them by religion as well as by positive law, is based on the objective of promoting peace and ensuring its durability, while also ensuring family cohesion and national stability.

On this, the tenth anniversary of the National Peace and Reconciliation Charter, Algerian women can rejoice in the reestablishment of security, which allows them to exercise their fundamental rights and participate from an equal standing in the development of their country, which is classed as one of the best international performers.

Just like in Beijing 20 years ago, my country joins in the commitment of the international community to continue to work for the promotion of women's rights and to implement strategies which aim to improve their status.

Thank you for your attention.