

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

Commitment Statement on behalf of Azerbaijan Government

Global Leaders 'Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Commitment to Action,

27 September 2015, New York, United Nations

The government of Azerbaijan thanks UN, UN Women and the People's Republic of China for the opportunity to recommit to the Platform for Action, which has had a great impact on the raising of women issues in the world.

Celebrating this anniversary of the Beijing Declaration we must recall the names of those women who played an important role in the struggle for advancing women's rights. I would like to mention that all women from Azerbaijan who actively participated in Beijing conference are holding leading position in the country and their commitment to gender equality is inspiring.

We welcome the opportunity to engage with UN Women and all international partners in discussing progress for girls and women since Beijing and more importantly to address persisting barriers to gender equality.

Azerbaijan has showed strong support and commitment to the Beijing Platform of Action and attaches high importance to its implementation. The leadership of the state has taken the main principles of the Platform for the advancement of women and ensuring gender equality in all spheres.

In recent years a great number of significant measures have been introduced to support and promote gender equality and women rights. Azerbaijan government actively undertakes measures to distribute opportunities equitably and to support the equal and balanced participation of women and men in public and social life.

Specific budgetary allocations have been made to ensure a steady increase in the gender mainstreaming process and all state programs and services committed to ensure gender equality at all levels and all spheres.

Women's greater economic independence and participation is crucial to gender equality and global development. Azerbaijan has prioritized this direction. As a result the rate of unemployment among women has considerably decreased; more women are getting senior decision-making roles and open their businesses in Azerbaijan. We are working to ensure more girls pursue careers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

We're introducing new legislation to help women into work – including flexible working and accessible childcare.

We actively support the development and implementation of specific programmes, projects and activities aimed at improving the enjoyment by women and girl-children of their fundamental human rights. Violence against girls and women in all its forms must be eradicated..As far as possible this work is undertaken in consultation and collaboration with other UN agencies and programmes. In Azerbaijan, we have introduced domestic violence protection orders and measures. We criminalized forced and early marriages.

As a country still suffering from continuation of the conflict , occupied territories and existence of 1 million refugees and IDPs we consider that It is necessary to recognize the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction. A great work is being carried out today for re-integration of refugee women into the society, promotion of their participation in political, economic and public life in Azerbaijan. We want to end Sexual Violence in Conflict. It is important to address the causes of, and impunity for, sexual violence in conflict as a central element of all discussions on the peace and security agenda.

Society is changing rapidly, and women face new roles and increasing pressures. Gender equality is very important for the development and we all should commit ourselves to do everything we can to ensure a safe future for women and children. We look forward to continuing to work together to fulfill the promises made in 1995 to girls and women everywhere. Today we have a unique and great opportunity to enhance gender equality and girls' and women's empowerment once again. We must ensure that the post-2015 development framework demonstrates a strong commitment to achieve gender equality and the empowerment girls and women. We need to accelerate implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The statement of commitment acknowledges the difficult task before us. It is an expression of our sincere determination to work together to meet the challenges of the future, to secure that women and young girls have access to high- quality services which promote their emotional, physical, social and educational development.

We call for Implementing and reinforcing international initiatives and conventions on women rights.

Commit ourselves to do everything we can to ensure a safe future for women.