



REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA



**CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY!**

**STATEMENT**

BY H.E. MR. ROSEN PLEVNELIEV,

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

AT THE GLOBAL LEADERS' MEETING  
ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT:  
A COMMITMENT TO ACTION

NEW YORK, 27 SEPTEMBER 2015

**Mr. Co-Chair,**

Twenty years after Beijing, gender equality remains a major challenge in all parts of the world. 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 has made substantial and stable progress with regard to women's empowerment. Gender equality is a key priority on my country's human rights agenda and is viewed as an absolute necessity for the full realization of human rights.

Bulgarian legislation guarantees the equality of rights for women and men and their equal participation in all spheres of life. Gender-based discrimination is prohibited by law. At the executive level, we have adopted a National Strategy for Gender Equality Promotion for the 2009 – 2015 period that addresses some of the barriers facing effective gender equality.

Our consistent efforts aimed at promoting the human rights of women and girls have led to an increased participation of Bulgarian women in political and social life and their leadership in high-profile careers. Two-thirds of the magistrates in national courts are women, as well as 65% of the civil servants, 43% of the board members of state-owned enterprises, more than 30% of the municipal counselors, etc. The Speaker of the Bulgarian Parliament, two Deputy Prime Ministers, the Mayor of the Capital City and the Bulgarian Commissioner in the European Commission are all women.

**Mr. Co-Chair,**

Bulgaria welcomes the UN-Women's initiative "Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it up for Gender Equality" and commends China for its leadership on this important issue. My country will make every effort to contribute to achieving full gender equality in the next fifteen years.

Bulgaria commits to adopt and implement a new, specialized Law on Gender Equality that has already been drafted. It will ensure that the gender perspective is mainstreamed into all policies as a precondition for the full realization of the human rights of women and girls.

The Bulgarian government has committed itself to further develop and update the National Strategy for Gender Equality.

We are determined to abolish the gender pay gap.

Today, Bulgaria reaffirms its commitment to enact further policies to combat all forms of violence against women.

**Mr. Co-Chair,**

In the coming year, the United Nations will elect the next Secretary-General. We believe that the process of selection should be transparent and inclusive ensuring equal and fair distribution based on gender and geographical balance, while meeting the highest possible requirements.

It is up to us to uphold the credibility of the UN as a universal organization and face the many challenges of tomorrow together by also including women in all processes of decision-making.

**Thank you, Mr. Co-Chair!**