

**ADDRESS BY H.E
THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS
MR. NICOS ANASTASIADES
ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT
Sunday, 27 September 2015**

**Mr. President,
Distinguished Colleagues,**

It is an honour for me to participate in this august forum. I wish to thank His Excellency, the President of the People's Republic of China and the Secretary- General of the UN for this timely initiative.

Dear colleagues,

As we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, it's time to assess our progress.

Cyprus, both in the EU framework and nationally, has come a long way in the promotion of gender equality, the empowerment and the realization of the human rights for women and girls, through a number of concrete measures and policies.

However, a lot remains to be done and we reaffirm our commitment to this end. My Government adopted the new National Action Plan on Equality between Women and Men for 2014-2017, which is the flagship of our national policies on gender equality. We also reaffirm our commitment to the relevant EU Action Plans and Directives and all relevant international instruments.

Combating all forms of violence against women, promoting their economic empowerment and eliminating deeply rooted stereotypes on gender roles, are among our priorities.

Another area of concern of my Government is combatting trafficking in human beings, with the core of our policies being the protection of the victims, mostly women and children.

I would also like to announce that we are ready to ratify the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

Dear colleagues,

The role of women in the promotion of reconciliation and peace is invaluable. In this context, I am pleased to convey that in the margins of the bicommunal negotiations to reaching a settlement on the Cyprus problem, a Technical Committee on Gender Equality has already been established.

Concluding, I wish to express the strong willingness of my country to contribute to the full implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Thank you, Mr. Chair