

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

27 September 2015

Statement by H.E. Ms. Erna Solberg
Prime Minister of Norway

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

This year we have a historic opportunity to renew our commitments to gender equality. To begin with, we are celebrating the gains and achievements that have been made in the 20 years since Beijing. This year is also the 15th anniversary of Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is yet another important milestone.

In two weeks, my Government will present a white paper to the Norwegian parliament on gender equality. This will lay the foundation for long-term, targeted efforts for equality between women and men. The focus is on education, work and the business world as well as health, violence and abuse.

A strong legal framework is essential for combating discrimination, including gender discrimination. In 2016, my Government will present a comprehensive equality and anti-discrimination bill to Norway's parliament.

(Check against delivery)

Yesterday, the UN member states formally agreed on a sustainable development goal, which sets 2030 as the expiration date for gender inequality. Some say that this is ambitious. I say: let us speed it up. This is a question of human rights. We need to accelerate the implementation of the platform we adopted 20 years ago.

I call on boys and men to engage actively in the promotion of women's rights and gender equality.

Education, especially of girls and women, is probably the single most important investment we can make to empower them, whether in Norway, in China or in South Africa. We simply cannot afford not to make this investment. If you are to understand and enjoy all your rights, education is crucial. Knowledge is needed to participate in the political, economic and social life of your country. Education will help girls – and boys – make the right choices for their future.

Let us therefore commit ourselves to redoubling our efforts for women's rights and gender equality. The Executive Director of UN Women has described Sustainable Development Goal 5 as 'a platform for game-changing initiatives'. Let us take these words to heart and act on them.

Thank you,