

**GLOBAL LEADERS' MEETING ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT:
A Commitment to Action**

27 September 2015, New York

Speech by the President of the Republic of Paraguay, Horacio Cartes

The history of the Republic of Paraguay illustrates women's greatness in times of peace and times of conflict. It shows how women helped to build society, and defend our homeland, culture and faith. The Paraguayan State has ratified all of the international standard-setting instruments for human rights and those for women's equality. It has taken on every commitment, successfully putting in place a consolidated institutional system at the highest level and promoting gender-equality policies at all levels across the country.

Achievements in recent years show women's increased access to employment and to public funds, equality in school enrolments, fair housing and equality in social-assistance programmes through conditioned money transfers and a sharp drop in maternal mortality. To fight the scourges of gender-based violence and human trafficking, our priority has been the way in which we approach and organize care, punishment and prevention services. To achieve equality in all areas, as set out in our Constitution, we must still adopt a series of measures that allow women to exercise their rights on an equal basis with men. Internationally, together with the family of nations and with its developments and challenges, Paraguay has helped to review global developments in gender equality and has contributed its vision in defining the aims, targets and indicators for the New Universal Agenda.

My government is implementing the Paraguay National Development Plan 2030, which defines three specific strategic pillars: poverty reduction and social development, inclusive economic growth and the integration of Paraguay in the world. Gender equality is a multi-area aim and, from a governing mechanism, it in turn drives three main lines of action: women's economic empowerment, care and prevention of gender-based violence and human trafficking and women's participation in public life.

The Post-2015 Agenda for people, the planet and prosperity marks the opportunity for States to not only reaffirm permanent development commitments; it is also the chance to recognize the need to ensure women and girls' full rights and to correct the course of our actions, with the Global Agenda introducing comprehensive reforms and investing dedicated resources so that the agreed objectives achieve actual results.

Seventeen sustainable development goals with 169 integrated and indivisible targets show the new universal agenda's scale of action. The agenda reaffirms the statements and

conferences of the United Nations, including the Beijing Platform for Action, and it approves the mainstreaming of gender equality in each of its objectives.

Goal 5 aims to "**Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls**" through specific targets and precise strategies to implement national policies, international actions, economic empowerment, strategic alliances, and data generation and monitoring.

As President of the Republic of Paraguay, I make a firm commitment to strengthening the actions needed to speed up the advancement of real and effective equality between men and women in my country in accordance with the national regulatory framework. Our priorities are:

1. Economic empowerment:

We have taken significant steps to include rural women with scant resources in public programmes by getting them into productive projects, providing them with access to credit and training, and enacting the Public Policy Law for Rural Women. We promote indigenous women's participation when formulating public policies for development and the prevention of violence.

I made a commitment to boost the implementation of this Law with as many resources as possible and to increase the number of rural women engaged in agricultural work who are beneficiaries of agrarian extension programmes, with guaranteed greater access to technical assistance, credit and land as key assets.

2. Preventing and punishing gender-based violence:

We are doubling the political support to approve the Draft Law for Comprehensive Protection for Women against any kind of Violence, now being discussed in the National Congress. Furthermore, we are committed to improving the coordinated actions among the different institutions to prevent any danger, help women facing violence and trafficking, and punish the perpetrators.

3. Women's public and political participation:

Through the governing mechanism for public policies for gender equality, my government is promoting legislative reform aimed at democratic parity. We are also promoting political agreements for women's active participation and increasing women's presence in decision-making positions and in positions of power.

I am sure that with the priorities we have highlighted, combined with the comprehensive gender perspective in all of the State's actions, and the focus this new agenda gives us on the fundamental needs for analysis and monitoring tools that help us to measure our progress in fulfilling everyone's rights, we will meet our targets in Paraguay.

We have an unwavering commitment to this universal agenda and the role of Republic of Paraguay as a state governed by the rule of law that defends all human beings and supports the sustainable development of men, women, boys and girls throughout the world.

Thank you very much