

**Global Leaders Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment – A Commitment to Action (UN Women), 27 September 2015**

**Prime Minister of Sweden, Stefan Löfven**

**(Check against delivery.)**

Co-chair, Excellences, friends,

I am proud to lead the world's first Feminist Government, guided by the principle of international solidarity. Today, we all commit to the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the achievement of gender equality no later than 2030, as set out in our new Agenda.

Gender equality can only be achieved if all social, economic and legal barriers to women's and girls' empowerment are removed. Gender equality is a fundamental matter of human rights – but it is also smart economics. By offering one half of our populations the same opportunities as the other half, we can double the talent pool and unlock enormous potential for prosperity.

And we know that actions do speak louder than words. Therefore, my Government is stepping up its actions to achieve gender equality this year: We will ensure that our national policies and national budget allocations contribute to gender equality. And we will ensure that our development and humanitarian aid is gender-sensitive across all areas of cooperation and support.

Fellow feminists,

The Beijing Platform for Action and the new 2030 Agenda are powerful action plans for equality, development and peace.

In this spirit, Sweden is taking action to strengthen women's contribution to peace and security: We will develop a network of women mediators, which within two years will be ready to assist peace efforts wherever they occur. The aim of this initiative is, however, not only to develop our own capabilities, but more importantly also to cooperate with female mediation networks from the global south.

We know that women's participation at all levels is vital to the success and sustainability of peace processes and peacebuilding efforts. Proactive leadership is needed to promote and include women.

In a world where women are dramatically underrepresented in peace negotiations and four out of ten peace agreements collapse within ten years, we need to act differently. For this generation, and for generations to come.

Thank you.