

**Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality  
and Women's Empowerment**

Sunday 27 September 2015, United Nations, New York  
Swiss Declaration

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*Mr Secretary-General*

*Madam Under-Secretary General*

*Excellencies*

*Ladies and Gentlemen*

It is a great pleasure to celebrate with you the  
**twentieth anniversary of the historic Beijing  
Declaration** and its Platform for Action

Twenty years ago, the Beijing instruments contained  
the founding ideas for a society respectful of gender  
equality and the transformative elements to permit  
sustainable development for the benefit of all.

Nevertheless, twenty years later, the record is not satisfactory: today, women are still the victims of multiple forms of discrimination and violence.

- **35% of women worldwide are victims** of physical or sexual violence.
- This type of violence and the **degrading treatment of women** and girls continue to be used as **weapons of war**.
- Moreover, **access to basic public services**, such as medical care and clean, safe health infrastructure is not always guaranteed. This is unacceptable.

The fight against all forms of violence and the protection of their sexual and reproductive health must, therefore, remain a priority.

True to its commitment to the protection of those who defend **women's rights**, Switzerland will also pursue the promotion of their freedom of action and of expression, without fear of reprisal.

Switzerland is convinced that the realization of gender equality and the empowerment of women are indispensable conditions for abolishing poverty and contributing to sustainable, inclusive economic growth.

The moment has come to include women and girls as the actors and **catalysts of change**.

As a Government, we also have the political duty to link implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action with the 2030 Agenda, in order to progress their goals, which are complementary, at national level.

The translation of these efforts into domestic policy also remains a priority. Our **National Action Plan** for equality between women and men revealed last year that there remains progress to be made in Switzerland.

It is, therefore, with vigour that we deploy efforts, in particular, to combat **wage discrimination**, to achieve a better work-family balance and to fight against **domestic violence**.

Desirous to further strengthen its commitment to equality, Switzerland has the firm intention of continuing to support the activity of **UN Women and has increased its contribution to USD 49.5** for the 2015 to 2017 period. It is also keen to see all other United Nations entities whose mandates it supports include a gender perspective in their respective activities.

Finally, Switzerland considers it crucial that international commitments be accompanied by **robust monitoring procedures**. The Commission on the Status of Women, on account of its responsibility for monitoring implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, must play a central role in this.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Gender equality, the realization of women's human rights and the empowerment of women are goals to be achieved by 2030.

If the task seems arduous, it will be by joining our efforts transregionally and by associating the effective participation of civil society and the United Nations Organization that we will overcome these challenges together, guided by the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the new impetus given by the **2030 Agenda**.

Thank you.