

**MULTI-STAKEHOLDER FORUM
IMPLEMENTING THE 2030 AGENDA TO ACCELERATE REALIZATION OF GENDER
EQUALITY AND THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN AND GIRLS**

21 JANUARY 2016

**Talking Points - PANEL 2 on Financing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in
the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

Ambassador Vladimir Drobnjak,

Distinguished Panelists and Colleagues,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good-morning!

- It is a pleasure to have the opportunity to join this panel discussion!
- The closing of the resource gap for realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is key to addressing global poverty: without educated, skilled, capable and productive women we will not achieve the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.
- A lesson learned from the process of achieving the Millennium Development Goals is that sustainable development is not simply about increasing the size of national economies but about shaping enduring systems that respect the rights of individuals and give them the tools they need to help lift themselves out of poverty.
- In this regard, we need an inclusive approach to sustainable development, one that combats discrimination, and focus on the underlying barriers of educating girls and young women and making opportunities available to them.
- In Qatar, we understood very clearly that our development was contingent on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. In this, one of the key goals of our National Development Strategy – the Qatar National Vision 2030 - is to enhance women's capacities and empower them to participate fully in the social, political and economic spheres, especially in decision-making roles.
- This is to be achieved through specific plans of action and dedicated financial resources to promote women's empowerment through education; skill

capacities; assisting them to work in the private sector and to participate in the business environment; removing obstacles to women's participation in the labour force; and promoting women as leaders.

- We have also implemented awareness-raising measures to effectively promote gender equality and fight discriminatory stereotypes concerning the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society.
- Consequently, we have trained – and continue to train - law enforcement personnel, lawyers, and journalists on the provisions of CEDAW.
- I would like to underscore that Qatar has given tremendous priority to education as a means to both develop our country and empower women to assume a significant role in all spheres of life. – to such an extent that Qatari female enrolment at university level has consistently exceeded that of males – with a ratio of about 2 to 1.
- Our guiding principle that ‘a nation's greatest resource is the potential of its people’ accurately depicts Qatar's story!
- The establishment of Education City, which is home to eight top-tier international branch campuses, allowed Qatari women to enjoy the same access to high quality education as their male peers
- However, much remains to be done, and as many other countries, we still face the challenge of how to transform women's educational gains into better economic and political empowerment. Tapping women's potential as vital human capital will further support the country's economic and social development.
- We have applied our beliefs to Qatar's international cooperation framework. For example, poverty reduction through improved education for women and girls is one of the main areas of focus of Qatar's international cooperation.
- I would like to give the example of Silatech, a Qatar enterprise, to startup and support the growth of sustainable, job creating youth enterprises across the Arab World. Through, partnerships, innovation, and creativity, Silatech is currently the largest provider of youth-focused microenterprise services in the Middle East and North Africa.

- Silatech has also invested in programs dealing with some of the stereotypes women face in the workplace, work-life balance, role models and mentoring, and finding funding for female-led enterprises. A number of initiatives have also focused on increasing women's access to employment in the Arab region.
- Through Reach Out to Asia (ROTA) – a Qatar foundation NGO focusing on expanding educational opportunities across ASIA - projects dedicated to women and girls focused on literacy, primary education, and community development have been implemented in Afghanistan, Gaza, Iraq, and Lebanon, among others. Some of these projects focus on improving access of female students to intermediate education and reducing the number of dropouts. Through creative activities and access to information technologies and training in essential skills, projects aim to help girls realize their true potential and give them hope for a better future.
- Qatar Foundation's Education Above All initiative, works with global, regional and local partners to provide educational opportunities, especially to children living in low-income settings or facing complex humanitarian crises. Underlying its work is a deep belief that education is key to progress and prosperity. It unlocks personal potential and encourages peace, collaboration and sustainable development. EEA has paid particular attention to girls and to provide women with the tools to learn.
- To conclude my remarks, I would like to highlight that underlying Qatar's development assistance are strong partnerships. Civil society, foundations and the private sector play a huge role in mobilizing resources and serve as implementing agencies. Furthermore, partnerships are essential for leveraging resources and expertise, and uncovering solutions faster, innovatively and more effectively.
- I hope that I have offered some ideas and good practices that could help close the resource gap and effectively invest in gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls.

Thank you very much!