

**Draft opening remarks Ambassador Ib Petersen**  
**UN-Women Executive Board Second Regular Session**

- This is the third and last Executive Board meeting that I will be chairing as president of the board of UN Women. As such I would at the outset like to thank members of the board and the bureau for their cooperation, advice and support.
- I would also like to thank the Secretariat of the Board, Jean-Luc and his colleagues, they have been a crucial support for the good conduct of meetings and preparations.
- Finally I would like to thank the management of UN Women, especially the ED, Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and her two deputies Ms. Puri and Mr. Glemarec for good cooperation. I also hasten to say that I look forward to continued close cooperation, including at bureau meeting, through the remaining months of this Presidency.
- This has been a crucial year for UN Women. A year where the organisation has been positioned at the heart of development for the next 15 years.
- This year has seen the 20th anniversary review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the agreement on the 2030 Agenda soon to be adopted, the review of resolution 1325, the 3rd Financing for Development Conference and the upcoming COP21. These are all processes that will have fundamental and transformative consequences for women's rights, empowerment, participation and equality.

- I think UN Women, just 5 years old, is to be commended for its hard and significant work in all of these processes, contributing to ensuring that women's rights and gender equality is finally recognized as being crucial for sustainable development.
- Many of these achievements are based on hard work over many years from many dedicated women and men who have continued to push for and advocate for women's rights and the crucial role of women in sustainable development.
- On the 27th of September their efforts will be recognized at the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment that will be co-organised by the Republic of China that hosted the Beijing Conference 20 years ago and UN Women. Heads of state and government of Mexico, Kenya and Denmark that hosted previous World Conferences on Women will also participate and I understand that a significant number of heads of state and government will speak at the meeting. It is truly going to be an occasion to commit and recommit to gender equality.
- While this event is going to be significant and an occasion for UN Women to celebrate achievements, it is also going to be an occasion to recognize the very hard work that lies ahead, when the UN and member states have to start delivering on the agreement that Heads of State and Government will adopt on behalf of the people they serve at the opening of the SDG summit on the 25th of September – just 10 days from now.
- For UN Women this will be a time to show that the organization is fit for purpose and represents a new way of working for the UN. I can say on

Denmark's behalf, and I believe also on behalf of many other member states, that we have very high expectations when it comes to UN Women and implementation of the SDGs.

- We expect UN Women to be a role model in applying its mandate across its operations, building on the normative framework and in contributing to delivering as one.
- On the other hand this will also be yet another occasion for UN Women to explore and challenge member states' commitment to finance UN Women.
- Therefore our discussion on financing UN Women that we will continue at this session comes at a very crucial moment.
- The question that our dialogue is to explore is whether the reality match the expectations? UN-Women has been and continues to be funded at levels that do not allow the Entity to implement its mandate fully. It has not yet reached its critical mass of resources. UN-Women must be funded for purpose to support the achievement of gender equality by 2030 and to fulfill the expectations we all have for UN-Women and for the people it serves.
- It is important in my view, that this dialogue on financing creates a clear understanding of what is possible as well as what is the "cost" of not achieving the necessary funding. As such I agree that this should be a true dialogue between Member States and the entity. I am counting on UN-Women and member states to make this process lively, relevant and fruitful, continuous, transparent and participatory. We are very much looking forward to this discussion.

- Having followed UN Women closely during the last year I am actually optimistic. I am encouraged by the ambition, dedication and motivation at UN Women.
- In particular, I welcome the strengthening of the strategic focus through the so-called flagship programs, this fit very well into the Agenda 2030 discussion on UN being fit-for-purpose. I would like to commend UN Women's leadership in general and Deputy Executive Director Glemarec in particular the the work and thinking that has been put into this already. I believe it is the right thing to do and we look forward to hearing more about the programmes in the near future.
- I also want to mention the HeForShe campaign. I believe the engagement of men and boys in promoting gender equality is crucial and a tool to move the agenda forwards after many years where this seemed to be a cause primarily promoted by and among already converted.. While there is still much to be done and achieved, the potential of the campaign both when it comes to raising awareness on gender equality and increasing awareness of the work of UN Women in general is huge.
- In strengthening this work we need to have in mind that this is also an area, where the UN needs to reflect the world of today – and hopefully as much as possible also the world of tomorrow. That goes for both the substance of the messages to be communicated as for the way and means, by which we communicate and reach out.
- Finally I will also commend UN Women for its engagement with the private sector. One of the major elements in the transitional agenda provided by the

FfD and Agenda2030 is the need for and potential of the private sector in sustainable development. For UN Women, I believe it is yet an example of an engagement that can be beneficial both financially as we can read in the report on funding but also a field where UN Women can push its agenda and reach further yet in changing mindsets and showing that gender equality is not only the right thing to do but also the smart thing to do.

- With these words let me thank again everybody here in advance for yet another fruitful board meeting.