



Closing remarks by Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN Women

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Executive Board Annual Session 2015

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Mr. President,
Members of the Bureau,
Members of the Board,
Distinguished delegates,
Colleagues and friends

I thank the President for his leadership, for steering this ship into safe water, and I thank the Vice-Presidents for their dynamic and supportive guidance through this session; we truly appreciate the engagement of all the Board members and observers.

I congratulate the newly elected vice-presidents of the Executive Board Bureau, Ms. Sejla Durbuzović, Counsellor of the Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina representing the Eastern European Group, and Ms. Alma Bibiana Perez, Minister of the Permanent Mission of Colombia representing the Latin American and Caribbean Group.

I thank the Bureau for its trail-blazing innovative practices, the added value of the informal and regional briefings, recognizing especially Ambassador Koncke and the former Bureau for 2014 as well as the Governments of Afghanistan and Viet Nam, the UN-Women Representatives and UN-Women country teams for their excellent work, and the fruitful visits.

We recognize that it is this intensified dialogue with the Board that brings about the well-focused plans and the results that we have discussed over the past days.

This was indeed a fruitful session. Three decisions were adopted: on the Progress Report on the Strategic Plan, 2014-2017; the Report on the evaluation function for 2014; and the Report on internal audit and investigation activities for 2014.

Most of all I thank the Board for its comprehensively stated solidarity and trust in UN Women. Your belief in our mandate, our capacity and our ambition are invaluable assets that we take

forward into the critical coming months – and years. This is a trajectory of continuing strong efficiency, transparency, accountability, and governance gains that we could only achieve under your guidance.

Thank you for your work that supported the clean audits and for the very positive evaluations from multiple sources on how well we are delivering on our unique, vital and ever-growing mandate, and our ‘frugal innovation’, which makes that delivery happen.

I was happy with the increased participation in the pledging event yesterday and the re-affirmation of support from more than 40 Member States.

Today is the fifth anniversary of the formation of UN Women; this was an encouraging birthday gift. Although no big increases were announced we understand that several countries are studying this possibility and we remain hopeful. We are also hopeful that you will consider making a year-end contribution to UN Women.

We are looking forward to the Structured Dialogue on Funding during the September session of the Executive Board. This dialogue shows that the challenge of funding UN Women at the suggested start-up capital of USD 500 million is being taken seriously by the Board and that we can achieve this by working closely together and aligning our joint efforts towards this common goal.

Deputy Executive Director Ms Puri said yesterday that “we must not only be fit for purpose but also financed for purpose”. You agreed and that is encouraging. Uniformly, both donors and developing countries, have called for robust financing of UN Women to close the resource gap; prioritizing core resources; and enhancing the quality of non-core funds including supporting our Trust Funds.

We thank those who made pledges for this year or the next as well as those who indicated doubling and other significant increases.

We need to see this commitment institutionalized in our Budget for 2016-2017 and we look forward to your ongoing support with this.

We welcome the request for a stronger implementation of the gender evaluation efforts throughout the entire UN-system.

We also welcome your call for a structured dialogue on financing, and for more information and analysis of what affects us in our quest.

Let me assure you of our commitment to continue to diversify and seek out new partners and new resources. In that connection, allow me to recall some highlights of the signatories of the HeForShe campaign: Iceland has the largest overall population signup with over 8,800 men, which is 1 in 20 men of the total population. The United States has more than 77,700 signatories; the United Kingdom more than 35,000; India, more than 25,000; Canada, more than 15,000; and China more than 5,000.

Allow me to share a couple of reminders: I would like to encourage the start of preparations for the UNiTE campaign's 16 Days of activism: in which we will "Orange" the world, lighting up iconic landmarks, engaging new audiences, and showcasing UN Women's programming activities on violence against women and girls.

On 27 September, as you will recall, we have asked for your support in making thorough advance preparations for the "Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Commitment to Action", which will be co-hosted by UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon and His Excellency Mr. Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China. We hope for your strong contribution through the commitments made by your countries.

At this historic moment we are all called upon to deliver and support full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, enhancing women's leadership at all levels, through the post-2015 agenda, the outcome of the Security Council 1325 review and the climate change agreement.

I invite the Board to take this positive atmosphere and ambition forward into the financing for development dialogue and continue your emphasis on closing the gender funding gaps. Many of you have been very helpful in pursuing this in the past days; and we thank you.

We would like to believe that you will take this commitment even further forward in pursuing the centrality of gender equality and women's empowerment in our global plans, for the post-2015 agenda, and for a Planet 50-50 by 2030.

This is an idea whose time has come.

Thank you.