



WOMEN AND POWER
Building a Different World
SANTIAGO de CHILE
February 27 - 28, 2015



Santiago, Chile, February 2015

WOMEN LEADERS: TIME TO STEP IT UP FOR GENDER EQUALITY

A call to action

As women leaders of our global community, we declare 2015 to be a momentous year for gender equality and women's empowerment.

This year, we celebrate the 20th anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, signed by 189 governments, and begin a new global development agenda to end poverty, transform all lives and protect the planet we share.

Today, no country has achieved gender equality across all areas of public and private life and significant inequalities persist between women and men.

The 20-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action has brought into sharp focus that progress has been slow and uneven. At the current pace of change it will take 81 years to achieve gender parity in the workplace, more than 75 years to reach equal remuneration between men and women for work of equal value, and more than 30 years to reach gender balance in decision-making.

There is an urgent need to change the current course of history.

Commitments to achieve gender balance in leadership positions have not been met. That must change immediately. We cannot wait another century to achieve parity in the decision-making bodies that shape our policies and societies, and decide on war and peace.

When women lead, new concerns are placed on the agenda. When women speak, different voices are heard. When many women enter politics, politics change and governance improves. Women have been the drivers of structural reforms to ensure more women participate in public life; that public institutions are gender-sensitive; and that they provide conditions of decent work and deliver the public goods and services that help promote balance between work and family responsibilities.

It is time for the world to listen.

As leaders we have heard from women and men from all walks of life and cultures – from the most remote to the most urbanized; from the poorest to the most prosperous; from civil society, politics, business and academia. They have said loud and clear – enough is enough, we have waited too long. Amplifying women's voices, expanding their agency, and boosting their leadership and influence is vital to the achievement of democracy, good governance, economic development, environmental sustainability, and peace. Women have a rightful place in decision-making and their leadership is making a world of difference.

Our call to action:

In this momentous year, we call on women and men to take a stand to end gender inequality.

Women must be at the heart of decision-making in all spheres – from parliaments, the judiciary and peace-making forums to global governance institutions; from local governments to households; and from multinational corporations to small businesses.

We want all decision-makers, in all spheres - from heads of state, heads of governments and parliamentarians to CEOs, trade unions and party leaders - to advocate for substantive gender equality. We want to see more women in economic leadership to ensure that women shape markets and drive economic growth. We want to see women involved in decision-making processes relating to climate change, and for women to design and implement gender-responsive climate solutions.

The 21st century cannot be a repeat of the past. It must be the century in which we pay the highest tribute to the work done by those who came before us, the suffragettes and all those who have fought, and continue to fight, for women's rights and empowerment at the national, regional and global levels, by ensuring that these are fully realized. In this century, in the face of new global challenges, women and men must share responsibility for determining their futures, and in building peaceful, climate-resilient communities.

Specifically we call for:

1. Renewed political commitment to close remaining gaps and fully implement the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action by 2020.

This will require political will to ensure women's participation and leadership across all spheres, including marginalized women; urgent action to promote positive norms of gender equality, human rights and social justice; the elimination of discriminatory social norms and attitudes; the replacement of laws that perpetuate discrimination against women with ones that promote gender equality, including through affirmative action; the enforcement of policies that support the full participation of women in the economy and workplace; and balanced representation of women and men in all international decision-making processes, including the Post-2015 Development Agenda, Sustainable Development Goals, Financing for Development, and climate change processes.

2. The empowerment of women, the realization of human rights of women and girls, and the expiry of gender inequality by 2030.

This will require explicit commitments by governments to achieve and regularly monitor measurable results and boost support for the gender equality movement, bringing together civil society, international and regional organizations, the private sector, media, academia, political parties, and youth, as well as male champions of women's rights; and shared responsibility for action – every woman and girl, every man and boy.

3. An end to the funding gap on gender equality, and matching of commitments with means of implementation.

This will require significant, increased investments in gender equality; economic transformation and sensitization of national budgets to issues of gender equality; increased receptivity to lobbying and fundraising calls from organizations working on gender equality and the promotion of women in leadership; and accountability of leaders for their promises.

Shared leadership is critical for generations of the future.

As leaders, we set an example to young women and men. We show them it is possible for women to lead countries, corporations, courts, communities, and colleges. We show them that it is possible for women to live free from violence, fear and discrimination; to have their choices respected and capabilities acknowledged; to demand the same opportunities, resources and responsibilities as men. In the face of adversity, we aspire to forge paths that will ease the way for the women who follow us, and those who follow them. This will require the collective efforts of women and men from across the leadership spectrum.

WE HAVE WAITED LONG ENOUGH!