

Opening statement by the President of UN-Women Executive Board

H.E. Ms. Nicola Clase

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sweden to the UN

- Madam Executive Director, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Colleagues, please allow me to welcome you all to the First Regular Session of the UN-Women Executive Board.
- I am honored to serve this year as President of the Executive Board and very pleased to be working alongside my distinguished colleagues, Vice-Presidents, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Albania, Ms. Suela Janina; Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Antigua and Barbuda, Mr. Walton Alfonso Webson; Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Japan, Mr. Umetsu Shigeru; and the Ambassador and Deputy Permanent Representative of Uganda, Mr. Godfrey Kwoba. The Bureau is committed to strengthening the effectiveness of the Board's oversight function for improved governance. And we will count on the support and cooperation of all.

- I am committed to building on the hard work undertaken by the previous Presidents and Bureaux to take the work of the UN-Women Executive Board to the next level.
- Women and girls, men and boys are depending on us to deliver on the expectations that the Board and our respective regions have upon us. I count on the support of all of you.
- **Excellencies, Distinguished Colleagues,**
- This First Regular Session is a very important one, since as you know, we have before us several important reports and briefings, which include very meaningful and new items such as an update on organizational culture, anti-discrimination and anti-racism; an update on the continuous work to improve the system of enterprise risk management and critical risks of strategic importance;
- As well as the follow-up on the JIU review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and UN-Women;

The presentation on the 2023 Annual Report of the Office of the Ombudsman for United Nations Funds and Programmes is also

new and we are looking forward to this discussion, as well we to the address by the UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS and UN-Women Staff Council.

- **Distinguished colleagues,**
- The oversight and policy guidance of the Executive Board would not be complete without actionable outcomes to our official Executive Board meetings. At this session, we have before us four draft decisions, namely:
 - Draft Decision 2025/1 on the ‘Financial report and audited financial statements for the year ended 31 December 2023 and Report of the Board of Auditors’;
 - Draft Decision 2025/2 on the ‘JIU review of governance and oversight of the Executive Boards of UNDP/UNFPA/UNOPS, UNICEF and UN-Women’;
 - Draft Decision 2025/3 on ‘Organizational culture, anti-discrimination and anti-racism’; and
 - Draft Decision 2025/4 on ‘Risk management’.

- I would like to thank Albania, Antigua and Barbuda, Japan, and Sweden for the facilitation of these decisions, and the Secretariat for supporting the negotiations. I encourage delegations to show flexibility and understanding during these negotiations so that we can reach consensus on these decisions.
- I am counting on the Board's continued support in enabling us to maximize the time allocated to us for negotiations and look forward to a successful outcome.
- Thank you.
- Before I hand over the floor to the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director for her opening statement, I would first like to introduce you to a video highlighting the impactful work of UN-Women underscoring its commitment to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment worldwide. While the Board focuses on compliance, oversight and governance, it's important to remember that these efforts are directly transforming the lives of women and girls at the country level. Please, go ahead.

[Video]

- Thank you.

- Without further ado, I am now happy to pass the floor to the Under-Secretary-General/Executive Director for her opening statement. Madame Executive Director, the floor is yours.