
Mr. President,

Members of the Executive Board,

Distinguished delegates,

Colleagues and friends

I am glad to have the opportunity for us to meet again, to take stock, and to look forward.

It has been a busy year for us at UN Women and for everyone who is associated with UN Women.

We have been busy at headquarters, at our regional offices and our country offices.

We have been busy with member States in capitals and here in New York, and we have been busy with our civil society partners.

We have reached out to young women, men and boys and to the private sector.

The key message of all reports tabled at this meeting is that UN Women is strong, stable, and achieving results as an organization.

We have a well-built ship.

We have a skilled and committed crew.

We have our charts and maps pointing the way forward.

And we are visiting every port of call building a global movement for women's rights, women's empowerment and gender equality.

Given the global pandemic of violence affecting one in three women worldwide,

Given the under-representation of women in leadership and decision-making, and the over-representation of women amongst the illiterate and the poor,

And given a rising tide of fundamentalism which aims to push back hard-won gains for women and girls...

UN Women is reaching out across all sectors.

We are seizing a once-in-a-generation opportunity.

We are using the countdown to achieve the MDGs, to finalize the post-2015 agenda and the Beijing+20 review to place women and girls and their human rights at the center of the global agenda.

We are grateful for consensus on the importance of a transformative, rights based agenda for women and girls.

That agenda is now goal 5 in the latest draft from the co-chairs of the Open Working Group on the Sustainable Development Goals.

The goal is time-bound, with measurable targets and actions.

It calls for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls everywhere.

For the first the world will be given a timeframe, a date by which gender equality must be achieved.

Discrimination, inequality, and violence against women has been given an expiration date of 2030.

By 2030 we should have made bold and far-reaching changes that touch the life of every woman and every girl, everywhere in the world, no matter where or who they are.

I started today by saying we have all been busy.

That is why we are witness to this progress from the Open Working Group.

We are speaking with one voice and for this I would like thank you as Board members, and as UN member States.

The evidence of the MDGs, of Beijing+20, the CSW58 outcome and the Open Working Group gives us rich data and insight out of which we can build a formidable agenda for 2030.

An agenda that will be inclusive of all rights of women, transformative and truly game changing.

Over the weekend I was in Malmo, in Sweden, with hundreds of women from the Nordic countries and the world over, who were reviewing progress in the past two decades on the Beijing Platform for Action.

Instead of talking about the post-2015 agenda, they simply want to embrace the Open Working Group's goal 5 as:

'The future we want for women and girls by 2030'.

It is not mission impossible; it is a mission of our time.

Mr. President

Women in Malmo, in Kigali, in the Zataari refugee camp in Jordan, in South Sudan, in the Central African Republic and other countries have told me the future that they want.

They have told Ms Puri and Mr Hendra about the future they want.

We know that it is not mission impossible, but it will take bold steps – not baby steps – to take us forward.

Mr. President,

Negotiations in the Commission on the Status of Women are one of the more complex negotiations in the UN system.

The road leading to CSW58 last March required us to work with people around the world to find common

ground. Together we produced resounding results but it also exposed challenges that we still have to tackle.

That is why I will be talking with Permanent Representatives in the hope that we can untie some knots as we move ahead.

Allow me now to thank you all – Member States, UN Agencies, Civil Society – for the long hours that you put into the CSW58 to achieve a successful outcome.

I would like to pay a special tribute to my deputy Lakshmi Puri and her team.

My friends,

We have started the process of reviewing the progress made in the 20 years since representatives of 189 governments met in Beijing in 1995, and adopted what is arguably the most comprehensive plan of action the

world has ever seen to empower women and girls and achieve equality between men and women.

Already 56 countries have sent in their national reports.

Thank you to all of you who have helped with ensuring your countries produce the report.

We have planned regional review meetings, and by the end of the year, each region will produce an evidenced-based report which will be triangulated with national reports.

The evaluation of the Beijing Platform for Action will culminate at the CSW 59.

We will be focused on *the future women and girls want by 2030*.

We will hear how each of our countries has progressed or not and why, and what is to be done.

In addition to the substantive work, we will also have an unprecedented attendance of women from around the world at CSW59 – to celebrate Beijing +20 and encourage accountability.

And in September 2015 at the UN General Assembly, we are planning a high-level forum of heads of State and Government.

There, countries will publicly commit to take actions for the Beijing Platform for Action and the future we want.

We have also planned national and international events that will be reviewing and celebrating Beijing+20 – and we seek your collaboration in this.

These events will bring together member States, civil society organizations, the private sector, and UN system partners.

The event in Malmo, Sweden was the first in a global series of meetings to review progress in each of the 12 critical areas of the Beijing Platform for Action.

We have upcoming events in Chile, India, Rwanda, South Korea, and other nations, which focus on increasing women's political leadership and participation, engaging men and boys as partners in equality, ending violence against women and girls, empowering women in the economy, and working together for peace and security, and sustainable development.

Next week on the 26th of June we will host a celebration at the Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York.

We hope to see all of you there taking the UN to the people – where it belongs.

Civil Society

Just as at CSW 57 and 58, civil society played an important role in helping reach a strong agreement, they are central to the review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action.

Earlier this year in February, I met with our Global Civil Society Advisory Group for strategic discussions.

We have civil society advisory groups in all regional offices and in 27 countries - and this network is still growing.

In my travels and country visits, I have met the staff of UN Women in all regions of the world. I express my

appreciation for the work they do, some under extremely challenging and dangerous circumstances. My colleagues are working long hours and are very dedicated to our mission.

I am pleased that some of you as Board members were able to see our work firsthand during the joint field visit to Panama and El Salvador.

This year's Joint Field Visit was particularly significant for UN-Women, as this was the first time that we were the lead coordinating agency.

Distinguished Delegates,

Many of you here today have been present in our Executive Board since UN-Women was established.

You have provided much- appreciated guidance, and contributed to our evolution as an organization.

Today UN Women has a global presence in 89 countries and provides support to 96 countries.

My annual report before you provides testament to our journey and the results we achieved together in 2013.

We put in place the approved regional architecture, while delivering substantial results at the normative level, in coordination, and through operational activities on the ground.

We have made advances with regard to women's leadership in and participation in peace and security as reflected in Security Council resolution 2122 and the greater follow up work through the deployment of gender experts for mediation and transitional justice.

Most recently in the Central African Republic, I have seen the work that is being done by UN Women supporting women's full and equal role in peace and security.

We are working across 37 countries, though This work at both normative and program level is still very difficult and requires new approaches.

We have contributed to a pool of expertise and desire to make a difference and everybody needs to do more to support women who are affected by conflict.

Making peace and ending violence against women remains the area of greatest concern for women and many have dedicated their lives to this work.

I witnessed this determination last week in London at the Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict.

I was proud to launch the UN guidelines on reparations for victims of sexual violence – and I fully support their implementation.

In my travels, I have seen firsthand how the UN Women and the UN system UN has assisted in the elimination of laws that discriminate against women and the passage of those that advance gender equality and women's empowerment, and are aimed at ending violence against women.

This is the area in which there is deep appreciation in many countries that would have had no capacity to address issues of considerable concern and far-reaching violations of the rights of women.

Travel

My considerable travel since I have arrived has been in the first instance to learn about our work, meet our field staff, partners especially civil society and the private sector, members of parliaments , governments, our ministers of gender, presidents ministers in other key ministries such as education, finance and justice and experts and individuals who influence work, who need to mobilize.

This has been invaluable.

UN System Coordination

Mr. President,

UN Women has promoted greater coherence and gender responsive operational activities at country level which is also a work in progress and challenging in some countries.

We have prioritized the availability of expertise in programmes of UN agencies and partners such as the African Union.

We are contributing to making delivering as one gender sensitive so that the UN system can deliver as one for women and gender equality. Success in this area will

have important lessons and is vital in assisting the UN system to be fit for purpose.

UN Women has led UN system coordination with the creation and implementation of the System Wide Action plan, which has fostered collaboration rather than competition. We have also learnt that not all coordination leads to higher impact.

We have managed with success the UN Secretary-General' campaign UNiTE and the UN trust fund to end violence against women.

UN Women continues to have great cooperation with UNFPA on ending violence against women and promoting sexual and reproductive health and rights.

And UN Women is discussing a partnership with UNESCO through which we will encourage girls to stay in school

longer and in the process fight child forced marriages and teenage pregnancy.

These are just a few examples of the partnerships of UN Women across the entire UN system.

Programme

The progress we make in norms and standards is measured on the ground by the real impact in the lives of women. It is also in this area of programming where limited resources limits the possibility we have to make far reaching Impact.

In 2013, UN Women was active in 71 countries in which we supported women's political participation and leadership.

We work with governments, civil society organizations, we support women's participation in elections, which includes gender responsive constitutional reforms and advocating for quotas and other special temporary measures.

Our fund for gender equality delivered \$ 56.4 million in 72 countries in the last four years and is able to do much more if there were more funds available.

The UN Trust Fund to end violence against women is over-subscribed as the local demand for funding far outstrips available resources. The need to further capitalize the UN Trust Fund to End Violence against Women cannot be overemphasized.

We are revitalizing on our work on women's economic empowerment.

We have completed an agreement with the African Development Bank, which will lead to intensified support to women and agriculture in Africa.

In the area of women's economic empowerment, UN-Women provided support to 67 countries in 2013.

In Jordan, the 2010 Labor Law was amended to ensure pay equity for women and a decent work environment.

Mr. President,

I am pleased to announce that UN Women recently launched our Private Sector Leadership Advisory Council, with whom we intend to partner on programmes to create jobs and support small entrepreneurs who are most critical for job creation and poverty alleviation.

We will also work with them to end violence against women and to embark on fundraising.

Mr. President,

Greater progress for women and girls requires greater allocation of resources.

It is time to end the historic under-investment in women.

It is time to prioritize financing for gender equality.

I am pleased to announce that we have joined the World Bank to establish a Community of Practice with finance ministers to advance financing for gender equality.

To advance gender responsive plans and budgets, UN-Women helped secure significant policy changes through our work last year in 65 countries.

One example is Nepal, where the Government increased gender budget allocations from \$0.88 billion in 2012 to \$1.13 billion in 2013, accounting for 22% of the total national budget.

Resource Mobilization

Distinguished delegates,

Our resource mobilization remains a big challenge despite increases of \$43 million in 2013 compared to 2012.

UN women was conceptualised as a small organization with a big mandate which is flawed in my opinion.

We have to reflect on this conceptual framework. Its unintended consequence is to slow down progress on the very mandate for which UN Women was created.

We need a new approach that can enable UN Women to be fit for purpose in 2015 as an entity that is charged with advancing women's empowerment and gender equality.

I have declared Resource Mobilization a corporate priority. This priority is a joint responsibility with Member States and with all of you, distinguished Members of our Executive Board. The demands on UN Women are huge and we need increased funding, a minimum critical mass, to change the game for women and girls.

I sincerely hope you will continue to be passionate partners in this joint endeavor, that more member states will come on board, that private sector contributions will become more numerous and generous, and that end-of-year contributions will become more

permanent, paving the way for a more stable and sustainable funding base.

This is how we become a stronger organization and gain more relevance – on the ground where it matters most.

I am grateful that last year our donor base became not only wider with 130 Government contributions, but also deeper.

We witnessed an all-time high number of increases and seven Member States contributing to core resources in double digit figures beyond the \$ 10 million level. Canada, Denmark, Finland, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom were all double

digit core contributors for which I am profoundly grateful.

All of us at UN Women look forward to putting the wind in our sails at the pledging event tomorrow.

Transparency and Accountability

Mr. President,

Allow me now to turn to a personal and institutional priority: transparency and accountability.

The public disclosure of UN-Women's internal audit reports is testimony of our values of transparency and accountability.

One year ago, we announced that UN-Women had received a "clean" unqualified audit opinion from the UN Board of Auditors for 2012, the first year of reporting results under IPSAS, the International Public Sector Accounting Standards.

Evaluation

Mr. President,

UN Women relies on the independent evaluation office to improve our performance. This is why I am personally committed to ensure the evaluation office is fully funded.

Tomorrow we will present the Corporate Evaluation Plan and we will report to you on the performance of the evaluation function.

I am glad that, as stated by the recently established Evaluation Advisory Group, the evaluation function is moving in the right direction.

However, we still have areas for improvement, notably in regard to Management Responses and related

implementation, and resources for decentralized evaluations.

Ensuring that the evaluation function is independent, credible and relevant requires continuous attention. I thank our independent evaluation office, the Evaluation Advisory Committee and Executive Board members for your continued constructive engagement with us.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Nearly 20 years since the Beijing Women's Conference, the world is coming together again to complete this journey.

We are campaigning to re-energize the vision laid out at Beijing.

Our goal is to renew commitment, strengthen action and increase resources to realize gender equality, women's empowerment and human rights.

We call it: Empowering Women, Empowering Humanity: Picture It!

I hope to see all of you on 26 June at the Apollo Theater in Harlem!

We are calling on governments to realize the commitment they made back in 1995 to the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, a visionary roadmap for gender equality.

And we are calling on the people of the world to picture AND take action to realize a future without gender inequality.

We are calling on youth, the private sector, and men and boys to join us.

Through our HeforShe campaign, we have reached more than 28 million people on social media. And we are preparing an official launch soon, very exciting, to which you will all be invited.

I encourage all men here to join and be a He for She!

The countdown to 2030 now begins, the date when, as indicated by the Open Working Group, “We will end gender inequality.”

That is the future we want for women and girls, and it is not mission impossible. It is an imperative for our time.

Thank you.