

*Closing Remarks by UN Under-Secretary-General and UN Women Executive Director Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka at the second regular session of the Executive Board*

*2 September, 2016*

[As delivered]

Thank you very much, Mr. President and to the delegates for these two full days of work.

Thank you first Mr. President, for leading us and as usual guiding us skillfully to reach the conclusions. It has been a busy year. We thank also the Bureau for ensuring that we fulfil our mandate in the best way possible.

On behalf of the delegates, I would like thank you for bringing us a Nobel Peace Prize winner yesterday from Tunisia. We did not get time to interact with her but we are really proud that a woman from Tunisia has been given this iconic recognition.

I also appreciated your drive in your opening remarks to encourage men in the Executive Board and beyond to join the HeForShe campaign, and to take an active role. Of course, we also appreciate all the positive remarks, and the challenges as well as the criticism that we receive from the Board, which as usual is all highly constructive. When we leave here we know that these are the marching orders for us as UN Women.

We have listened carefully to your statements and interventions. All of them shape our thinking and planning, and your decisions take our work forward. I would like to applaud you for the complex negotiations during this session, conducted in a spirit of cooperation, and for the complex discussions that have given us the decision that we have now adopted. I congratulate everyone that was involved, especially the skillful facilitator who made it possible.

This has been a year where we really started to get the measure of implementing Agenda 2030. UN Women's centrality in that effort and our role in coordinating has been discussed in this meeting, but I want to emphasize the fact that our coordination could be enhanced and strengthened by your support when you engage in the other boards that you sit on. Because our coordination is all about strengthening one UN and delivering as one. You are a very important part of that puzzle and your contribution and your support when you engage in the other boards will make our coordination easier.

On the funding gap and structured dialogue on financing, again we want to appreciate your clarity in understanding our role and the importance of gender equality if Agenda 2030 is to be achieved. We also thank you for understanding the challenges that we continue to face as UN Women; the many expressions of encouragement for the report and structured dialogue on financing; your concern about the funding gap; and your detailed commentary on innovation and expansion of that funding base.

I noted that the decision really elaborates the variety of things needed in order to achieve the expected fundraising. I note the extent to which we have to come out of our comfort zone as we look for new ways of fundraising.

I also want to note in particular Sweden's encouragement to all Member States to carefully analyse the funding gap and the serious consequences it has for our work.

I also want to note the United Arab Emirates' comment on UN Women's funding strategy and the need to increase the resources and the number of donors that we engage with in particular. In addition to United Arab Emirates, most of you highlighted the importance of doing more with the private sector.

Japan, Switzerland and Colombia you welcomed the Flagship Programme Initiative and you also emphasized that we must treat it as a platform for resource mobilization, something that is already embedded in the architecture of the Flagship Programmes.

We also very encouraged by the additional funds from Sweden. We hope that becomes contagious, so we really welcome the announcement. China and Japan, we welcome that you also continue to contribute, I think in the same spirit as Sweden.

We have heard from you on the issue of transparency and accountability and we note the work that we need to do further in this area.

We will take all your comments forward in the development of the next strategic plan. We welcome the interest expressed by several delegations on engaging in the discussion that is required for the strategic plan to get to the next phase.

We welcome the presentation that was made on Morocco. We hope that it was enlightening to you, and we also appreciated the contribution that was made by the Ambassador and of course, that of the UN Women team. We hope that it helps you to see the amount of work that our teams embark upon on the ground and the difference that they make.

The side event of this session—on the Syrian Women's Advisory Board—was an example of what we do on women, peace and security. This was indeed a highlight. Just as much as the situation in the Syrian Arab Republic still represents many challenges, it was also interesting that this was happening at the same time as we are celebrating the breakthrough that we have had in Colombia. In that way we are able to present a case that has moved to its logical conclusion, but also to encourage the women from Syrian Arab Republic on the road that lies ahead. Hopefully for them we can say with conviction that this too will pass. So thank you for all the encouragement. They have given us feedback that they were very encouraged by the way they were received and the kind comments that were made by the delegates.

UN Women has a unique mandate across the three pillars of the United Nations: development, human rights, and peace and security—exemplified through our work in humanitarian crises and large movements of people. The comments by members of the Board have highlighted the importance of UN Women in making sure that we represent not just the refugees, not just the migrants in difficult situations, but also those who are internally displaced. We are, as you know, chairing the Global Migration Group and we have taken this role very seriously. In September's upcoming summit, we intend to make sure that we strongly represent the issues that we know are very close to your heart. We appreciate the role that has been played by Bangladesh as the chair of the Global Forum on Migration and Development.

I also want to join everybody who has congratulated us in expressing our excitement about our new UN office in Abu Dhabi, which will strengthen the support in that country as well as in the region. This is also another effort for us to strengthen our capacity for resource mobilization, as well as to serve the people of that region.

The United States of America commended UN Women on the development of a framework to prevent violence against women, and we thank you for that encouragement. In Bangladesh, the government is also giving high priority to ensure protection of women against violence. We appreciate both the work that the government of Bangladesh is doing and also the collaboration that we have with them. In addition, we appreciate the high priority that Tunisia is placing on women's political participation and we hope that we will be able to be part and parcel of the advances that you are making there.

In conclusion, I would like to say that we have noted the points that you have made about the February meeting and we will make sure that we adjust the arrangements accordingly. I want also to thank you for the visit to the Kyrgyz Republic and the very enlightening report that that was presented by the delegate from Switzerland. The recommendations have been noted. Your brief but punchy report has also been received with high appreciation.

It has been an engaging session. We also hope that you continue to support the campaign for the feminist woman Secretary-General.

Thank you.