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Sustainable  
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Goals

UNESCO's  
*Soft Power*  
today



# UNESCO'S SOFT POWER TODAY

Fostering Women's Empowerment  
and Leadership

UNESCO'S  
**SOFT POWER**  
TODAY

**Fostering Women's Empowerment  
and Leadership**

Division for Gender Equality, UNESCO  
30 June, 2017  
Paris, France

The messages in the key note speeches are those of the speakers and do not reflect the views of UNESCO.  
All speeches are included in the original language.

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“Soft power.

... the power to broker ideas, convince the reluctant, set new standards.

... the power to bring the right actors together to pursue joint goals.

... the power to draw on the wealth of civil society, local communities, the private sector, for stronger collective action.

This is UNESCO’s signature strength.”

**Irina Bokova**, Director-General, UNESCO

# FOREWORD

**Saniye Gülser Corat,**

Director of UNESCO's Division for Gender Equality

“

An old fable tells of a struggle between the North Wind and the Sun. The North Wind boasted greatness in strength; the sun boasted greatness in gentleness. They decided on a contest to decide who was the greatest; each had to try to make a traveller remove his warm, winter coat. The Wind blew cold; the man clung tighter to his coat. The Sun breathed warmth; the man took off his coat. The Wind, indignant, asked the Sun how she had won; she replied, “I used my gentle light.”<sup>1</sup>

”

It is the kind of gentle greatness and light mentioned in this fable that lies at the heart of the concept of *Soft Power*.

*Soft Power* is a concept that is fundamental to UNESCO's work. It encompasses the power to bring people together; to persuade, rather than coerce; to set common goals and provide conditions that are ripe for collective action.

This conference on *Fostering Women's Empowerment and Leadership* – part of UNESCO's Soft Power Conference Series – is a perfect embodiment of this concept and its importance to our work.

As the UN organization dedicated to building peace in the minds of women and men, UNESCO works to unite actors from all over the world, and from different sectors. By bringing them together, we provide a space where they can share their vision and their concerns. By uniting behind a common goal in this way, we are better able to move together towards a brighter, more ambitious vision of the future founded on the fundamental values of social justice and human rights.

Gender equality lies at the core of this vision and has been one of UNESCO's two priorities since 2008.

Gender equality has also been a key pillar of the two mandates of our Director-General, Ms Irina Bokova. From the first day, Ms Bokova focused on this priority with courage, determination and passion.

She became an internationally renowned champion of gender equality and made UNESCO's work in this area visible and invaluable. It is my hope that the many women she helped will follow in her footsteps. This Conference is also a tribute to her.

Soft Power has been a red thread running through our efforts to advance gender equality.

I have witnessed the gentle, but no less effective, power of soft power over and over again.

I have seen it in the renewed vigour with which conference participants return home to share the positive energy and the best practices they have learned at a conference we have organised.

I have seen it in the eyes of a young woman in Africa who learned to read via a UNESCO programme and went on to share her knowledge and wisdom with her family and her community; I saw the power that she herself gained in the process and the highly tangible benefits for her economic empowerment. Soft power does not only have soft outcomes.

As Malala Yousafzai has so eloquently said, “*With guns you can kill terrorists, with education you can kill terrorism.*”

Gender equality is another battle that can be won only with the pen, the *soft power* of words.

If, indeed, gender equality is a battle. One of the outcomes of this conference was a renewed emphasis on the need to engage men in order for gender equality to become a reality. And for the need to stop seeing gender equality as a battle between the sexes for this to be possible. It was a pleasure to hear male – as well as female – voices calling for a change in mind-sets so that gender equality and women's empowerment are seen in their true light as outcomes that will benefit us all.

Inspired by this message, and the many other stories shared at the conference, we will continue to use our gentle light in favour of gender equality and women's empowerment.

This is our promise for gender equality. I hope you will join us.

Saniye Gülser Corat

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This report presents the findings and recommendations of the conference 'UNESCO's Soft Power Today: Fostering Women's Empowerment and Leadership (June 2017) that was organised by UNESCO in collaboration with *the Fondation pour l'Égalité des Chances en Afrique*.

We would like to thank all of the event's participants: the numerous keynote speakers, panellists and moderators, all those who attended and all those at UNESCO who participated in organising the conference.

We are grateful to numerous people at UNESCO who made this event possible. In the Division for Gender Equality, special thanks to Mary Joy Brocard, Julia Prats-Romeu, Damiano Giampaoli, Bruno Zanobia, Amaya Tanaka Galdos, Alice Mihalache, and Cvetan Cvetkovski, as did our consultant, Giulia Corinaldi, who assisted in the preparation of the conference. The support of the members of the Organizing Committee, in particular Estelle Maria Loiseau, Anatheia Brooks, Mirta Lourenco, Lynne Patchett, Julius Banda, and Armelle Arrou was invaluable. We are also grateful to all those at UNESCO who provided support with communications, including

the technicians, protocol and security, as well as administrative and logistical support. There were also many volunteers without whom this event could not have taken place; to them, we are extremely thankful.

This event would not have been possible without the generous collaboration of the *Fondation pour l'Égalité des Chances en Afrique*, a Belgian philanthropic organization, which received its charitable status by royal decree on August 15th 2015. It was created by an entrepreneur, Mr. Mohamed Bouamatou, and lawyers specialised in human rights law. The foundation supports non-profit projects for Africa.

The report was commissioned by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director-General and drafted by an external consultant, Sarah Grosso.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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## SOFT POWER TODAY CONFERENCE SERIES: FOSTERING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & LEADERSHIP

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UNESCO fulfils its mission through advocacy for peace and development and through the soft power of persuasion. To highlight this key instrument, UNESCO is organizing a series of thematic conferences within the framework of "UNESCO's Soft Power Today."

The first in the series "UNESCO's Soft Power Today," this conference highlighted the theme of Gender Equality, one of UNESCO's two global priorities.

Over 50 high-level personalities and renowned experts from around the world spoke to celebrate UNESCO's achievements and to identify future directions for promising work on women's and girls' empowerment and leadership, in the presence of an audience of 400 participants.

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## ABOUT THIS REPORT

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This report presents the findings and recommendations of UNESCO's high-level conference on "Fostering Women's Empowerment and Leadership" organized at UNESCO, Paris on June 30th 2017.

Each section of the report documents the keynote presentations, summarizes the key points made by the panellists during the panel discussion and outlines some recommendations for each topic in line with UNESCO's continued efforts towards Priority Gender Equality.

# 1. THE POWER OF WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' EDUCATION

The first panel discussed how gender equality can be enhanced in and through education.

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## CONTEXT

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Despite progress towards gender parity in primary education, many challenges must still be overcome if girls are to access and benefit from a full cycle of quality education. Numerous barriers persist, ranging from poverty to discriminatory social norms

that see girls married young and disproportionately prone to gender-based violence. Finding solutions to these challenges is all the more urgent, given the proven benefits of girls' education, both for the girls themselves and for their families and societies.

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## KEY MESSAGES

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**STEM/STEAM & girls' education:** more action is required to draw girls into science disciplines and to harness the potential of technology for girls' education. Technology allows people to access information and girls and women must be able to benefit from technological advances. Role models play a crucial role in boosting the visibility of women in scientific careers and helping to make these disciplines more accessible to girls.

**Expanding our understanding of 'education':** working towards quality education for girls entails an understanding of education that begins in the family, one of the key sites where gender stereotypes are reproduced. Formal schooling should be seen as part of a broader ecosystem of education, including lifelong learning. It must also encompass the broad set of topics and skills that are necessary for girls to be

confident and empowered, such as sexual education and leadership skills.

**Leadership and innovation:** UNESCO is encouraged to continue its global leadership role in favour of gender equality and women's empowerment through education. New avenues, such as innovative partnerships with both the public and private sector should be continued in support of girls' and women's education.

**Evidence-based advocacy:** the collection of sex-disaggregated data, via UNESCO's Institute for Statistics and at a national level, is vital in order to provide a solid evidence-base for continued advocacy efforts in favour of girls' education.



## 2. WOMEN, PEACE & SECURITY

This panel explored the many obstacles and challenges that continue to impede the full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000) from a gender perspective.

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### CONTEXT

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The landmark Resolution 1325, adopted in 2000, acknowledged the changing nature of warfare in which civilians are increasingly targeted and women continue to be excluded from participation in peace processes. It addressed the disproportionate impact of war on women and the pivotal role

women should and do play in conflict management, conflict resolution, and sustainable peace. However, challenges remain if it is to be fully implemented to benefit girls and women in conflict situations and in the peace-building processes that follow.

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### KEY MESSAGES

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**International mechanisms help protect women's rights:** international mechanisms such as CEDAW and the Istanbul Conventions play a crucial role in creating an environment in which women's human rights can be protected in law and in practice.

**The reality of conflict and of peace-building processes:** work on gender, peace and security must acknowledge the changing nature of conflict and the need to engage with non-state actors to protect women and to work against gender discrimination. Equally, this work must recognise the longer-term peace-building processes, that continue long after a peace agreement has been signed, in order to ensure that women are included in the discussions and reconstruction work that follow.

**Education for peace; education for women's participation:** education plays a key role in the profound shift in the perception of gender that is

required in order for Resolution 1325 to be fully implemented. Schools can help to work towards peace by being attentive to gender, and other, stereotypes that are perpetrated in textbooks that have the potential to create tensions between groups. Supporting women with the right skills through education and capacity building can empower them in peace-building negotiations and processes.

**Advocating for peace:** in the context of a growing number of conflicts across the world, UNESCO has a key role to play in conflict prevention. UNESCO can contribute by fostering intercultural dialogue, supporting post-conflict state building and by working to prevent conflicts by addressing radicalization and extremism.

# 3. THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLE MODELS IN CHANGING CULTURAL NORMS

This panel discussed the importance of mentors and role models for women and girls in breaking gender stereotypes.

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## CONTEXT

Girls and boys are conditioned by their gender roles from birth. From an early age, girls learn that they are not expected by society to become scientists, engineers, innovators or leaders. As a result, women are still drastically under-represented in many areas

of STEM/STEAM fields, especially in leadership positions. More efforts are required to help break down the barriers that remain in the minds of girls and boys and to inspire them to challenge cultural norms.

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## KEY MESSAGES

**Gender stereotypes strongly influence the implementation of women's rights:** these stereotypes, that are unconsciously perpetuated, should be seen as part of broader power systems that contribute to the perpetuation of male power. They also shape the context in which laws in favour of women's rights are implemented. UNESCO, notably through its work on education and the media, can play a key role in helping combat these negative gender stereotypes.

**The importance of female role models:** female models play a key role in illustrating what women have achieved and can achieve. Encouraging women's leadership helps provide role models to inspire the next generation of girls.

**Engaging boys and men in favour of gender equality:** high-profile male role models who are gender equality advocates can help normalize the participation of men in these debates and inspire the next generation of boys to be involved in work towards gender equality. Boosting the visibility of men who are advocates of gender equality can help demonstrate that gender equality is an issue that affects and benefits both women and men and breakdown the negative perception that gender equality is a 'female' issue.

**Mentorship programmes in support of girls and women:** developing mentorship programmes enables girls and young women to learn from their successful peers and from those who have excelled in different fields of activity.

## 4. CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO

This panel discussed how gender stereotypes disrupt positive change and proposed some innovative approaches that aim to promote non-stereotypical images of women and men.

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### CONTEXT

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Gender stereotypes have the capacity to limit the freedom of women and men, girls and boys. Gender stereotypes are a limit to human potential and wellbeing because they condition the vision that women and men, girls and boys, have of what they

can or should achieve. Gender categorization and portrayals may be subtle and difficult to tackle, and yet they often represent a greater obstacle than laws and norms in preventing equality between men and women.

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### KEY MESSAGES

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**Gender stereotypes are stubborn and create a hostile environment for female participation:**

gender stereotypes are fueled by misinformation and a lack of curiosity; they are also difficult to change and create the perception that gender roles are fixed. These prejudices make it harder for women to participate and gain influence in politics and in business and for the positive steps that have been taken in favour of women's participation (such as quota laws in politics) to become a reality.

**The media produces gender stereotypes:** because of the key role played by the media in the production of gender stereotypes, it is all the more essential that women have the opportunity to participate in the media at all levels.

**Challenging gender stereotypes requires male support:**

more and more men are engaged in gender equality in the private sphere; this support is necessary if both parents are to enjoy work-life balance and gender equality in the home. Greater public commitment from men is essential to realise gender equality in the community, in the work place and in politics.

**Supporting the freedom of speech; supporting gender equality through the media:**

UNESCO's work in relation to the freedom of speech and the safety of journalists creates a supportive environment in which a greater number of women can be involved in the media as professionals and journalists.

## 5. WOMEN IN POLITICS

This panel debated the main areas of progress and the main barriers that exclude women from political leadership positions, as well as innovative solutions that can help address those challenges.

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### CONTEXT

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Women are still severely under-represented in political leadership worldwide and a global commitment at the highest political level is needed to improve this situation. Political participation and leadership of women worldwide is not only a goal

in itself, it is also a necessary precondition for the promotion of gender transformative policies and the achievement of gender equality in all other spheres of life.

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### KEY MESSAGES

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**Gender stereotypes and roles create a hostile climate for women's political participation:**

Family duties are a key barrier to women's political participation, as traditional gender roles pressure women to take the majority of household responsibilities and hence are implicitly forced to compromise their political aspirations. In other words, the two are perceived as – or are in practice – incompatible. Policies and awareness raising campaigns that support both parents and promote equal responsibilities can help boost female political participation.

**Quotas and a supportive legal framework have strong potential:**

an increasing number of countries have introduced gender quotas or have written equal political representation into their constitutions. These quotas have met with success. However, whether these laws are effective depends on their implementation, which is not yet systematic.

**Inspiring the next generation of female politicians:**

education and the presence of role models can help young women imagine different ways in which they can participate and can help them to gain confidence in their own capacity to participate in politics.

**Support for national parliaments:**

as well as continuing its work to counteract negative gender stereotypes, UNESCO should also explore the possibility of working with national parliaments on gender equality and women's political participation.

## 6. WOMEN IN BUSINESS

This panel explored the extent to which progress has been made in the field of women and business, as well as the main barriers that continue to prevent women from reaching leadership positions.

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### CONTEXT

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Whilst women remain under-represented in business at every level, gender inequalities are particularly striking at the highest managerial levels. This remains the case despite research demonstrating the business benefits of gender diversity; increased female participation at the top of the corporate pipeline is known to boost prosperity,

as well as profitability. However, despite these benefits for companies themselves and the need for women to participate in business as a matter of human rights, gender bias and gendered domestic roles continue to impede full female participation in the economic sphere.

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### KEY MESSAGES

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**Some progress in female leadership has been observed:** in Europe, for instance, the number of female leaders is rising. As most graduates in Europe are women, this also provides a supply of potential future female leaders to continue this trend in the future.

**Gender stereotypes, unconscious bias and the domestic division of labour remain key challenges:** negative stereotypes and unconscious bias discourage girls pursuing careers in 'male' domains and reduce their confidence to do so. The continued responsibility of women for reproductive work in many cultures also continues to constitute an obstacle to female economic participation and the advancement of women in leadership roles.

**Leading by example:** business leaders can play a key role by instigating change from the top and fostering an environment that favours inclusivity and

gender equality. These leaders may also support the introduction of concrete, effective measures that promote gender equality such as quotas and human resource policies.

**The power of mentoring and networking:** Senior professionals – both male and female – also play a role providing practical and moral support to younger female professionals via mentorship schemes and women's networks. UNESCO provides valuable networking opportunities for women via its high-level events; these events invigorate female leaders by providing them with opportunities to connect, support each other and share examples of best practice that they can bring back with them to their home country. These events equally provide a forum to raise the profile of male advocates for gender equality.

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# INTRODUCTION

# FOSTERING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & LEADERSHIP

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## SOFT POWER TODAY CONFERENCE SERIES

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UNESCO fulfils its mission through advocacy for peace and development and through the soft power of persuasion. To highlight this key instrument,

UNESCO is organizing a series of thematic conferences within the framework of "UNESCO's Soft Power Today."

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## FOSTERING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & LEADERSHIP

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The first in the series "UNESCO's Soft Power Today," the conference highlighted the issue of Gender Equality, one of UNESCO's two priorities.

Over 50 high-level personalities and renowned experts from around the world spoke to celebrate UNESCO's achievements and to identify future directions for promising work on women's and girls' empowerment and leadership, in the presence of an audience of 400 participants.

The conference was organized according to three key themes that are echoed in the structure of this report:

- Women's Empowerment and Sustainable Development
- Breaking Gender Stereotypes
- Leadership and Power

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## ABOUT THIS REPORT

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This report presents the findings and recommendations of UNESCO's high-level conference on "Fostering Women's Empowerment and Leadership" organized at UNESCO, Paris on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2017.

Each section of the report documents the keynote presentations, summarizes the key points made by the panellists during the panel discussion and outlines some recommendations for each topic

in line with UNESCO's continued efforts towards priority Gender Equality.

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## UNESCO, PRIORITY GENDER EQUALITY

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UNESCO is at the forefront of the international dialogue on sustainable development, and stands as a global reference for innovation and leadership in Gender Equality.

Over the years, UNESCO has provided women and girls with role models for their participation in STEM/STEAM fields, it has developed gender-sensitive media indicators, it has promoted young women's leadership in culture, and it has worked to ensure

equal opportunities for boys and girls in education, among many other fields.

This conference was designed to support UNESCO in this endeavour by highlighting the best practices of existing initiatives and by identifying new approaches that can help maximize this work in favour of women's and girls' empowerment in the future.

# OPENING SESSION

## PANEL PARTICIPANTS

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### OPENING

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- ▶ **Ms Irina Bokova**, Director-General of UNESCO
- ▶ **H.E. Ms Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca**, President of the Republic of Malta
- ▶ **H.E. Dr Amal Abdullah Al Qubaisi**, President of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates
- ▶ **H.E. Ms Rula Ghani**, First Lady of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
- ▶ **H.E. Ms Tarja Halonen**, Former President of the Republic of Finland
- ▶ **H.E. Ms Teresa Fernández de la Vega**, Former First Deputy Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Spain, President of the Fundación Mujeres por África
- ▶ **Mr Mohamed Hmayen Bouamatou**, Conference Sponsor, Founder & President of the Fondation pour l'égalité des chances en Afrique

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### OFFICIAL LUNCH

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- ▶ **H.R.H. Princess Petra Laurentien of the Netherlands**, Princess of Orange-Nassau, UNESCO Special Envoy for Literacy for Development



Irina Bokova delivering her keynote speech in the Opening session

## THE STRENGTH OF SOFT POWER

**Ms Irina Bokova**, Director-General of UNESCO

“

This is the importance of soft power. By this, I mean the power to broker ideas, convince the reluctant, set new standards. I mean the power to bring the right actors together to pursue joint goals. I mean the power to draw on the wealth of civil society, local communities, the private sector, for stronger collective action. This is UNESCO's signature strength.

”

This is the first, and largest, in a series of conferences on UNESCO Soft Power that will culminate in the General Conference in November.

We are living turbulent times - societies are transforming deeply - the planet faces rising pressure.

In this context, no single State can tackle the challenges facing the world, nor is hard power enough.

We need new ways of thinking, new ways of acting.

UNESCO does not deliver development financial aid - it crafts the conditions for development.

UNESCO does not keep the peace - it makes peace last. This is inscribed in the DNA of the Organization, created in 1945 to build the defenses of peace in the minds of men and, I would add women.

Since Beijing in 1995, we have seen progress across the world.

Driven by the Millennium Development Goals, we have seen strong steps.

But not enough.

Today, being born a girl remains a primary cause for exclusion.

Too many girls, in too many countries, are forced out of school, to work, into marriage.

The scale of discrimination remains staggering.

60 percent of countries have achieved parity in primary education - and only 38 percent at the secondary level.

62 million girls are denied the right to education.

Women represent two thirds of the 758 million illiterate adults in the world.

This harms all societies, holds back development, undermines peace.

According to UNESCO's Global Education Monitoring Report, if all girls had primary education in sub-Saharan Africa and South and West Asia, child marriage would be cut by 14 percent.

According to the International Monetary Fund, if women participated in the labour market to the same extent as men, GDP could increase by 5 percent in the United States, by 9 percent in Japan, by 27 percent in India.

This is what I mean by soft power.

In April last year, I visited a Community Learning Centre in Nepal and met with women who followed UNESCO literacy courses.

One woman told me she had not attended school because she came from a family of 7 siblings and had a disability.

Today, she works in a monastery and uses her literacy skills to keep accounting records.

I spoke also to the daughter of this same woman, and she told me of her dream to become a doctor, to help poor people when they fall ill.

This mother's determination ... this girl's aspiration ... this is the soft power that will transform the world.

“

Le leadership n'est pas un don de la nature - il faut le cultiver. Cela commence très tôt - sur les bancs d'écoles.

”

Mesdames et Messieurs, L'égalité entre les genres est au cœur de l'Agenda 2030 pour le développement durable. C'est un objectif à lui seul. C'est un accélérateur pour la réalisation de tous les objectifs. Le leadership n'est pas un don de la nature - il faut le cultiver.

Cela commence très tôt - sur les bancs d'écoles.

C'est pourquoi j'ai lancé en 2011 le Partenariat mondial pour l'éducation des filles et des femmes de l'UNESCO auprès des entreprises du secteur privé, afin de cibler les points faibles dans l'apprentissage des filles et des femmes - l'éducation secondaire et l'alphabétisation.

C'est pourquoi j'ai créé le Fonds Malala de l'UNESCO pour le droit des filles à l'éducation en 2012, soutenant des dizaines de milliers de filles et de femmes à travers neuf pays, de la Mauritanie au Viet Nam.

Au Pakistan, nous travaillons avec des communautés marginalisées, pour améliorer la formation des enseignants, pour approfondir l'engagement de la communauté envers l'éducation des filles.

En Egypte, les centres d'apprentissage communautaire de l'UNESCO offrent un programme d'alphabétisation à des milliers de femmes.

En Afghanistan, nous avons réussi à toucher environ 600 000 adultes, principalement des femmes, à travers le programme d'alphabétisation – et permettez-moi de saluer à ce titre l'engagement de Madame la Première Dame Rula Ghani.

En Myanmar, avec Ericsson, nous renforçons l'autonomisation des femmes et des filles grâce à la technologie mobile.

La révolution numérique doit être une révolution de développement pour tous.

C'est l'objectif de la Commission à large bande pour le développement numérique durable que j'ai créé en 2010 avec l'Union internationale des télécommunications, dirigée par S.E. le président Paul Kagamé du Rwanda et Carlos Slim.

Le Soft power, c'est savoir travailler différemment, avec le secteur privé, dans l'ensemble du système des Nations Unies.

“

Nous ne pouvons pas nous développer durablement sans la créativité et l'innovation des femmes.

”

C'est la raison pour laquelle l'UNESCO s'est associée à ONU Femmes, au Fonds des Nations Unies pour la population et à la Banque mondiale, sur le Programme conjoint pour l'autonomisation des adolescentes et des femmes par l'éducation – pour garder les filles à l'école en travaillant avec les ministères de la santé et du travail.

Toutes ces initiatives visent à démultiplier le pouvoir de l'Égalité des genres. La mise en avant de modèles est également centrale.

C'est ce que s'attache à faire le Prix UNESCO-L'Oréal pour les femmes en science et le Prix de l'UNESCO pour l'éducation des filles et des femmes.

Nous ne pouvons pas nous développer durablement sans la créativité et l'innovation des femmes.

Nous ne pouvons pas construire une paix durable sans faire entendre la voix des filles et des femmes.

Ces principes guident toute notre action pour promouvoir l'égalité des genres dans et à travers les médias – par l'intermédiaire de l'Alliance mondiale pour les médias et le genre, en formant des journalistes pour améliorer leur sécurité, comme au Soudan.

L'autonomisation des femmes doit commencer au travail – c'est pourquoi le partenariat de l'UNESCO avec l'Université de Koç, en Turquie, est si important.

C'est pourquoi j'ai été si déterminée à changer le visage de l'UNESCO.

Sous mon leadership, le pourcentage de femmes aux postes de directrices et supérieurs a presque doublé, plaçant l'UNESCO en tête dans le système des Nations Unies.

L'UNESCO fait tout cela pour renforcer le leadership des femmes.

Et aujourd'hui, en regardant la salle, je vois de nombreux leaders ... de toutes les sphères... du monde entier... de Malte, et je salue le travail de la présidence maltaise au Conseil de l'Union européenne... des Emirats Arabes Unis, de Finlande et d'Espagne, menant de front le combat...

Merci à vous tous pour votre leadership.

“

A mes yeux, l'autonomisation des filles et des femmes est la question des droits de l'homme du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle.

”



Panel: Saniye Gülser Corat, Rula Ghani, Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca, Amal Abdullah Al Qubaisi, Tarja Halonen, Maria Teresa Fernández de la Vega, Mohamed Hmayen Bouamatou (from left)

C'est ce même esprit que je retrouve dans l'exposition – HERstory – Célébration des femmes de pouvoir aux Nations Unies - initiée par la Mission colombienne à l'ONU et la Délégation permanente de la Colombie à l'UNESCO.

A mes yeux, l'autonomisation des filles et des femmes est la question des droits de l'homme du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle ... nous ne pouvons pas échouer ... nous devons surmonter tous les défis.

A mesure que nous avançons, souvenons-nous des mots de Malala Yousafzai, prix Nobel de la paix 2014 avec Kailash Satyarti de l'Inde.

J'ai eu l'honneur d'assister à la cérémonie à Oslo lorsqu'elle a dit :

« Je suis juste une personne engagée et têtue, qui veut que chaque enfant obtienne une éducation de qualité, qui veut des droits égaux pour les femmes et la paix à travers le monde. »

Que ceci devienne notre devise : Soyons engagés. Soyons têtus !

Je vous remercie.



# POSITIVE PATHWAYS TO EQUALITY

**H.E. Ms Marie-Louise Coleiro Preca**, President of the Republic of Malta

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Dear friends,

It is my pleasure to participate in this important conference on “Fostering Women’s Empowerment and Leadership”, as part of UNESCO’s “Soft Power Today” initiative.

Highlighting gender equity and equality is a topic close to my heart.

I am delighted that gender issues are being recognised, at such a high-level meeting, as one of UNESCO’s global priorities.

Women’s empowerment and gender issues are at the heart of the mandate of the United Nations’ Agenda 2030, and its Sustainable Development Goals.

As we know, the Sustainable Development Goals bind the international community, and in particular, SDG Number 5, to end all forms of gender discrimination, and to achieve the meaningful empowerment of women and girls by 2030.

I believe that, through UNESCO’s mandate to address culture, science, and education, we can make real progress to achieve this global goal.

To do so, we must be courageous and determined.

We must confront the underlying discrimination and injustice, which are undermining the dignity of women and girls around the world, and thereby, restrict women and girls from equal participation in our societies.

First and foremost, we must take a critical look at the sources of oppression, which circulate even through our nations, and our international systems, to the detriment of half of the world’s population.

We must be very clear in our objectives.

We must be very determined about implementing policies and strategies for the empowerment and leadership of women.

Let me, therefore, state, in no uncertain terms, that the only pathway to achieve the sustainable and meaningful wellbeing of women and girls is by confronting the patriarchy.

Patriarchal oppressions are present throughout our societies, in the way our cultural narratives function and are disseminated.

Patriarchy is a global perspective. It is a cultural system that we are born into, in which we all participate, and which we perpetuate, often unconsciously, to the great detriment of so many human beings.

“

The only pathway to achieve the sustainable and meaningful wellbeing of women and girls is by confronting the patriarchy.

”

Patriarchy, like all forms of oppression, has a way of normalizing its abuses, such as the unacceptable injustices faced by so many women and girls.

Patriarchy makes us believe that there are no alternatives to its way of thinking, of acting, and of living. It would have us believe that a deep-rooted change is not possible.

We cannot be complacent in the face of patriarchal oppressions. We must move on, together as women and men, to address all unjust systems of power.

We must keep using all the platforms at our disposal, such as this conference, to affirm that there is, indeed, another way of life.

There are other paths for us to take, on our slow but steady journey, towards a more peace-focused, gender inclusive, and sustainable culture.

In order to open our minds to the limitless potential of women, working with and alongside men, we must

challenge the one-dimensional vision of masculinity which is upheld by the patriarchy.

We cannot continue, explicitly or implicitly, to promote damaging attitudes.

We must replace attitudes that privilege power, coercion, control, and extreme competitiveness, with stronger attributes, such as compassion, relational connection, and the ability to nurture humanity.

UNESCO can be truly effective, thanks to its unique ability, to target and inform global educational and cultural narratives.

It is intrinsically part of UNESCO's mandate, to open the minds and hearts of all people. This gives us hope, in our ability to create a more peace-affirming, inclusive, and dignified culture, which should be of benefit to all humanity.

To achieve such a vision of our world, we must do more to disrupt dualistic and narrowly gendered thinking, especially when it comes to the roles that women and men pursue in society.

Although it may seem that these outdated notions are diminishing in some areas, it is clear that in other ways, these dangerous ideas continue to have long-term, adverse effects.

For example, we cannot ignore the realities of the gender pay gap, which exists across our nations, and continues to restrict women's access to equitable and equal opportunities for employment.

Nor can we ignore the fact that careers, which are historically associated with women, such as education and childcare, have a disproportionately lower salary.

We must take note of urgent indicators from the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report, that it will take 170 years for us to achieve economic gender equality.

We must also address the fact that men often occupy the vast majority of visible roles of influence, within political and economic sectors.

According to last year's indicators from United Nations Women, only 22.8 percent of all national parliamentarians were women, and globally, there are 38 countries in which women account for less than 10 percent of parliamentarians.

“ The inclusion of women in positions of authority and governance is essential, if we are serious about valuing the voices of people of all genders.

Moreover, women who hold such positions are expected, and in some ways, they are forced, to subscribe to patriarchal norms in order to be successful.

The inclusion of women in positions of authority and governance is essential, if we are serious about valuing the voices of people of all genders.

One important contribution that we can and must make, in response to these concerns, is to create safe and respectful spaces for dialogue, which will help to expand the participation of women, and all the oppressed and marginalized communities in society.

Let us also find ways to bring women on board, as stakeholders in processes of dialogue which aim to transform conflict and sow the seeds of peace. Women are perfectly positioned, within their families and communities, to be powerful activists for the promotion of peace.

To achieve sustainable and equitable peace, we must also question the status quo within our nations and our international systems, which normalizes and perpetuates patriarchal oppressions, to the detriment of women, of girls, and minorities.

We cannot go on excusing cultural narratives which justify anti-social and damaging male behaviour, by saying that “boys will be boys”.

Not only does such an attitude endanger the health and safety of women and girls, but it also diminishes the dignity of men and boys, by implying that positive change is not possible.

“ Institutions such as UNESCO need to do more, to encourage men to be vocal, and to speak out against patriarchal ideas and actions. Men cannot be silent partners in the work we must do, to achieve the meaningful empowerment of women.

Nor can we go on celebrating a “macho” culture, where violent and controlling attitudes are celebrated, without criticism.

We must challenge the idea that aggression is part of what it means to be a “real man”, and that femininity should, by extension, be degraded.

Women’s leadership should not be measured by any standard, except a woman’s intrinsic qualities to lead.

To achieve these goals, I believe that institutions such as UNESCO need to do more, to encourage men to be vocal, and to speak out against patriarchal ideas and actions.

Men cannot be silent partners in the work we must do, to achieve the meaningful empowerment of women.

We are all stakeholders, with so much to gain, by addressing the tremendous challenges that patriarchy, normalized violence, and deep-rooted oppression are having, at every level of our societies.

I believe that, in order to ensure that women and girls are empowered, and able to exercise active leadership within society, we must, first of all, work with media stakeholders in our nations.

We must take steps to ensure that the mass media is not perpetuating harmful patriarchal ideas and stereotypes, by promoting narrow gender binaries; by objectifying women through a constant focus on their appearance and body image; and by giving a skewed perception that diminishes the gravity of gender-based violence.

UNESCO, through its cultural and educational work, is ideally placed to promote media accountability, across our communities, and to foster inclusive language and dignified actions, which nurture equity and equality.

Ending patriarchy is about removing the barriers that constrain people of all gender identities, and safeguarding the dignity of each and every individual.

On concluding, let me quote the inspiring words of activist and academic Bell Hooks, who said;

“

The soul of feminist politics is the commitment to ending patriarchal domination of women and men, girls and boys. Love cannot exist in any relationship that is based on domination and coercion... A genuine feminist politics always brings us from bondage to freedom, from lovelessness to loving.

”

#### **Bell Hooks**

Let me encourage you to work more closely together, to take practical actions to address the underlying cultural and social injustices, which are perpetuating these abuses within our societies and across our globe.

UNESCO has a powerful role to play, to promote innovative educational perspectives and bold cultural narratives, which end, once and for all, the discrimination and violence being faced by women and girls.

We cannot afford to deal with symptomatic manifestations of oppression, while ignoring the root causes.

Let us take this opportunity to implement the full force of the United Nations’ Agenda 2030, and Sustainable Development Goal Number 5, to promote the equality of all genders.

Let us prioritize a zero-tolerance policy, towards patriarchal violence and oppression. In this way, we shall be creating a global culture of respect and dignity, for the benefit of all the people of our world.

Thank you for your attention.

# EMPOWERING WOMEN, EMPOWERING SOCIETY

**H.E. Dr Amal Abdullah Al Qubaisi**, President of the Federal National Council of the United Arab Emirates

بِسْمِ اللّٰهِ الرَّحْمٰنِ الرَّحِیْمِ

Your Excellency Irina Bokova, Director General of the UNESCO

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Guests,

A bright morning to all of you

It is a great honor to be here with you today, in the presence of so many inspiring women who have contributed to great causes both in their countries and globally.

Even though we are gathered today to talk about the empowerment of women I see many women here who have been instrumental in empowering the world. I would like to especially thank my dear friend, Irina Bokova, for her motivating opening remarks and her great leadership in advancing women's empowerment throughout the world.

Her efforts to lead global awareness campaigns to counter youth radicalization and prevent violent extremism, hate speech and discrimination are really affecting young people across the world.

All of you, dear sisters and women leaders, and many more who are outside these walls, some of whom are less known, are making great changes and empowering the new world, politically, economically, culturally, socially and technologically. Women are indeed empowering their communities as much as their communities are empowering them.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We all acknowledge that is a great deal of effort to be made to achieve the gender equality goals. However, great strides have been achieved and the efforts of organizations such as the UNESCO and women like your good selves here today are already bearing fruits.

In the United Arab Emirates, 97% of the female high school graduates join university, and 70% of university graduates are women. The percentage of women in the government workforce is 66%, women constitute 27.5% of the UAE Ministers' cabinet and 23% of the UAE Parliament, the Federal National Council. Moreover, we have 23,000 business women with investments worth more than 50 billion dirhams which is equivalent to around 13 billion Euros.

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At the UAE, we have transformed from empowering women, to empowering the society through women.

”

Since the establishment of the United Arab Emirates in 1971, the mother of our nation Her Highness Sheikha Fatima bint Mubarak, President of the General Women's Union, paved the way for UAE women's political participation and women's accession to the Federal National Council. For decades, Her Highness has been a champion for women's empowerment in the Arab world in general and in the UAE in particular. As a direct consequence of Her Highness' leadership, today, Emirati women are in various leadership roles, helping to define and implement the country's strategic direction across all sectors of the government and society. At the UAE, we have transformed from empowering women, to empowering the society through women.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

No doubt, we, and the women of the world, have made great strides, but we find ourselves today living in very critical times with immense challenges. At a time when the quality of life has risen to extraordinary heights due to science and technology, communications, health management, and transportation, we do have far more challenges

to meet. From the spread of violent extremism to political protectionism and all the way up to global warming and scarcity of resources, all these are challenges that are threatening our present and our future, and all of these challenges are rooted in culture.

I dare say that one of our greatest challenges today is the spread of violent extremism. The spread of a mentality that makes it permissible to take life based on difference. Difference of religion, race or even difference of ideas.

The spread of political protectionism is also threatening our world. Partly a reaction to extremism, partly a reaction to failed globalization but mostly a reaction to a growing culture of fear. We fear for our jobs, fear for our values, fear for our religion and traditions, fear from others, fear from losing resources and opportunities and fear for identity, and our reaction towards all of that is being protective about it. This fear has given rise to extreme political culture that is close to the extremist mentality that marks the acts of terrorism and violence that are disguised by all religions. But fear is a state of mind, that is set in cultural paradigms and if we are to defeat it we need to address that fear.

Culture, ladies and gentlemen, is at the heart of our remedy for present and future challenges.

Establishing cultural norms is at the heart of what women do, since the creation of man, women were the force of the greatest act of transformation: birth, and the source of an infant's first perception of the world and their cognitive activities. Women have always been agents of change and transformation throughout the ages. This is the role not to be forgotten and the role that is much needed today to bring the changes needed to address some of our major challenges.

Our societies need to be empowered with the right cultural attitude that is based on respect for human right and responsibility for humanity and there is no one better equipped than women to empower societies towards a cultural change that will potentially avert the great risks we are facing.

More than before, we need a cultural revolution on a global scale led by women, powered by women and delivered by women and men. We need to bring women back to the foreground of creating and establishing the values of tolerance and respect for

diversity. We need women to be the conscience of the world.

To do so, we also need to harness the power of women. We have not used technical advancement in social media or telecommunication to crowdsource women across the world to magnify their power and impact. There are 3.7 billion females around the world and the potential of harnessing their power is great if we can connect them.

The current frameworks that measure women's economic need to be expanded to allow for measuring their cultural impact and influence.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The time has come for the women of the world to take charge. We have the power to end, even the deepest of divisions in our societies, and we can do so! It will take women leaders from all walks of life coming together and exercising the power inherent in us.

Ending such dangerous divisions will require a shift in culture; it will require a collective effort from women who lead as political leaders; women who lead as social leaders; women who lead as religious leaders, and women who lead corporations and organizations in the private sector.

“ We women do not need anybody to grant us the right to exercise the leadership inherent in us... Indeed, history stands witness to countless women pioneers who took charge, on their own, and changed the world. ”

Most importantly, it will require women who lead as mothers; and women who lead in every facet of life by doing the things that only women can do exceptionally well – change the world through tolerance and moderation; change the world through love and understanding; through persuasion and influence; and change the world through the greatest power of all – SOFT POWER!

We women do not need anybody to grant us the right to exercise the leadership inherent in us..... Indeed, history stands witness to countless women pioneers

who took charge, on their own, and changed the world.

The world needs us women more today than any other point in history. Let us answer the call to action.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Through soft power, we can truly change society and transform lives. We can overcome long established barriers to tolerance and hope, and we can eradicate the culture of hate and terror.

Over the course of today's important proceedings, we will discuss, analyze and debate new paradigms to harness the tremendous soft power of women to help solve the greatest challenges of our time. I would like to propose three action items to be considered for inclusion in the output resolution of this important higher conference:

Action 1. A call to establish a new global framework, with measurable targets, specifically focused on developing more effective ways for accelerating women's empowerment in order to prevent conflict in our world where division is increasingly driving socio-economic and political dynamics that often lead to extreme violence. We need no less than a cultural revolution on a global scale, enabled through soft power, and guided through true partnership between government, parliament, the private sector and society. I believe that government and parliament cannot do this alone. In order to succeed, private sector and leaders of society will have to play a central role. A good innovative way of addressing this, is to establish a "Soft Power Council" as we did in the UAE.

Action 2. We need new innovative ways to harness the power of women, at local and global levels, by better utilizing technical advancements in social media to multiply the power and impact of women across the world.

Action 3. For the last action item, I would like to propose that the output statement, which we will adopt at the end of today's proceedings, invokes reference to the Abu Dhabi Declaration of the Global Summit of Women Speakers of Parliament of December 2016 under the theme "United for Shaping the Future". The Summit brought together Women Speakers of Parliament from around the world, along with men and women leaders of government, society and the private sector, scientist, innovators

and youth to discuss the long-term implications of megatrends related to three important areas:

- 1) The rapidly changing political and economic dynamics,
- 2) Global warming and resource scarcity, and
- 3) The transformative innovations in science and technology.

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Women are not any more in need of power, they are the source of power.

”

The Summit concluded with the Abu Dhabi Declaration that underscores the role of women leaders and women members of society in overcoming the grand challenges of our time and of the future.

Clause 18 of the Declaration's "Action Imperatives" calls for Advancing Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment. It emphasizes the importance of accelerating women's participation in all aspects and at all levels of the political participation, and the elimination of discrimination and violence against women. It also addresses inequality in economic opportunities, and ends with an important call for close partnership between women and men for achieving those ends.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Women are not any more in need of power, they are the source of power.

Thank you.

# THE POWER OF CONVENING FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

**H.E. Ms Rula Ghani**, First Lady of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

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Distinguished members of the audience, I come to you in Peace.

It is a privilege to find myself addressing such a distinguished audience and I would like to thank UNESCO and its Director-General, Ms. Irina Bokova for reaching out to me. I hope my observations will bring added value to the ensuing debates.

As the theme of this conference is rather broad, I have focused on one particular topic: The use of convening power to reaffirm women's role in society and encourage them to become leaders. The case of Afghanistan and the long road to Peace.

In my very short tenure as First Lady of Afghanistan—I am just completing my third year—I have been able to meet with quite a few of my compatriots.

Hundreds of groups have come to me from different corners of the country — mostly groups of women and young people from all walks of life. We sit down and talk. They unburden their feelings and share their concerns. I listen, I encourage them to find solutions appropriate to their situation, and within the capabilities of my small office, I try to facilitate their journey to improvement.

One common grievance is the people's frustration with the ongoing insecurity and uncertainty that still pervades our country. One third of our provinces are deemed unsafe and the intermittent bouts of extreme violence—we just had one in Kabul less than a month ago—are constant reminders that, like many other post-conflict countries, we are still in a state of latent war.

Last winter, I had a revelation. News had come from the central province of Ghor that 29 members of one extended family had been slaughtered overnight. The media had reported that Daesh was responsible. The president, my husband, decided to go and see for himself and I went with him. To make a very long story short, we found out that actually the massacre

was the result of a local feud with one proponent being the head of a militia with strong ties to a highly-placed official in Kabul.

We may be under constant attack from outside insurgents and our valiant soldiers are paying a high price defending the country, but simultaneously, we, among ourselves, are still operating under a reign of violence fostered by decades of conflict. And though the rule of law is slowly gaining ground, we still have a long way to go before people's mentality shifts back from a mode of violence and open confrontation to that of peaceful coexistence.

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The surest way to people's mind is through the soft yet formidable power of culture ... Culture is the glue that holds together a people and reflects its deepest convictions.

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And here I wholeheartedly concur with the preamble to the UNESCO constitution which states: "Since wars begin in minds of men, it is in minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed."

The surest way to people's mind is through the soft yet formidable power of culture.

Culture is this strange amalgam of instincts, beliefs, and feelings that surreptitiously take hold of a person as he or she grows within a community. It is Past, Present and Future wrapped into a sense of belonging, of being part of a whole.

Culture is the glue that holds together a people and reflects its deepest convictions.

Culture is also the channel through which a people expresses itself.

Novels, poems, plays, songs and dances, paintings and sculptures, films, pictures, videos, etc., all are outlets that allow the display of a whole range of emotions, disappointments, hurts, aspirations, and hopes.

Culture is organic. It may evolve with the evolution of historical circumstances but to be durable any change to culture needs to come from within, it needs to be owned by its people.

Numerous sittings and talks with all the groups that came to see me had already indicated the existence of a deep-seated weariness with war, insecurity and destruction. Women in particular complained of additional restrictions to their movements in the provinces because of insecurity, which in turn made it difficult for them to avail themselves of education, health and other services. It also hampered their efforts to engage in economic activities. In a prevalent atmosphere of violence, they also related numerous instances of domestic abuse and violence.

I have no illusion as to the extent of my leverage. Besides, I do not believe in aggressive changes imposed from above. Instead of touting "women's rights" (to which any man in his right mind would answer "how about my rights?") I speak of human dignity and of mutual respect between men and women. I have encouraged women to seek respect first within their own families, and become a more active participant in decision-making. I have also urged them to start an income generating activity, no matter how small in order to strengthen their role within the family.

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I have encouraged women to seek respect first within their own families, and become a more active participant in decision-making. I have also urged them to start an income generating activity, no matter how small in order to strengthen their role within the family.

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One reason that I am a firm believer in women's importance within the family is that women already assume large responsibilities in the management of the household and the upbringing of children.

Acknowledging their contribution is only right and goes a long way towards enhancing their social status.

Another reason is that I have very fond memories of pre-conflict Afghan society. As a young bride 43 years ago, I got to intimately know my in-laws extended family, both its urban branch and its provincial one. Women commanded respect, whether they stayed home or engaged in professional activities outside the home. Often, the most formidable character within the extended family was the grandmother who carried, on a huge ring, the keys to all the cupboards and skilfully ruled the household.

Consequently, calling for respecting women is actually calling for a return to Afghan culture that years of war had side-lined.

But how could women play a role in reducing the violence and bringing about Peace?

In addition to welcoming groups of women from all over Afghanistan, my office realized early on the importance of organizing events. At first, we organized gatherings to celebrate various religious and cultural events (Nowruz, Eid, Iftars during Ramadan, Mother's Day, etc.) as well as occasional teas to acknowledge the achievements of one group or another.

People showed eagerness to participate and actually enjoined my office not to forget them when drawing the lists of participants for the next gathering.

Soon we decided to take advantage of a gathering to showcase cultural activities or to discuss a particular theme such as the preparation for an international donor conference.

Then last year, the opportunity presented itself to organize a Symposium in Kabul. Two preceding symposiums for Afghan women had taken place in Washington, DC, in 2013, and in Oslo, in 2014, both organized by international donors with the participation of members of Afghan Civil Society.

Our office was approached by the donors to take part in organizing the Kabul symposium and we soon took the lead given our home advantage.

In May, 2016, we convened around the theme "Afghan Women and their Role in Afghan Society". More recently, the theme of the May, 2017 symposium was "Afghan Women, Messengers of Peace." We had discovered the Power of Convening.

Of course, to the members of this distinguished audience, the Power of Convening is a matter of fact and international agencies such as UNESCO have



been using it for a long time. Today's conference is just one illustration. Still bear with me as I quote a passage from an article entitled "the Power of Convening for Social Impact" from a Stanford University Publication, as it articulates my feelings accurately:

"Bringing people together in an environment that encourages and facilitates idea exchange is one of the most powerful communication strategies for driving change.

Our initial, somewhat naïve assumption that we needed to help "build a field" was turned upside down, and we instead discovered an opportunity to curate a safe and supportive space for practitioners from across all sectors to come together and explore new models for social impact. We realized that we didn't need to build a movement; the movement was already there.

But we did have an opportunity to help shape and amplify the work of those dedicated to accelerating new ways of thinking about global social progress."

The most recent symposium, "Afghan Women, Messengers of Peace," took place over four days and involved about 300 participants, mostly women. They were selected with several criteria in mind: over a third came from far flung provinces where insecurity prevails and where they had attempted to initiate peaceful interactions between warring communities.

Others had been the victims of terrorist conflagrations whether in the cities or the provinces. Others were social activists who had focused on training their fellow citizens in conflict resolution. Others still were high civil servants from relevant ministries such as Women's Affairs, Education, Labour and Social Affairs, Information and Culture, and Rural Development.

A small group of women from the Police and the Army were also there as well as a handful of youth that had championed diversity and inclusion in their own activities. Last but not least were a group of women from a formerly dissident party that had just negotiated with the government its peaceful re-entry in Afghanistan.

Orientation took place the first day. The second day featured three panel discussions with audience participation; the third day was dedicated to a workshop on conflict resolution; and the last day all participants met in nine small working groups to decide on a plan of action. Their reports were then discussed in a plenary session. A tentative list of recommendations was then announced at the closing session.

I cannot describe the atmosphere of elation, of feverish determination, and of joyful camaraderie, that animated the debates.

My fervent hope is that this symposium will mark the beginning of a social movement that will involve all of Afghanistan. Already some follow up events are being planned in some provinces.

But the most important result is that the women who took part in this 4-day brainstorming event had reached the conclusion that yes, they had a significant role to play both within their families but also within their broader community, in standing up to violence in their everyday life and in fostering an environment of peaceful interaction where frictions and disagreements are resolved through deliberation, mediation and negotiation.

After all, Afghanistan is the land of Shuras and Jirgas!

# MAKING GENDER EQUALITY A REALITY

**H.E. Ms Tarja Halonen**, Former President of the Republic of Finland

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Director General Irina Bokova, Distinguished High-Level Participants and Fellow Speakers, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to be here today. We have many distinguished speakers and panelists discussing maybe the one most important issue of our time – gender equality. It is an issue that should not be on our agenda anymore, but as women and girls still are at a disadvantaged position in every society we still have work to do.

Thank you, UNESCO, for showing leadership and for organizing this event. You have done a wonderful job in promoting women’s empowerment in general and gender equality in education. You are the organization championing the breaking of gender stereotypes and showing the importance of role models in changing cultural norms.

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If we want to build a better future for all that is socially just, economically prosperous and inclusive and ecologically sustainable we need to make sure that women and girls enjoy the same rights and opportunities as men and boys.

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Today UNESCO is needed more than ever, especially as the young generation is the largest ever, and the foundations our young people need through education and culture are absolutely key in how they will be treating and leading this world in the future. I am glad that my own country Finland has also been very active in promoting gender equality internationally, including within the work of UNESCO.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Through the Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals we have finally managed to agree that if we want to build a better future for all that is socially just, economically prosperous and

inclusive and ecologically sustainable we need to make sure that women and girls enjoy the same rights and opportunities as men and boys.

Gender is not considered anymore as soft politics or a marginal issue, but a key core question of global importance. We have promised to leave no one behind, so let’s not do it. This is a good time to move from the discussion of “why gender equality matters” to the discussion of “how we make equality a reality”.

Today’s world is full of uncertainties. Wars, uncontrolled migration, land degradation, economic crises, natural disasters, political turmoil and an increasing number of unforeseen events affect our lives and particularly the lives of the poor and marginalized people. This is, however, the world in which we live in and in which we have to build a more sustainable future.

There is no time to waste. The problems are very complex and the issues are interlinked. So are the solutions. That’s why the Sustainable Development Goals touch upon all aspects of our lives and societies. They need to be implemented on a broad front.

And the implementation requires the efforts of not only the governments and international organizations, but also the private sector, academia and civil society. Individuals must also take action in their private lives. The positive thing is that by contributing to sustainability you also contribute directly to your own wellbeing.

Dear Friends,

Already in the Rio+20 Summit we stated that in order to achieve a sustainable future, we need all the human resources available. That means also the poor, youth and women. As we know, gender equality is a human rights issue, but it is also a very smart investment.

I have noticed that some people tend to understand better the language of economics. Sometimes we

have to argue that gender equality also brings great economic benefits to families, communities and whole societies. There is much statistical evidence and data to support this. According to UN Women, for example, the increased educational attainment of women and girls accounts for about 50% of the economic growth in OECD countries over the past 50 years.

A mother's education not only influences whether her children and especially her daughters attend school, but also has an impact on the reduction of child and maternal mortality and reducing poverty. Educated women and girls will also have it easier to claim their rights, seek financing for their economic activities and participate meaningfully in decision-making.

Finland is a good example also. I have been asked many times why, a relatively small country, Finland is ranked at the top in many international comparisons. Our education system plays, of course, a vital part. But adopting gender equality – when gender wasn't on the agenda – was extremely important both for the democracy and for the whole development of our country.

Finland was a poor backward territory of the Swedish Kingdom for 700 years until Sweden lost a war to Russia and we became an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire for 100 years. After we gained our independence in 1917 – exactly 100 years ago – a bloody civil war was fought followed by two wars against the Soviet Union in the 1940's. The beginning was thus not easy.

However, our forefathers were very brave and granted Finnish women full political rights, the first country in the world to do this in 1906. Women could vote and be candidates in elections. There was no evidence that it would work or be a good idea at the time. Since then women have been a key factor in building our welfare society in which gender equality has been central element. Girls and boys have been equally educated, labour force participation of women is high, public services that benefit particularly women and mothers exist. The strong commitment to gender equality has led into mainstreaming gender perspective into all policy sectors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Countries do better - across every metric - when they tap the talents of all their people. Although

one should not cherry pick any favorite goals from the SDGs or our broader efforts in building a sustainable future, I would highlight the importance of particularly education, sexual and reproductive health and rights and the life prospects of the youth.

In this context, I would like to mention a report published by the High-Level Working Group on Health and Human Rights of Women, Children and Adolescents established by the WHO and the UN Human Rights Commissioner. I had the honour to serve as its Co-Chair. Our recommendations in the report are based on three key ideas: First, that you cannot improve health if you fail to uphold rights. Second, that you cannot realize rights if you fail to uphold health. Thirdly, that none of this is possible without bold leadership at the highest levels. We believe that the need to realize the right to health and through health has never been more urgent.

Sexual and reproductive health and rights is a central element in our recommendations. Having access to comprehensive sexuality education, the possibility to freely decide on the number and spacing of children and having access to health services ensures that everyone can complete education and gain a profession. SRHR lies at the core of everybody's opportunity to chart their own lives and to have control over the most personal decisions of their lives.

“ It is important to allow boys and men to have new types of role models and chances in life to pursue careers, lifestyles and family roles that lead to greater sharing and equality in life and change attitudes and social norms. ”

One aspect that we should also keep in mind is that men and boys need to be kept involved in our work. It is important to allow boys and men to have new types of role models and chances in life to pursue careers, lifestyles and family roles that lead to greater sharing and equality in life and change attitudes and social norms.

Dear Friends,

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“Women need to be also involved in all decision making. Too often we see only men making decisions about women’s lives.”

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Women need to be also involved in all decision making. Too often we see only men making decisions about women’s lives. Still worldwide for example only 22% of parliamentarians are women. Many of us here have worked hard for gender equality and we have broken different barriers in our lives – as I have also done. From being the first female Union lawyer in Finland to being the first female Minister for Foreign Affairs and then the President of the Republic. But what is important is that other women will follow.

I trust that events like this today will encourage us, and especially younger women, to be more active and claim their voice in society for the benefit of everyone.

I look forward to hearing my fellow speakers and participants in the following discussions.

Thank you.

# UN MONDE MOINS INJUSTE

**H.E. M<sup>me</sup> Teresa Fernández de la Vega**, Ancienne Vice Première Ministre, Présidente de la Fundación Mujeres por África

Madame la Directrice,

Mesdames et Messieurs les représentants des autorités,

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Permettez-moi que je salue particulièrement deux intervenants de cette séance d'ouverture: Madame Tarja Halonen, avec qui j'ai tissé des liens très particuliers depuis l'époque des rencontres des Femmes Africaines pour un Monde Meilleur; et Monsieur le président Mohamed Bouamatou, dont l'immense générosité et l'engagement ressortent particulièrement aujourd'hui, et qui ont fait de lui un des principaux membres du Conseil d'administration de la Fondation Femmes pour l'Afrique que j'ai l'honneur de présider. Merci, cher Monsieur le Président.

Mesdames et Messieurs,

Je voudrais remercier l'UNESCO, par le biais de sa directrice Irina Bokova, de m'avoir invitée à participer à cette réunion. Une réunion utile et nécessaire. Une conférence où montrer que, face aux incertitudes, face aux injustices, face aux menaces, face aux questions sans réponses qui surgissent dans notre monde globalisé en ce moment de changement d'ère, il y a des institutions, des organisations, tout genre de groupes, et surtout, des millions de citoyens qui sont prêts à livrer la bataille pour faire de ce changement une opportunité d'amélioration.

Et ils veulent le faire avec leurs cerveaux et leurs âmes, avec la raison et les connaissances, sans armes, sans violence, sans impositions, sans intolérance. Il faut montrer au monde ce pouvoir "soft" mais immense car il représente l'opportunité de refonder un système qui s'écroule à vue d'œil.

Une profonde crise économique, sociale, politique, démocratique, institutionnelle est en train de secouer ses fondations. Tous les jours, la même révolution technologique qui a rendu possible le village mondial, qui a connecté nos vies et nos

destins, détruit des milliers de postes de travail et nous sombrons dans une décadence frappée, malheureusement souvent, par le marteau terroriste.

Nous assistons à la fragilisation de notre démocratie qui génère, comme le signale Todorov, ses propres ennemis.

Oui, ce pouvoir que nous représentons et que nous voyons dans cette réunion, est le seul capable de faire face aux autres forces puissantes qui, profitant de la peur et de l'insatisfaction de tant de personnes dans cette situation difficile, mettent en pratique et diffusent des politiques de haine. Des discours qui favorisent la notion de "l'autre", de la différence, de l'ennemi.

Zygmunt Bauman, à la fin de sa vie, a confronté l'utopie avec la rétro-utopie, la recherche de solutions dans la solidité d'un passé idéalisé, face à la société actuelle qu'il qualifia d'"essentielle et définitivement incorrigible". En effet, pour la première fois depuis longtemps, depuis beaucoup de générations, nous pensons que les choses seront plus difficiles pour nos enfants que pour nous.

Cependant, Bauman lui-même, laissa une porte ouverte. Nous ne réussirons à surmonter ce changement d'époque — affirme-t-il — que si nous unissons nos mains et nous cessons de chercher l'"autre".

Et c'est ce que nous voulons faire. C'est la raison pour laquelle nous sommes ici, car nous sommes encore capables de visualiser un monde moins injuste, plus incluant, plus pluriel. Un monde sans traces des "autres", d'autrui, d'ennemis.

Je souhaite signaler, mesdames et messieurs, qu'il existe une grande partie des citoyens, la moitié de la population globale, qui est en mesure de réaliser particulièrement bien ce travail, car elle le fait depuis des siècles. Il s'agit de nous, les femmes.

Pour nous les « autres » n'existent pas, ils ne peuvent pas exister car c'est contre cette notion, qui en différenciant discrimine, que nous avons lutté avec le féminisme. Pour les femmes, avec les femmes, l'espoir existe toujours et nous poursuivons notre lutte en faveur de l'utopie car, souvent bien lentement, et même parfois à reculons — comme actuellement, dans cette époque agitée — nous avançons sur notre chemin vers la pleine jouissance du statut de citoyenneté.

Notre chemin vers l'égalité, vers la pleine jouissance de nos droits et avec nos droits ceux de tous. Le bénéfice que ceci rapporte, non seulement aux femmes mais à l'ensemble de la société, est évident.

Là où les femmes arrivent, comptent et décident. Là où elles exercent le leadership qui leur revient, les avancées sont manifestes. Certaines très visibles et évaluables, comme celles résultant de l'action des femmes dans les affaires, ou l'obtention de la paix, et d'autres moins faciles à exprimer avec des chiffres, mais infiniment puissantes, ayant un effet antibiotique très important contre la maladie qui touche notre système, qui est une maladie de la démocratie. Car cet antibiotique est constitué de valeurs. Il est constitué de liberté, d'égalité, de fraternité et je suis ravie de le dire là où, justement, a été consacrée cette trinité bénie.

Car récupérer les valeurs démocratiques et éthiques qui impliquent que nous, les femmes, nous placions enfin là où il nous revient en toute justice, des valeurs dont personne dans le monde n'a joui, même pas dans les pays avancés, est la plus grande révolution, le tour de vis le plus complet que nous puissions donner à notre processus de civilisation.

Car uniquement ces valeurs constituent les clés de voute de l'idée, du concept de la démocratie, qui peuvent forger le nouveau ciment d'un vivre ensemble inclusif et libre de haine au niveau mondial.

Ne pas placer cet objectif en tête de ceux que la communauté internationale doit poursuivre est de la simple myopie. Car si nous le faisons, tous les autres connaîtront une extraordinaire impulsion. Nous ne trouverons pas d'innovation plus puissante que celle que nous, les femmes, offrons. Car nous défendons des valeurs universelles qui nous unissent, toutes et tous, les droits des hommes et des femmes, les principes démocratiques. Elles ont été, et le

resteront toujours, les compagnes de voyage de la lutte des femmes.

Ce socle commun, qui est justement celui qui est attaqué par les totalitarismes en tous genres, celui qui a transformé le mouvement des femmes en mouvement global, celui qui, avec toutes les particularités culturelles, historiques ou religieuses qui existent, est la base d'un vivre ensemble libre, respectueux, juste et pacifique.

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La bataille contre les totalitarismes, contre le sectarisme ... est une bataille intellectuelle ... Ce n'est qu'avec de la confiance et en comprenant ces valeurs que nous pourrons construire un monde meilleur.

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La professeure tunisienne Faouzia Charfi affirme que pour nous, comme pour tout authentique démocrate, la bataille contre les totalitarismes, contre le sectarisme, contre l'exclusion, contre les extrémismes qui minent notre monde est une bataille intellectuelle. Et elle a raison. Il n'existe pas de raccourcis. Ce n'est qu'avec de la confiance et en comprenant ces valeurs que nous pourrons construire un monde meilleur.

D'abord, plaider pour l'universalité des droits de l'homme. Cet attachement aux valeurs universelles ne signifie pas que l'on ne reconnaisse pas l'histoire et le patrimoine culturel de chaque pays. Il signifie le respect de l'individu et l'adhésion aux principes d'un Etat moderne, qui construit son Droit sur la base de principes et de valeurs.

Nous ne devons pas céder à ceux qui refusent l'adoption et le respect des valeurs universelles, sous prétexte qu'elles seraient associées à un monde qui serait étranger à leur culture. Ces derniers clament leur adhésion à la démocratie. Mais la démocratie ne se limite à un processus électoral, elle doit également signifier un Etat de droit et le respect des droits humains, des droits et libertés sans distinction de sexe.

Aucune politique, aucune idéologie ou croyance peut impliquer le rejet de l'autre ni la remise en cause du vivre ensemble qui suppose l'adhésion à des valeurs communes dont l'égalité entre les femmes et les

hommes. Le vivre ensemble ne peut pas accepter la remise en cause de la mixité, qui ne gêne pas certains défenseurs du relativisme culturel sous prétexte du droit à la différence. Refuser l'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes au nom de la spécificité culturelle n'est pas acceptable.

Dans cette lutte, le rôle de l'éducation et de la culture est fondamental. L'école, le lycée, l'université ont une grande responsabilité pour l'avenir de nos jeunes, la responsabilité de transmettre des valeurs universellement acceptées, c'est-à-dire, le partage de valeurs dont la paix et la liberté.

Nous avons aujourd'hui les moyens technologiques de diffuser le savoir, mais nous avons à penser des contenus qui permettent de soutenir l'action des enseignants dans leur travail de formation. Il faut plaider pour l'autonomie de la science et penser les contenus dans le sens où le respect de la diversité ne doit pas réduire la portée du savoir universel et ne signifie nullement qu'il puisse y avoir une restriction à la reconnaissance des droits de l'homme sous prétexte d'une culture particulière à respecter, une restriction qui peut mener très loin dans le refus de partager le savoir.

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S'engager aux côtés des artistes est très important, car, aux voies de la raison et de la science, ils ajoutent celles de l'émotion et de la subjectivité, tout aussi indispensables pour restaurer un monde vraiment humain.

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La montée des extrémismes se traduit par des comportements nouveaux face au savoir et a eu un impact sur une grande partie de la jeunesse formatée pour refuser tout ce qui pourrait remettre en cause leur vision intolérante. De l'ouest à l'est, nous trouvons des exemples de réalités alternatives, déni de données scientifiques, manque de respect de la vérité historique. Et nous devons faire face à cette situation de la connaissance, de l'éducation, ainsi que de la culture et de l'art.

S'engager aux côtés des artistes est très important, car, aux voies de la raison et de la science, ils ajoutent celles de l'émotion et de la subjectivité, tout aussi indispensables pour restaurer un monde vraiment humain. C'est en prenant appui sur les

artistes que l'universalité peut être partagée et que peut se réaliser la résistance aux intolérants.

Pour cela, nous devons nous appuyer sur les jeunes. La jeunesse est engagée pour le futur. Ils et elles sont créatifs, ils et elles lancent des startups et exploitent le numérique pour abolir les distances, ils et elles seront demain producteurs de contenu technologique à l'échelle mondiale. Ils et elles inaugurent une autre manière de travailler dans un mode collaboratif et de concevoir l'espace du travail en le partageant.

La jeunesse est pour la défense des libertés et refuse que l'on porte atteinte aux minorités. Ils sont convaincus que les avancées scientifiques peuvent constituer un atout pour la préservation de la planète plutôt que sa dégradation et mettent en action leurs convictions en s'impliquant dans le cadre associatif. Ces jeunes nous montrent un des chemins possibles pour l'avenir où la liberté rime avec le respect de l'autre, où la rupture ne signifie pas le chaos, où la politique ne signifie pas ambition personnelle mais l'engagement pour le développement. Alors, peut-être qu'encore une fois, le futur sera le fruit de l'amour des jeunes pour leur pays et leur sens de la responsabilité.

Misons sur les jeunes, investissons dans la jeunesse et avec eux abandonnons les ombres de cette époque.

Merci beaucoup.

# EGALITÉ DES CHANCES ; EGALITÉ DES GENRES

**M. Mohamed Hmayen Bouamatou**, Sponsor de la Conférence, Fondateur et Président de la Fondation pour l'égalité des chances en Afrique

Chers amis,

Merci d'être venus si nombreux à cette conférence qui doit tous nous aider à promouvoir l'autonomisation et le leadership des femmes dans le monde.

Depuis presque trente ans, je m'active dans mon pays, puis dans ma sous-région, pour faciliter l'accès à l'éducation des enfants, et à l'enseignement supérieur des femmes. J'ai construit de nombreuses écoles primaires, secondaires et des lycées dans mon pays la Mauritanie. J'ai participé au financement du nouveau lycée français de Nouakchott tant j'attache de l'importance à l'excellence, et je contribue au fonctionnement d'un centre au Maroc hébergeant des lycéennes désireuses de pouvoir suivre des études supérieures. J'ai également fait construire en 2004 l'extension de la Maternité de l'hôpital Cheikh Zayed à Nouakchott pour lutter contre la mortalité maternelle.

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Chaque individu sur notre planète devrait pouvoir bénéficier de toutes les infrastructures lui permettant de progresser, d'apprendre, de s'éduquer, de se cultiver.

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Ces actes de philanthropie me paraissent totalement nécessaires car je crois en l'égalité des chances. Je considère que chaque individu sur notre planète devrait pouvoir bénéficier de toutes les infrastructures lui permettant de progresser, d'apprendre, de s'éduquer, de se cultiver. Le renforcement de l'Etat de droit doit être au cœur de nos objectifs pour que le pouvoir ne soit plus un raccourci pour l'enrichissement. Les droits de l'Homme doivent être respectés pour lutter contre la pratique de l'esclavage et la torture sur toute ses

formes, quel que soit le pays qui le pratique ou l'être qui le subit.

C'est la raison pour laquelle j'ai créé en 2015, avec mes amis Me Georges Henri Beauthier et Me William Bourdon la Fondation pour l'Egalité des Chances en Afrique, qui s'efforce à soutenir des projets renforçant l'égalité des chances par l'éducation, la justice, la santé et les droits de l'Homme. A la recherche de l'égalité des chances, et donc de l'égalité des genres, la Fondation soutient par exemple :

- le Dr Denis Mukwege, « l'homme qui répare les femmes », en soignant des victimes de crimes sexuels de masse en République démocratique du Congo,

- la Maison Shalom de l'activiste burundaise Marguerite Barankitse qui accueille et assure l'éducation de milliers d'orphelins,

- ou encore en Mauritanie l'Association des Femmes Chef de Famille de l'activiste féministe et anti-esclavagiste Aminetou Mint Moctar.

Il était naturel pour la Fondation d'appuyer l'UNESCO dans l'organisation de cette conférence. Car depuis votre arrivée à la tête de cette organisation, Madame la Directrice générale, l'UNESCO est devenue incontournable dans la promotion de valeurs sensibles à la Fondation. Vous avez su ériger comme priorités le développement de l'Afrique et l'égalité des genres que l'UNESCO considère comme un droit fondamental de la personne humaine, un fondement de la justice sociale, et une nécessité économique.

L'UNESCO a su se concentrer sur l'accès à l'enseignement secondaire pour les femmes et sur l'alphabétisation. Au Kenya par exemple, la formation offerte à 30 chefs d'établissement et 60 professeurs du secondaire a permis d'assurer un nombre conséquent de formateurs d'enseignants



qui sont maintenant attentifs aux questions de genre. En Ethiopie et en Tanzanie, l'UNESCO a mis en place un projet d'engagement participatif pour l'éducation des filles visant à réduire leur taux d'abandon scolaire. Au Sénégal, 6500 filles et femmes réparties dans plus de 200 classes ont reçu une formation et ont amélioré leur niveau d'alphabétisation. Et tant d'autres projets ont été mis en place.

Depuis plusieurs années maintenant, l'UNESCO a renforcé son plaidoyer pour la promotion de la place de la femme dans la culture. En 2011, l'UNESCO a créé un partenariat mondial pour la scolarisation des filles et des femmes. En 2015, l'organisation a créé l'Alliance mondiale genre et médias et a placé l'égalité des genres au centre du Programme pour la gestion des transformations sociales, le MOST, qui est un programme scientifique intergouvernemental dédié aux transformations sociales.

Alors comment aujourd'hui ne pas apporter son soutien aux activités de l'UNESCO ?

Dans un monde de plus en plus clivé, dans un monde déchiré par l'extrémisme religieux ou nationaliste, par le repli sur soi, le radicalisme, la haine, le terrorisme, il est plus important que jamais de s'assurer que les femmes ne soient plus perçues comme une minorité, qu'elles ne soient plus placées sous le joug autoritaire de l'homme, qu'elles bénéficient des mêmes droits politiques, sociaux, culturels et économiques que les hommes.

Alors que j'appartiens à une religion qui est souvent stigmatisée comme celle participant à la soumission de la femme, je crois avec force à l'ascension sociale de la femme dans toutes nos sociétés. Moi le premier, musulman et simple fils d'un commerçant traditionnel, je suis fier de mes filles Leila et Ghana. La première vient de terminer major de son PHD à la *Fox School of Business* de la *Temple University de Philadelphie*, la seconde va commencer sa troisième année de droit à l'Université Paris 2 Assas.

Il n'est jamais facile de parler des questions de genre. Ce débat peut rendre les individus inconfortables, voire les irriter. Parce qu'il n'est jamais agréable de penser à changer le statu quo. Mais durant cette conférence, personne ne doit avoir peur de s'exprimer ou de ne pas se sentir en position de parler. Ici ce sont les libertés de penser

et de s'exprimer qui doivent dicter toute forme de débat.

Alors oui, tous ensemble, unissons nos forces pour pérenniser l'héritage de Mme Bukova. Pour que l'égalité des genres reste au cœur des priorités du 21<sup>e</sup> siècle.

“ La société du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle ... s'est construite sur une maquette unique, celle de l'homme. Or le 21<sup>e</sup> siècle doit être celui des femmes. Car il n'y aura pas de paix, ni de justice, ni de développement durable sans la moitié de la population mondiale.

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La société du 20<sup>e</sup> siècle, comme celles des siècles derniers, s'est construite sur une maquette unique, celle de l'homme. Son projet demeure, pour l'essentiel, masculin. Or le 21<sup>e</sup> siècle doit être celui des femmes. Car il n'y aura pas de paix, ni de justice, ni de développement durable sans la moitié de la population mondiale. Car l'égalité des genres est un facteur déterminant de la réalisation de tous les objectifs de développement convenus au niveau international.

Tous ensemble, formons le vœu que le prochain Directeur général, ou plutôt je l'espère, la prochaine Directrice générale, garde vivantes ces priorités fondamentales que sont l'égalité des genres et l'Afrique.

Nous sommes tous frères, disait Gandhi. Aujourd'hui, nous devons tous être sœurs. Je vous remercie.

# PART 1

# WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

# 1. THE POWER OF WOMEN'S AND GIRLS' EDUCATION

How can gender equality be advanced in and through education? In this panel, the participants shared their personal and professional experiences to explore strategies and initiatives that empower women and girls to gain the knowledge and skills they need. The panel also recommended how UNESCO can best work to promote gender equality in education, as well as quality education for girls and women.

## PANEL PARTICIPANTS

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### MODERATOR

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- ▶ **Ms Anita Erskine**, Entrepreneur and Broadcaster

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### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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- ▶ **Ms Helene Öberg**, State Secretary to the Minister for Education of Sweden

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### PANELISTS

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- ▶ **Ms Aïcha Bah Diallo**, Founder of the Forum for African Women Educationalists, former Assistant Director General, a.i. of UNESCO's Education Sector
- ▶ **Ms Annie Black**, Deputy Executive Director of the Foundation L'Oréal
- ▶ **Ms Meagan Fallone**, Chief Executive Officer of the Barefoot College
- ▶ **Ms Evernice Munando**, Founder and Executive Director of the Female Students Network Trust
- ▶ **Ms Mistoura Salou**, Head of SRAJ and Gender of CeRADIS
- ▶ **Dr Hayat Sindi**, Founder and President of the Institute for Imagination and Ingenuity (i2institute), UNESCO Goodwill Ambassador

# CONTEXT

There has been immense progress in achieving gender parity in primary education. However, numerous challenges remain for girls to access, complete and benefit from a full cycle of quality education. Poverty remains the main barrier. Further barriers including discriminatory social norms (early marriage, gender-based violence), safety concerns due to the distance between home and school and inadequate sanitation facilities in schools further impede girls' access to education. Girls are also disadvantaged in terms of learning processes and outcomes. These challenges remain despite evidence that show the wide-ranging benefits of girls' education; an educated girl can be a powerful game changer for herself, her family, her community and her society.

## UNESCO, WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & EDUCATION

Gender equality is inextricably linked with UNESCO's work on Education. The Education Programme addresses gender disparities by promoting gender equality in access to education, within education (content, teaching, learning context and practices) and through education (learning outcomes, life and work opportunities).

Some examples of our work include:

***Better Life, Better Future – Global Partnerships for Girls' and Women's Education:*** launched in 2011, this initiative aims to establish innovative partnerships to support adolescent girls' transition to secondary school and adolescent girls' and women's literacy. ***These are the key projects being implemented under the partnership:*** UNESCO Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education, UNESCO/ UNFPA/UN Women Joint Programme on Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education, UNESCO-HNA Partnership, UNESCO-CJ Strategic Partnership for Girls' Education.

***Joint Programme on Empowering Adolescent Girls and Young Women through Education:*** part of the Better Life, Better Future initiative, this joint programme by UNESCO, UN Women and UNFPA supports multi-sectoral approaches in education, health, skills development and economic empowerment.

***UNESCO Malala Fund for Girls' Right to Education:*** this fund launched in 2012 with funding from the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, aims to expand girls' access to quality, gender-responsive education and safe learning environments, especially in countries affected by conflict and disaster.

***TeachHer:*** a public-private partnership spearheaded by the United States, UNESCO, the Institute of International Education (IIE), Microsoft, Fitbit, and other NGO and private sector partners, this initiative works with governments and educators to ensure teachers have the training they need to prepare girls to pursue careers in STEM/STEAM.

# SUMMARY

**Engaging girls in science:** more action is required to draw girls into science disciplines, for instance by demonstrating the relevance of science in everyday life, demonstrating that it is possible to harness technology to save lives and make sustainable changes (e.g. by producing clean water) and by ensuring that teachers treat girls and boys equally in the classroom.

**Expanding the use of technology:** technology plays a key role in enabling people's access to information. More work is needed to understand its potential benefits and dangers. New ways of making technology more accessible to women and girls at the grassroots level should be explored to enable them to benefit as much as possible from these technical advances.

**Role models are essential to combat gender stereotypes, especially in science:** gender stereotypes constitute a major hurdle to girls' education in general and, in particular, in the science disciplines. Initiatives like the UNESCO-L'Oréal programme for Women in Science that provide role models and boost the visibility of women in science can have a huge impact on how girls see scientific careers.

**Education begins at home:** to work towards quality education, the strong links between the family and

education need to be acknowledged. This includes a focus on lifelong learning. Gender stereotypes also begin at home; the ways girls are socialized informs their career choices and is a further key barrier to their participation in STEM/STEAM disciplines.

**Refining our understanding of 'education':** improving education requires an understanding that education cannot be viewed in isolation; it is part of a wider ecosystem. Education should also be understood holistically: covering home and school and including all the topics needed to prepare girls for life and to boost their confidence, including sexual education and leadership skills. Furthermore, at present, discussions about education risk excluding women who do not come from a traditional educational background and who may be the people who have the strongest need to be involved in the learning process.

**Sexual education can empower girls and prevent early pregnancy and marriage that are key barriers to girls' secondary education:** engaging a broad range of actors, both male and female, in the community (including e.g. religious leaders) can help create a supportive environment for sexual education. In turn, sexual education can help girls avoid early pregnancy and prevent the high drop-out rates observed in some countries between primary and secondary school.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

**Global leadership on education:** UNESCO's contribution to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment through education is recognised as a global excellence. UNESCO shall continue to promote Gender Equality in, within and through quality education and lifelong learning and address the particular vulnerabilities that affect girls and women worldwide in accessing quality and relevant education.

**Innovative partnerships:** UNESCO is commended for its innovative public-private partnerships and is encouraged to continue to engage in innovative partnerships with the private sector to support and sponsor girls' and women's education as a critical element in their empowerment. UNESCO should also engage more with grassroots organisations to boost its presence in the field.

**Collecting sex-disaggregated data:** UNESCO is encouraged to continue its work on data collection

and analysis in this domain, especially on sex-disaggregated data, both through the Institute of Statistics and by building the capacity of institutions responsible for data collection. This will enable us to chart progress towards the 2030 goals and will provide an evidence base for advocacy work.

**Evidence-based advocacy:** UNESCO can further help decision-makers assess the return on investment of education for all the different stakeholders involved and in different socio-economic scenarios.

**Expand work on STEM/STEAM education:** UNESCO is encouraged to broaden its STEAM education initiatives. High-end job opportunities in science, technology and innovation are likely to increase in the near future and can become a strong advantage for women's empowerment in many countries, including in fragile states and countries affected by conflicts and disasters.



Helen Öberg delivering her keynote speech

## RIGHTS, REPRESENTATION & RESOURCES: TOWARDS GENDER EQUALITY IN EDUCATION

### KEYNOTE SPEECH

**Ms Helen Öberg**, State Secretary to the Minister for Education of the Kingdom of Sweden

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking UNESCO for arranging this conference and for inviting me. I feel very inspired and strengthened by being here today together with you from different parts of the world and different functions in society.

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Women and men should have the same opportunities and conditions with regard to education, and paid work, and provide them with the means to achieve life-long economic independence.

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I am proud to be part of the first feminist government in the world. This means that the Swedish government has put gender equality at the very top of our agenda. We make this clear stand because we are convinced that gender equality is the foundation of sustainable development.

The aim of Swedish government's gender equality policy is to ensure women and men enjoy the same power and opportunities to shape society and their own lives. Women and men should have the same opportunities and conditions and with regard to education, and paid work, and provide them with the means to achieve life-long economic independence.

In development cooperation and foreign policy of our government, we work with 3 “R”s. Firstly, women's rights are human rights. Secondly, representation which includes influence over agenda-setting and



decision-making processes at all levels and all areas of society. And thirdly, resources. We need to apply a gender perspective when distributing aid and resources.

Let me start by underlining that gender equality is not just a women's issue. We have talked about it already today, but I want to underline it as well. It's the responsibility of and benefits society as whole. It, therefore, requires active contribution and engagement by men and boys, just as much as from women and girls.

This is also the theme of the photo exhibition "Swedish Dads" that you can see in the main hall of UNESCO today. It reflects on the impact that shared parental leave has on society as a whole.

But let us focus on the situation of women and girls in the world where are we today. Despite a general positive trend, girls in particular still face numerous challenges and barriers in enrolling in school at different levels. Women account for two thirds of illiterate adults in the world: a proportion unchanged over the past two decades.

Gender often influences whether or not children attend or remain in school. There are 42 million 11-15-year-old girls out of school in the world. Only one third of countries have achieved gender parity at secondary level. Boys are twice as likely as girls to attend secondary school.

Across the world, girls are more likely than boys to be out of school. The poorest girls and women from

the most disadvantaged rural areas tend to have the lowest educational attainment levels.

“ One of the primary causes of girls dropping out of school is early marriage or pregnancy. ”

The recent behaviors relate, of course, to social power structures and socially constructed norms that define male and female roles. These gender roles affect the rights, responsibilities and opportunities including their access to and treatment in school.

One of the primary causes of girls dropping out of school is early marriage or pregnancy. It is, therefore, vital to offer young people comprehensive sexual education and contraceptives so that young girls can remain in school as long as possible. It is important for many reasons but this is one of the main important reasons.

If adults and girls stay in school and obtain skills, research shows that they will earn higher income in the future, marry later and have fewer and healthier children. Educated women are more likely to have these working conditions and participate in political progress.

In the long term, secondary education protects girls against HIV and AIDS. This is the reason Sweden recognizes clear links between sexual



Panel: Evernice Munando, Hayat Sindi, Annie Black (from left)

reproductive health rights and areas such as work, economic rights, peaceful societies and the political participation of women.

In Sweden, primary education has been compulsory for both girls and boys since 1842. The Swedish Education Act states that all children and young persons shall have equal access to education in the natural school system and that all education should be the same for all.

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If adults and girls stay in school and obtain skills, research shows that they will earn higher income in the future, marry later and have fewer and healthier children.

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Last year the Swedish government decided on an updated policy for gender equality. For the first time, equal education was pointed out as one of the action areas. This means that all women and men, girls and boys, should have same opportunities and conditions in terms of education, study choices, and personal development.

This might be obvious, especially in a country like Sweden. Nevertheless, there are significant differences between boys and girls regarding achievements, experience and preferences in Sweden.

Boys generally perform at a lower level than girls and, therefore, receive lower grades. In compulsory schooling, girls get higher grades in every subject except physical education and health.

Girls and young women are, at the same time, most stressed in school and generally have a lower level of health and wellbeing in their teens. We can also see that the choice of programmes in upper secondary school is gender-biased, especially concerning vocational programmes.

Therefore, promoting gender equality in education demands a long-term perspective. One aspect is focusing on the difference in needs of support by boys and girls during different ages in school. Pupils should also receive broad open and gender-neutral guidance in which all occupational areas are possible for both boys and girls, young women and men.

Gender must, therefore, be integrated at all levels of education: from early childhood to higher education, in formal as well as in non-formal settings, and from planning infrastructure to training teachers.

The Swedish Education Act and the school curricula and places where gender equality should be guiding all levels of the school system. Just weeks ago, the government took an initiative to make an overview of the preschool curriculum in order to see how it could be improved to better promote gender balance.

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“Gender must, therefore, be integrated at all levels of education: from early childhood to higher education, in formal as well as in non-formal settings, and from planning infrastructure to training teachers.”

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In addition to the, strong gender segregation in education that I mentioned before, a particular prominent future is the existence of typically female fields of study and typically male fields of study. In order to change this pattern, measures have been taken to improve educational and vocational guidance to pupils in compulsory, upper secondary, and adult education so as to provide support for pupils to ensure study and career choices are not limited by their gender.

Although we have come a long way towards gender equality, I would like to say that we are far from perfect. We are still struggling to achieve equal pay for equal work. We struggle to break the glass ceiling for women in positions of influence in the private and the public sectors. We struggle to end men's violence against women.

Dear friends, I'm sure that everyone gathered here today agrees that when we're fighting for women and girls' rights we are fighting for human rights for everyone.

With this knowledge, it is worrying to learn that many countries do not prioritize education in their national budgets. It's also discouraging to learn that overall international aid to education today is 6% lower than in 2010. The 2030 agenda is firmly based on the UN Declaration of Human Rights. The right to education is indeed a human right. Inclusive

access to quality education should be a choice for all: from access to preschool to primary education and the opportunity for all young people to access upper secondary, vocational, and higher education, regardless of gender.

Vital for the success of gender mainstreaming is strong leadership. It has therefore been vital that the Swedish Prime Minister, Mr. Stefan Löfven, is committed to and outspoken about the importance of gender for equality.

Each minister in our government has a task to deliver on gender equality; they have to report to the Prime Minister. It's everyone's responsibility. Training on gender mainstreaming has been provided for all ministers as well as state secretaries and also to key government officials.

Evidence shows that ensuring women equal opportunities helps build democracies and economies. Investing in women and girls reduces

poverty. Women spend 90% of their income on their families' health and education. Men spend 30-40%.

I learned this when preparing for this conference and it's an important fact that we need to bring with us. It makes a big difference. When we promote gender equality, talent and strength are released. Skills are unlocked when all girls and boys go to school. GDP grows when more women work. Simply put, equal societies perform better.

We cannot afford to hold half of the population back. All legal, social, and economic barriers to women and girl's empowerment must be removed because women and men are equal, women and men should be treated equally, women and men should have equal opportunities.

Nothing else will do.

Thank you.

## **2. WOMEN, PEACE & SECURITY**

This panel explored the many obstacles and challenges that continue to impede the full implementation of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security (2000) from a gender perspective. Drawing on this discussion, the panelists identified new pathways for UNESCO to contribute to the women, peace and security agenda.

## PANEL PARTICIPANTS

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### MODERATOR

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- ▶ **Dr Rangita de Silva de Alwis**, Associate Dean of International Affairs of the University of Pennsylvania Law School

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### KEYNOTE SPEAKER

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- ▶ **Ambassador Melanne Vermeer**, Executive Director of the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security, Former Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues in the USA

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### PANELISTS

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- ▶ **Professor Feride Acar**, Professor at the Middle-East Technical University, President of GREVIO (Council of Europe), Member of CEDAW
- ▶ **Ms Elisabeth Decrey-Warner**, President and Co-Founder of Geneva Call
- ▶ **Ambassador Mara Marinaki**, Principal Advisor (PAG) on Gender and UNSCR 1325 at the European External Action Service
- ▶ **Ms Mazal Renford**, Adviser for International Cooperation and Peace of the International Council of Women, former Director of the Mount Carmel International Training Center

# CONTEXT

The United Nations Security Council adopted the landmark resolution 1325 in 2000. This resolution – and those that followed in its path – acknowledged the changing nature of warfare in which civilians are increasingly targeted and women continue to be excluded from participation in peace processes. It addressed the disproportionate impact of war on women and the pivotal role women should and do play in conflict management, conflict resolution, and sustainable peace.

## UNESCO, WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & PEACE & SECURITY

UNESCO works to establish a culture of peace where women can be safe. UNESCO is also committed to women's leadership in peacebuilding and fostering gender equality into humanitarian response efforts. Some of the initiatives UNESCO has established in the past years are:

***Call to Action on Protection from Gender-based Violence (GBV) in Emergencies:*** UNESCO officially joined this initiative, launched by Sweden, the US and the UK, in October 2016. This initiative aims to transform the way that Gender-based Violence is addressed in humanitarian emergencies. It provides a framework for increased accountability, collective action and concrete programmes on Gender-based Violence in Emergencies.

***Regional Research and Documentation Centre for Women, Gender and Peace-building (Democratic Republic of Congo):*** since its foundation in 2011, this centre in the Great Lakes Region has been working to promote the status of women and women's role in peace building in the region. It pursues this goal via policy-oriented research, consultations, networking and capacity building with a focus on preventing violence against women and the connection between gender and poverty.

***Integrating education programmes on GBV in schools (South Sudan):*** this project contributes to our work on violence in post-conflict areas. UNESCO produced emergency education teacher training manuals tailored to the priorities in the country, including the prevention of gender-based violence. These materials provide teachers with the knowledge necessary to support vulnerable girls in this emergency setting.

***Teachers' Guide for Countering Violent Extremism:*** UNESCO has developed guides for teachers and for policy-makers to help harness the soft power of education in order to combat extremism across the world. The guides offer technical guidance for education professionals on how to address the concrete challenges posed by violent extremism within each society.

***Vocational Skills Development Opportunities for Young Syrian Refugee and Vulnerable Women in Jordan:*** this pilot project, sponsored by Procter & Gamble and implemented by the Jordan River Foundation (an NGO established in 1995 by Her Majesty Queen Rania Al Abdullah), equips 500 young Syrian and Jordanian women with work readiness and life skills, business and vocational training. The initial training course will be followed up with individual counseling and support for the women involved in order to build their confidence and empower them in their academic and career choices.

# SUMMARY

**CEDAW & the Istanbul Convention are key international mechanisms to safeguard the human rights of women:** the power of CEDAW is that it guarantees the equality of rights of all women – regardless of origin, religion – in law and in practice. The Istanbul Convention complemented CEDAW, for instance, by adding a comprehensive, legally-binding treaty on Violence against Women and by introducing a robust monitoring system (GREVIO) based on a committee of experts who monitor its progress on the ground.

**Perceptions of gender must change for peace and security:** 1325 was renamed Gender, Peace and Security – rather than Women, Peace and Security – to reflect the need for a profound shift in the perceptions of men and boys; education plays a key role in this work.

**Implementation of Resolution 1325 must involve mainstreaming throughout policy:** the implementation of this resolution should not be confined to the creation of a stand-alone national action plan; rather, it should entail mainstreaming the gender, peace and security agenda throughout any relevant policy areas.

**Work on gender, peace and conflict must recognize the changing nature of conflict:** conflicts today are increasingly between a state and a non-state actor, rather than between states. Initiatives like Geneva Call are responding to this reality by working with non-state actors to protect women and on gender discrimination. By insisting that women are included in the non-state actor's delegation, they demonstrate that women can be and need to be part of the discussion.

**Education can help work towards peace:** women play a role as educators and mothers helping to

create a new mindset to bring about change within society. Schools also play a role, in particular, the way different groups (e.g. Palestinians/ Israelis) appear in school textbooks.

**Creating spaces for dialogue:** creating opportunities where people can exchange at the level of civil society can help them see the situation from the other side and start talking. For instance, seminars between Palestinian and Israeli women have been held to encourage them to listen to each other and build bridges.

**Capacity building supports women to be part of peace negotiations:** whilst women are often involved in these non-state groups as combatants and have a clear vision of the future society they want to live in, they are often excluded from, or not taken seriously in, peace negotiations. Training in negotiation skills can build the confidence of these women and help them make a meaningful contribution to the peace-building efforts; however, it is difficult to attract funding for this work due to the negative perception of these female combatants among donors.

**Women must be involved in the peace building processes that continue long after the peace agreement has been signed:** long-term peace building must engage the whole population and include an understanding of why the conflict occurred. The local knowledge and wisdom held by women are essential to the success of this process. There is a tendency for international organisations to undervalue the role women can play; women are all too often excluded from peace discussions, which tend to be held with high-level participants (mostly men) echoing the power struggles experienced during the conflict. The rare occasions when women are involved, such as in Colombia, demonstrate how important it is to include local women.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

**Leadership and advocacy in favour of Resolution 1325:** UNESCO is a key player for the implementation of the UNSC Resolution 1325 and is encouraged to continue its efforts to raise global awareness of the role that women play in promoting peace and security worldwide. UNESCO should further position itself as an advocate for women to lead peacebuilding and peacekeeping processes.

**Addressing radicalization and violent extremism through UNESCO programming:** Building peace in the minds of women and men also means understanding how gender inequalities intersect with different violent ideologies. The phenomena of radicalisation and violent extremism are closely

linked to gender inequalities, and as such should constitute key issues to be addressed in UNESCO actions through gender transformative programmes.

**Enhance work on conflict prevention and post-conflict state building:** UNESCO is increasingly called to respond to a growing number of crises worldwide. Through education and culture, UNESCO should become a global reference for conflict prevention and post-conflict state building by:

finding flexible and innovative ways to adapt education to fragile states, promoting intercultural dialogue and using a gender transformative approach to target the most vulnerable.





Melanne Vermeer delivering her keynote speech

## WOMEN ON THE FRONTLINE OF PEACEKEEPING KEYNOTE SPEECH

**Ambassador Melanne Vermeer**, Former US Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues

It is such a pleasure for me to return to UNESCO and to salute the Director General. I know her personally, I call her a friend, but I have seen for many, many years, her commitment to the issue of gender equality, and, frankly, what this conference represents.

I also want to acknowledge this distinguished panel. I have known some of the panelists for many years and I am very mindful of their commitment. All of the panelists bring enormous knowledge and experience and dedication to this topic so I'm confident that the discussion will be a rich discussion based on those experiences from different parts of the world.

UNESCO has a mandate to promote human rights, social development and peace. I think each of us knows that the full integration of a gender perspective is critical to the realization of these

goals. Without taking gender into account, it would be hard us to reach our full potential in relation to any of these goals.

So, it is a privilege for me to be able to say a few words about the role of women in peace and security and, in the context of what this conference is about, women's empowerment and sustainable development.

As you heard, I was ambassador for my country - the first time we had a US ambassador for global women's issues. And it was in that position that I saw firsthand - from Afghanistan to the DRC, from Myanmar to Liberia, from the Ukraine to Colombia - the role that women were playing - the role that women continued to play, sometimes against great adversity - working to end conflict and promote peace.

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Women are on the frontlines of peacebuilding ... even though they might not always be acknowledged as such.

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I would say that women are on the frontlines of peacebuilding. They are the frontline activists, even though they might not always be acknowledged as such.

Women in these places - and so many other countries I did not mention - are also increasingly being targeted by armed combatants, through the use of social violence which in conflict is an ongoing scourge that demands greater accountability, and the end to impunity. And we are far from there.

But women, as each of us knows, are far more than victims. Yes, they are victimized in the conflicts that rage, but they have agency.

I remember, one night being in Kabul, Afghanistan and sitting with a group of women and the first one said to me, “Stop looking at us as victims, and look at us as the leaders that we are.”

I thought to myself she is absolutely right. I will go back to my government. When we are sitting at our big conference tables, it is not enough if the only

image we have of these women, is that we need to send some resources to help those who are abused. That far from sufficient.

There is a tendency to only see them in that way – as victims – and not with their agency, with their possibility, with their leadership: all of which are absolutely essential to moving their country forward.

Women’s leadership and participation in ending war and building peace are a necessity. That’s what they were reminding me of. But it is not easy when you are in government to push for that participation, because they are still all too often viewed as marginal.

And then as you heard, I worked on the development of the *US National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security*. This is a framework to incorporate Resolution 1325 into the way that governments do their work. We were late frankly in coming to the table. There are now some 63 countries that have adopted national action plans including NATO and including the European Union. And we have a representative from the EU on the panel.

Now, in some places, these National Action Plans have had real impact, as they should, but in others it is a little bit more, just a little bit more than a check-the-box experience. More than just being able to say “Oh, we have a National Action Plan,” although it rarely influences the work that goes on.



Panel: Melanne Verweer, Mazal Renford, Mara Marinaki, Rangita de Silva de Alwis, Elisabeth Decrey-Warner, Feride Acar (from left)

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The integration of the women, peace and security agenda throughout government should mean that we execute our diplomatic work, our development work, our military operations differently, and more effectively by incorporating women's perspectives and women's participation into all of our efforts.

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The integration of the women, peace and security agenda throughout government should mean that we execute our diplomatic work, our development work, our military operations differently, and more effectively by incorporating women's perspectives and women's participation into all of our efforts.

I always used to say to my government, *“This isn't something separate when we're doing policy on Afghanistan or working on policies in Africa where conflicts are raging. That's when this women, peace and security agenda must be a part of those deliberations. It is not something separate.”*

And this is an issue that I continue to work on in the institute that we established at Georgetown University: to create an evidence-based case for the role of women in peacebuilding; to bridge that gap between the theory and practice. Action, action that positively affects policy and programmes.

I learned that so many decision-makers, the majority, I regret to say, view this issue as a marginal issue to what they do every day. This is why there is a strong need to create a research base and data: to demonstrate using a data-driven case that this is not just the right thing to do – and it is fundamentally the right thing to do – but it is also the smart thing to do to advance peace and security.

As we know there are solid links between the inclusion of women in peace processes and the sustainability of peace agreements. It remains true that when men negotiate – as it's mostly men and rarely women at the negotiating tables for peace agreements – they negotiate over the issues that they went to war for.

When women are at the table, when they are brought into that process, it is for the issues that are relevant to the society for the moment, knowing what needs to be done, what's important for the future, what

issues have to be considered, if there is going to be a better future.

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Resolution 1325 recognizes that women bear a disproportionate burden during violent conflict and must be protected because no society can achieve peace and security and stability when its population lives in daily terror of sexual assaults, when the perpetrators act with impunity and when the victims lack any access to justice.

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Resolution 1325 recognizes that women bear a disproportionate burden during violent conflict and must be protected because no society can achieve peace and security and stability when its population lives in daily terror of sexual assaults, when the perpetrators act with impunity and when the victims lack any access to justice. 1325 recognizes the need to prevent and respond to sexual violence in conflict.

But, it also recognizes the role of women as full and equal partners in all phases of conflict resolution, peace building and enhancing security. So Resolution 1325 stands on twin pillars. The right and the need to be protected and to fully participate. And essentially, that's what the women in Afghanistan were saying to me in not quite the exceptional language that appears in foreign policy documents.

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We need to accelerate the implementation of the 1325 framework, because, regrettably, the promise of 1325 remains still largely unfulfilled.

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In 2015, on the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of 1325, the United Nations undertook three landmark studies to improve progress in this area. The conclusion they reached is that we need to accelerate the implementation of the 1325 framework, because, regrettably, the promise of 1325 remains still largely unfulfilled. And that's the challenge for each of us to address and that's why this topic has been put on

the UNESCO agenda. What more can UNESCO do to contribute to advancing women, peace and security?

At this moment, there are some 40 armed conflicts and wars raging around the world. Many of them are recurring where peace agreements have been reached, abrogated, and the civil war starts up all over again. There are more than 20 million refugees, coming out of these conflicts, more than at the highest peak we've ever seen which was after World War II. Yet, more than half of peace agreements fail within the first five years of being signed.

Women comprise a tiny percentage of those involved in negotiating the agreements to end conflict. Even though they are directly affected by the conflicts and, even more importantly, possess vital knowledge from their lives on the ground about what needs to be done and what's important to the outcome of the talks.

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Studies show that where women were able to influence negotiations, those processes had a much higher chance of resulting in agreements not just being reached, but agreements that lasted.

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Data shows that women are better at building trust across divided communities, ensuring the needs of marginalized are represented in those discussions, in forging compromises, acting as honest brokers and catalyzing public support for the agreements once they're reached. Studies also show that where women were able to influence negotiations, those processes had a much higher chance of resulting in agreements not just being reached, but agreements that lasted.

We did a study at the Institute on four distinctive peace processes of four different countries where women were involved at various levels of engagement from direct negotiations to civil society engagement. In each case they enhanced the prospects for sustainable peace. But clearly, much more needs to be done to increase women's participation at all levels.

When the Security Council adopted its most recent resolution a couple of years ago, it added violent

extremism to the women's peace and security mandate and recognized that there needs to be greater consultation with women's organizations on the ground who are critical to devising strategies to prevent and counter violent extremism. But this must be done with respect for human rights and it can't be done in a way that securitizes women or objectifies them for a certain purpose.

As the UN Security Council said at the time, when armed extremist groups place the subordination of women as the top of their agenda, we must place women's leadership and the protection of women's rights at the top of ours.

At the same time that the Security Council recognized countering violent extremism and preventing it as a key ingredient, they also recognized climate change. Because future conflicts will indeed stem from tensions exacerbated by vanishing natural resources, especially water and bring greater political instability with it. Women's participation again is critical in forging climate solutions.

So, there is much more to do to move this agenda forward. UNESCO has made some very significant contributions, but in gathering us here for this Conference, it continues to recognize that more remains to be done to accelerate progress for 1325.

UNESCO, for example, has been involved in the prevention of violent extremism through education programmes and anybody associated with UNESCO knows that education is one of the strongest safeguards. And I think it's one of the reasons that extremists the world over target education, why Malala risked her life and took a bullet for the right of girls to go to school. The power of education.

Also, UNESCO's been working with women's groups in preventing and resolving conflict and that is so necessary. I think publishing good practices and solutions to advancing inclusion, training and capacity building programmes for women leaders and working with male champions on how to advance women's engagement - we know that men need to be a critical partner in this process to make women's participation possible. All of it to make a difference for that critical ingredient of women's empowerment.

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We must change the narrative on women's participation on peace and security from just a nice option to a necessity.

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So, we must change the narrative on women's participation on peace and security from just a nice option to a necessity. The necessity that it is to prevent conflict, transform justice and secure the peace.

This Conference focuses on sustainable development as well and SDG 5 is gender equality and the empowerment of women. SDG 16 is peace and justice. You can't have one without the other.

Women's empowerment is critical, frankly, to most of the SDGs, if not all. But it is truly critical to peace and security. So, if we fail, we don't just short change women, we short change the kind of world we all want to see.

# PART 2

# BREAKING GENDER STEREOTYPES

### **3. THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLE MODELS IN CHANGING CULTURAL NORMS**

This panel discussed the importance of mentors and role models for women and girls in breaking gender stereotypes. It also explored innovative initiatives to ensure that women and girls receive the positive encouragement they need to succeed and become leaders and shed light on the best ways in which UNESCO can contribute in this domain.

## PANEL PARTICIPANTS

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### MODERATOR

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- ▶ **Mr Henri Thulliez**, Director of the Fondation pour l'égalité des chances en Afrique

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### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

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- ▶ **Baroness Beeban Kidron**, OBE, Member of the House of Lords, Gender Equality Advocate
- ▶ **Ms Marlène Schiappa**, Secretary of State for Equality between Women and Men of the Republic of France

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### PANELISTS

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- ▶ **Ms Miriam González-Durántez**, Founder of Inspiring Girls International
- ▶ **Ms Aminetou Mint El Moctar**, President of the Association of Female Heads of Households
- ▶ **Ms Tarcila Rivera Zea**, Founder of Chirapaq: Centro de Culturas Indígenas del Perú
- ▶ **Ms Michäella Rugwizangoga**, Project Officer - Innovation Accelerator at the Imbutu Foundation, Co-Founder, International Hope Week
- ▶ **Ms Clare Twelvetrees**, CEO of the Cherie Blair Foundation for Women



# CONTEXT

Girls and boys are conditioned by their gender roles from birth. At school, children are taught about the contributions of Issac Newton and Albert Einstein, whereas female scientists such as Hypatia or Rosalind Franklin are rarely mentioned. From an early age, girls learn that they are not expected by society to become scientists, engineers, innovators or leaders. As a result, women are still drastically under-represented in many areas of STEM/STEAM fields, especially in leadership positions. UNESCO believes that role models can help break down barriers in the minds of girls and boys and inspire them to challenge cultural norms.

## UNESCO, WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND ROLE MODELS

UNESCO believes that one of the best tools to inspire the next generation of women is to provide strong role models. UNESCO focusses on supporting and building capacities of girls and women and promoting their given recognition that they deserve. Some examples of our work in this domain include:

**UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors:** an outstanding group of celebrity advocates, the UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors use their talent and status to spread UNESCO's ideals and draw the world's attention to the work of UNESCO, including in the domain of gender equality. Several UNESCO Goodwill Ambassadors have a specific focus on gender equality and women's empowerment. These include H.R.H. Princess Lalla Meryem of Monaco, who supports the protection of women's rights with a focus on Arab society, and H.R.H. Princess Firyal of Jordan, who helps provide a voice for rural women and acts to promote improvements in their living conditions.

**UNESCO Prize for Girls' and Women's Education:** this annual prize, supported by the Government of the Peoples' Republic of China, rewards outstanding innovation and contributions made by individuals,

institutions and organizations to advance girls' and women's education. Its 2017 laureates are the 'Development and Education Programme for Daughters and Communities Center in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region' in Thailand that aims to prevent child trafficking via protection, education and training and the 'Mini Academy of Science and Technology', a non-profit organization in Peru, that seeks to close the gender gap in STEM/STEAM fields.

**UNESCO-L'Oréal for Women in Science (FWIS):** this partnership celebrates outstanding female scientists from all over the world providing role models to inspire women and girls pursue scientific careers.

**E-learning tool on Women in African History:** this tool highlights the role that women have played in the history of the continent in diverse domains including politics (Gisele Rabesahala), diplomacy and resistance against colonization (Njinga Mbandi), defense of women's rights (Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti), and environmental protection (Wangari Maathai) ensuring that their legacy will not be forgotten by the next generation of boys and girls.

# SUMMARY

**Gender stereotypes have various sources and affect us all:** stereotypes originate in our own experiences and are unconsciously maintained through socialization, education (at home and at school) and society. Gender stereotypes should be understood as part of a broader patriarchal, power system and play a role in preserving male privilege. Gender stereotypes also intervene in the difficulties translating important legal progress and structural reforms in favour of women's rights (e.g. ratification of CEDAW) into tangible changes on the ground.

**Education plays a key role in combatting gender stereotypes:** how both boys and girls are educated plays a central role in combatting gender stereotypes, both at home within the family and in formal schooling.

**Role models play a major role in breaking stereotypes:** role models help to break these stereotypes by illustrating what women can and have achieved. For instance, the *Cherie Blair Foundation* has helped 250,000 women in India, Pakistan and other countries in Africa and Asia via role models and mentoring schemes in business. Indigenous communities in Peru – where fewer gender stereotypes prevail compared with the non-

indigenous communities – have also provided role models for future generations, both within their own communities and in society as a whole.

**Encouraging female leadership creates role models for the next generation:** in Rwanda, thanks in part to changing the mind-set of decision-makers, 44% of the members of the national parliament are now women. Systematic encouragement of women's leadership accelerated the process, which, in turn, created role models for future generations. Reciprocally, mentoring girls is crucial for the creation of the future generation of women's leadership. This is achieved in Rwanda via the Mentorship Department of the Ministry of Youth, Culture and Sport.

**Male role models are important to engage men and boys:** to create 'gender solidarity' and to ensure the sustainability of progress, men and boys must also be involved. The Rwandan President, Mr. Paul Kagame's involvement in a recent Forum on African Women is an example of a high-level male politician promoting gender equality.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

**UNESCO should continue to promote successful women as role models:** UNESCO has achieved important results in promoting role models that can break down gender stereotypes and in promoting equality in the minds of girls and boys, women and men. The Organisation should further advocate for successful women to make their voices heard and provide role models for girls and women worldwide.

**UNESCO should promote mentoring programmes for girls and women in different fields:** UNESCO and its partners are encouraged to explore mentoring programmes for girls and young women that will allow them to learn and thrive with the support of their peers and of prominent women who have excelled in different fields of activity.

**UNESCO should continue to combat gender stereotypes via education:** UNESCO is encouraged to continue work to ensure that educational materials are free from negative gender stereotypes and that gender stereotypes are not perpetuated in the classroom by incorporating a gender perspective into teacher training programmes.

**UNESCO should work with male advocates for gender equality and women's empowerment:** UNESCO is encouraged to support the role and visibility of men who are coming forward to advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment and to encourage other men to follow in their footsteps.



Beeban Kidron delivering her keynote speech

## “HER VOICE IS MY STRENGTH”: LISTENING TO FEMALE ROLE MODELS KEYNOTE SPEECH

**Baroness Beeban Kidron**, OBE, Member of the House of Lords, Gender Equality Advocate

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Madame Bokova reminded me this morning that last time I spoke at UNESCO apparently, I said something along the lines of “We don’t want to smash the glass ceiling, we want to live under the sky.”

Now I don’t remember saying that, but I feel that especially when she said it back to me. But today I actually wanted to say something a little bit more personal which I hope will give a context to some of the debate afterwards.

I’m going to tell two personal stories and they are about two generations: my daughter and myself.

Since the age of 12, my daughter had wanted to be a chef. I didn’t want her to be a chef but she isn’t like me, she’s the opposite. And now she is 20 and she is a chef in a kitchen where she is one of three women and the other 35 chefs are men.

On her first day, one of the other chefs, one of the male chefs, followed her into the fridge and grabbed her from behind. So, she whipped out her towel that all chefs wear, and she had specially prepared it wet, and she went whack and she said to him as she walked out of the kitchen, next time that will be a knife.

She told me this story and I was horrified but she said to me that was the best lesson she had learned at college learning to be a chef. It was the only thing she had learned at college becoming a chef. All the cooking she had learned from my husband.

Now I was impressed, I have to admit, and I was so horrified. And I’m trying to tell her that she had rights, that she should complain, but she was adamant that in the kitchen neither your boss nor the law was protection and what you had to do was defend yourself.

For weeks, she suffered inappropriate touching, her food was contaminated by other colleagues, her section was left un-stocked, she was saddled with the worst chefs, the heaviest pots, and all the time the guys said that women could not take the heat of the kitchen. Then they asked her out on a date and when she said no, they badmouthed her.

But, it was after almost three months that she got downhearted. She said to me, "Mum, I can take the abuse, I can stand my ground, I know what it is to make a man take his hands off me, but do you know what I hate?" And I had no idea about all of that. She said "*what I hate is that they call each other chef and they call me darling.*"

Now over 30 years before that conversation, I made my first film as a film director. At the time, in the UK, there were no other female film directors.

From the very first day, it was clear that my assistant film director hated working for me. The first assistant director's job is to plan the filming, where the rain, the horses, the actors, etc. are and they organized the day and they organized the shot, and they had in their hands, the microphone.

My first AD on my first film, put all of his energy into undermining me. One of his favorite tricks was to take that microphone and shout out in a sarcastic tone "*the little lady wants to do another take,*" "*the little lady thinks the man in the brown jacket is not walking fast enough,*" "*the little lady thinks you should do an extra 15 minutes running behind.*" You get the picture.

On the third day, we were shooting a love scene, and one of the actors was terribly young. It was his first job and he was very nervous and in the middle of shooting the love scene, my first assistant called for lunch. And I saw rage. The last three days disappeared. The last three days sort of disappeared into a cloud of rage and I stole from him his microphone... I took his microphone out of his hand and I addressed the crew, 120 people on the set and two half-dressed actors, and I said "*I am not little in my ambition, I am not little in my spirit,*" at the time, I was not even little in my stomach. And I said "*but this little lady tells you to take a hike, walk off my set, don't come back, you are fired.*"

The film settled down and I was afforded a privilege and I just want to make this point very, very specifically: I was afforded the privilege of worrying about my creativity and not my authority.

I would like to say to those women who wonder why there are so few women in the culture industry at the highest level is because you spend so much time worrying about your authority that you aren't as good as the boys. I mean it doesn't give you enough space to be as good as the boys, so I just want to make that point in passing.

I told that story to my rather downhearted daughter and we laughed and we cried. We cried because 30 years later she was undergoing the very same thing that I had gone through 30 years earlier.

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The naming - being called 'little lady', 'darling' at work - carries values; it carries hard-wired values of society.

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What we talked about was the fact that the naming carries values; it carries hard-wired values of society.

What we came up with was this. That if someone came up to her "yes chef" which is the language of the kitchen she would say "yes chef." But if they called her "darling" she would say "yes darling." And I figured by the end of the month either they would all be calling each other darling or she'd be called chef. We will see.

I've been very fortunate in my work, my work in live film direction, as member of the House of Lords, tech startups, producer, etc. And in spite of all the battles and disappointments, I do feel that I have been very privileged. And I have been very privileged by one particular thing which is I think our subject today which is: I had a role model.

I left school when I was 16 to work for the legendary photographer called Eve Arnold. She had photographed every American president, people all over the world. She photographed ordinary people, famous people and her pictures of Marilyn Monroe, Malcolm X, remain the best pictures of those two people, even now after her death.

I was only a teenager when I worked for her, but she taught me a lot of things. One thing she told me about creativity. But I do want to share with you some of the words that she would say as we sat in the dark editing her photographs from all over the world:

*No one is better than you, they are only different.*

*Never accept no for an answer. Just ask again or better still don't ask in the first place.*

*The work of work and the work of life are the same and neither of them is ever finished.*

*The subject of your work is owed your humanity and their dignity.*

*There's no such thing as late or tired. To participate you must be fully present.*

*Being a woman is an advantage because everyone is always underestimating you.*

Whether dealing with a Minister in government whose restless eyes betray a gendered disinterest in what I have to say, insisting on a financial deal commensurate to my worth, or confronting a sex-tourist at the door of a vulnerable child's house in India, I have the voice of Eve in my ear.

Her voice is my strength. And as we move forward in our debate, I want to put forward four very brief thoughts.

First, ideas of gender equality and diversity are more firmly embodied in our institutions and laws. The reality for most women is that accessing those rights on the grounds further alienates them, so it cannot be our only answer.

Second, the further down the socioeconomic scale you are, the more likely you are to suffer for your gender. Leaders do not enter on the top of the pile they come up from the bottom. We have to think about leadership and role models for people at every stage of their career and in every sector.

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What makes people strong is imagining what is possible, understanding what they are due, borrowing confidence of those who have overcome – these are lightning rods for change.  
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Third, we must not be instrumentalist. Our programme for change must be creative, inclusive, and dare I say, humorous. What makes people strong is imagining what is possible, understanding what they are due, borrowing confidence of those who have overcome – these are lightning rods for change.

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Role models are everywhere.  
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And the last thing is that I spend a great deal of time formally and informally mentoring young women. But recently, in the context of a digital transformation coming up that I've been involved in, I have reversed mentoring from a woman who was not a woman, who is a transgender person. She taught me about the digital environment in a way that totally transformed my understanding. I want to say that role models are everywhere. We must not see that they work from the successful to the less successful, the old to the young, the strong to the weak. It is an equality.

I would like to end with my daughter. It's a year later. She has been promoted. And at the request of her Head Chef she has trained 3 new female chefs in their kitchen. He believes that the atmosphere, the work ethic and the dishes have vastly improved by having more women in the kitchen, and of course men and women both are called 'yes, Chef'.



Marlène Schiappa delivering her keynote speech

## METTRE EN LUMIÈRE LES FEMMES INSPIRANTES KEYNOTE SPEECH

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**Mme Marlène Schiappa**, Secrétaire d'État auprès du Premier ministre, chargée de l'Égalité entre les femmes et les hommes de la République française

Avant de commencer, j'aimerais vous proposer que nous ayons une minute de silence et de recueillement à la mémoire de Simone Veil qui nous a quitté ce matin.

A la mémoire de Simone Veil, qui nous a quitté ce matin, et qui a tant fait à la fois pour la paix, pour témoigner de l'horreur qui a été la Shoa mais également pour faire avancer les droits des femmes en France et dans le monde, je vais commencer par cette citation de Virginia Woolf qui disait :

« La destinée ne perd jamais une occasion de contrarier, de perturber, d'ennuyer la vie humaine. Et cette destinée est complètement désarmée si en dépit de tout ce qui survient on se conduit en grande dame. »

Je pense que cette citation correspond parfaitement à ce qui a été et ce qui a incarné Simon Veil.

C'est un très grand honneur de m'exprimer aujourd'hui devant vous au nom de la France pour évoquer l'une des conditions essentielles et peut-être même la première pour promouvoir l'autonomisation et le leadership des femmes. Ce sujet qui vous occupe aujourd'hui et qui nous occupe, la lutte contre les stéréotypes de genre.

Depuis plus d'un demi-siècle notre pays a fait progresser les droits des femmes grâce à un arsenal législatif et réglementaire constamment renforcé – j'en parlais concernant Simon Veil et le droit à diverger.

L'égalité entre les femmes et les hommes est désormais inscrite dans notre constitution et constitue l'un des fondements du socle républicain et de notre système éducatif français.

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Malgré les lois et en dépit des progrès décisifs qu'elles ont permis d'accomplir, l'égalité n'est ni acquise ni atteinte, l'égalité est théorique mais elle n'est pas une réalité.

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Pourtant, en France comme partout dans le monde, malgré les lois et en dépit des progrès décisifs qu'elles ont permis d'accomplir, l'égalité n'est ni acquise ni atteinte, l'égalité est théorique mais elle n'est pas une réalité. Des multiples formes de discrimination persistent encore à l'encontre des femmes, des obstacles à une réelle émancipation des femmes dans les faits.

La persistance des stéréotypes de genre en est la principale cause. Ces stéréotypes assignent aux femmes comme aux hommes des rôles et des fonctions différentes dans le monde professionnel comme au sein du foyer. Ils nourrissent les inégalités et légitiment aussi toutes les sortes d'agressions fondées sur le sexe.

En France, nous subissons ce que l'on appelle la loi du 20%. Il y a 12 à 27 pour cent d'écart de salaires entre les femmes et les hommes. Les hommes accomplissent seulement 20 pour cent en moyenne des tâches ménagères et les femmes jusqu'à il y a peu représentaient uniquement 20 pour cent des parlementaires.

Ces chiffres ne sont pas décorrélés entre eux. Ces chiffres dessinent une sorte de consensus social tacite de notre société : le consensus social tacite de l'acceptation de l'inégalité entre les femmes et les hommes.

Notre seuil de tolérance à cette inégalité est trop élevé et c'est à ce seuil de tolérance à l'inégalité que nous devons nous attaquer. Nous devons nous indigner, nous devons lutter contre les inégalités entre les femmes et les hommes en France et partout dans le monde.

Nous ne devons plus considérer comme normal qu'il y ait moins de femmes que des hommes dans la représentation nationale.

Nous ne devons plus considérer comme normal qu'il y ait des écarts de salaire et qu'à un poste égale une femme soit moins rémunérée qu'un homme.

Et nous ne devons plus considérer que les femmes auraient un gène supplémentaire qui leur permettrait d'être qualifiées pour s'occuper des enfants et pour faire le ménage alors que les hommes auraient un gène supplémentaire qui leur permettrait de rester très tard à des réunions au travail pendant que les femmes s'occupent du foyer.

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Ces stéréotypes sont profondément ancrés dans l'imaginaire collectifs et ils sont en partie alimentés par la représentation des femmes et des hommes dans les médias qui contribuent à dévaloriser la place des femmes dans la société.

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Dans une société où l'image tient une place prépondérante, les médias et nouveaux médias véhiculent des représentations souvent stéréotypées et parfois dégradantes des femmes qui vont à l'encontre des progrès sociaux réalisés en matière d'égalité des sexes. Ces images sont de nature à entretenir les préjugés sexistes et à réduire les femmes à des rôles ou à des fonctions type ou à les invisibiliser.

Deux exemples concrets en attestent. On songe à la surreprésentation des experts invités aux programmes d'information, on voit que les hommes sont souvent des experts et ont souvent un nom de famille, les femmes sont souvent des témoins et sont souvent désignées par leur unique prénom ; elles sont là parce qu'elles étaient des témoins, la mère de quelqu'un, l'épouse de quelqu'un, une simple passante. Les hommes, eux, sont là pour leur expertise. Aux hommes l'expertise, aux femmes le partage de l'expérience.



C'est ce déséquilibre criant qui entretient les difficultés rencontrées par les femmes pour revendiquer légitimement leur place et pour s'affirmer dans certains secteurs. Dénoncer et déconstruire les stéréotypes sexistes doit donc être un objectif prioritaire, dans la publicité d'abord où il est nécessaire d'en finir avec des images qui assignent les femmes à des rôles sociaux prédéfinis, la gestion des tâches domestiques et familiales qui leur attribue des traits de caractère prétendument féminins ou qui les réduit à des objets et les met en scène pour des situations parfois humiliantes ou dégradantes.

Il faut mesurer la gravité de ces représentations diffusées en permanence sur nos écrans et qui s'impriment dans nos rétines et dans celles de nos enfants, qui sont une atteinte à la dignité des femmes et qui nuisent terriblement à leur confiance en elles.

Ainsi, une enquête réalisée il y a tout juste un an relevait que 82 pour cent des femmes estiment en France que la publicité donne une image qui complexifie les femmes.

À cet égard, et pouvant prendre toute la mesure on pourrait se poser la question si un jour un extraterrestre arrivait sur notre planète, et regardait des publicités, il penserait que les femmes humaines ont toutes une passion sans borne pour la lessive et pour le choix de leur lessive, et qu'elles vivent cloisonnées dans leurs cuisines et qu'elles ne sortent de leur cuisine que pour faire des apparitions dénudées devant des voitures.

Au-delà des dispositifs de contrôles qui doivent être développés c'est une révolution culturelle qui nous faut accomplir pour mettre en relation notre communication avec ce que veulent les femmes et ce que sont les femmes dans leur vie quotidienne par un travail de sensibilisation, de responsabilisation de la société, notamment auprès des jeunes générations.

Comme le disait une autre Simone, Simone de Beauvoir, dans les années 80, il n'est pas inutile d'agir sur les images. Les enfants aussi ont des yeux, les images s'impriment en eux. Et l'idée qu'elles ne leur inspirent le mépris des femmes serait déjà une victoire.

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Il faut développer massivement des outils pédagogiques d'analyse de l'image qui contribueraient à déconstruire les stéréotypes de genre dès le jeune public.

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C'est la raison pour laquelle il faut développer massivement des outils pédagogiques d'analyse de l'image qui contribueraient à déconstruire les stéréotypes de genre dès le jeune public.

La mobilisation des professionnels de la communication est aussi déterminante. A cet égard, le travail mené par l'association *Toutes Femmes, Toutes Communicantes* montre bien qu'il est possible de concevoir des messages respectueux de la dignité humaine, débarrassés des stéréotypes sexistes sans pour autant porter atteinte à l'attractivité et à la créativité dans le monde de la publicité.

La communication n'est pas un outil neutre. La communication est à la réalité ce qui est décrit dans le mythe de la caverne de Platon. C'est une ombre portée qui ne correspond pas forcément à la réalité. Elle véhicule nos représentations du monde et pas le monde tel qu'il est, mais elle contribue aussi à le façonner.

Faire évoluer la manière dont les médias montrent les femmes, la façon dont ils en parlent contribuera résolument à faire changer le regard que la société porte sur elles et sur la place qu'elles doivent y occuper.

La communication doit donc être aussi le vecteur d'images positives de parcours de réussite au féminin et notamment dans les secteurs d'activité traditionnellement masculins en valorisant des rôles modèles auxquels les petites filles et les jeunes femmes puissent s'identifier plus fortement.

C'est ainsi qu'il pourra s'ouvrir pour elles le champ du possible et c'est ainsi seulement qu'elles pourront choisir des métiers selon leurs aptitudes et selon leurs envies et non en fonction des stéréotypes auxquels la société attendait qu'elles se conforment, et non en fonction des stéréotypes qu'elles-mêmes parfois reproduisent.

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De nombreuses femmes dans le monde ont participé à la vie culturelle, à la vie scientifique, à la vie sportive, intellectuelle ou politique. Pourtant, la plupart nous sont inconnues.

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Il faut donc soutenir toutes les initiatives qui contribuent à mettre en lumière le rôle que les femmes ont joué dans l'histoire. De nombreuses femmes dans le monde ont participé à la vie culturelle, à la vie scientifique, à la vie sportive, intellectuelle ou politique. Pourtant, la plupart nous sont inconnues.

En France lorsque on demande de citer une femme scientifique, et qu'on demande une femme scientifique sauf Marie Curie, on a beaucoup de mal à en nommer une. Et pourtant il existe des femmes scientifiques. Elles n'ont pas seulement été oubliées ou ignorées, elles ont été délibérément effacées des mémoires de nos sociétés pendant des siècles, sociétés patriarcales qui ont ignoré et méprisé la place qu'elles étaient parvenues à y occuper.

J'en prends pour preuve le nom de rues en France, seulement 14 à 16 pour cent des rues en France portent un nom de femme. L'immense majorité des rues des France portent des noms d'hommes. Il y a plus de noms de rue de fleurs ou de plantes en France que des noms des rues des femmes. Quand il y a des rues des femmes, elles sont souvent avoisinées avec un homme. Je reprends comme exemple Marie Curie qui n'est jamais seule et qui est bien souvent avec Pierre, ou Simone de Beauvoir que j'ai cité tout à l'heure et qui n'a pas de place à son propre nom mais qui partage une place avec Jean Paul Sartre.

S'il y a un domaine où la place des femmes a bien trop été occultée, c'est celui de la création : elles sont singulièrement absentes de l'histoire officielle alors même qu'elles ont largement contribué à l'édification du patrimoine culturel mondial.

En réhabilitant leur héritage, il ne s'agit pas seulement de leur rendre justice, il s'agit de faire connaître leurs découvertes, leurs créations, leur travail, leur engagement.

Bref, en faisant connaître ce patrimoine, c'est précisément contribuer à l'émancipation des femmes d'aujourd'hui et de demain. Comment

les femmes voient-elles se projeter clairement dans des cas d'artistes d'écrivaines des cheffes d'entreprises, des scientifiques, des championnes sportives quand la société et l'imaginaire collectif leur donne l'impression que ces domaines sont la chasse gardée des hommes.

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L'égalité se conquiert aussi par l'exemple : l'exemple est le modèle de celles qui ont su s'affranchir des normes qui les assignaient à la sphère domestique pour imposer leur talent dans des domaines traditionnellement réservés aux hommes.

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Et lorsqu'elles le font, il demeure toujours des hommes pour leur rappeler que c'est leur domaine et qu'elles n'ont rien à faire ici. Je voudrais rappeler là encore l'exemple de Simone Veil, et les insultes sexistes auxquels elle a dû faire face lorsqu'elle était une femme qui s'exprimait et qui défendait les droits des femmes dans l'Assemblée nationale en France.

C'est pourquoi il faut encourager les médias à diffuser des manifestations culturelles, sportives, des reportages, des programmes qui font connaître ces femmes pour ce qu'elles font, pour ce qu'elles sont et pas seulement pour qui elles ont épousé. Ces femmes qui sont autant des modèles pour les jeunes générations.

L'apport des femmes dans la production intellectuelle et artistique doit être rendu visible par une meilleure intégration de leurs œuvres dans la programmation des lieux culturels.

L'éducation joue un rôle central dans la culture de l'égalité et de la valorisation des rôles modèles et pour combattre les phénomènes d'autocensure.

Il faut que les pouvoirs publics prennent leurs responsabilités, mettent en œuvre les conditions de lutte contre cette autocensure. Car la lutte contre l'autocensure n'est pas uniquement de la

responsabilité individuelle de chaque femme ; c'est une responsabilité collective et c'est la responsabilité de la République française de permettre à chaque femme de lutter contre cette autocensure et de cesser de créer les conditions de cette autocensure.

Il nous faut accroître la visibilité des femmes dans les métiers dits d'hommes.

La semaine de sensibilisation des jeunes à l'entrepreneuriat des femmes qui est organisée chaque année à l'initiative de mon Secrétariat d'état et l'association *100,000 entrepreneurs* donne ainsi la parole à des femmes entrepreneurs qui transmettent à des collégiennes et des collégiens, à des lycéennes et des lycéens, à des étudiantes et des étudiants l'envie d'entreprendre.

Ces témoignages permettent de changer le paradigme, de changer les représentations sur la réussite professionnelle des femmes et dans le monde de l'entreprise. C'est aussi l'occasion de leur rappeler qu'elles n'ont pas à choisir entre la fonction de mères quand c'est leur choix et la fonction de femme qui prend pleinement sa place dans l'ensemble de la société.

Dès la petite enfance, avec l'appui des médias responsabilisés et de leurs sociétés mobilisées, il nous faut donc promouvoir ces actions qui déconstruisent les stéréotypes sociaux et sexuels pour qu'ils cessent d'enfermer les jeunes dans des choix prédéterminés par leur genre.

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Il faut mettre en lumière ces femmes dites inspirantes dont la réussite doit convaincre les filles quelles peuvent décider de leur destin et pleinement s'accomplir comme elles le souhaitent quelles que soient leurs aspirations et leurs talents.

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Il faut mettre en lumière ces femmes dites inspirantes dont la réussite doit convaincre les filles quelles peuvent décider de leur destin et pleinement s'accomplir comme elles le souhaitent quelles que soient leurs aspirations et leurs talents.

Il est également de notre responsabilité de valoriser à l'envers les métiers dits féminins, les secteurs qui sont très largement féminisés en permettant aux hommes de s'y inclure et en cessant de dévaloriser ces secteurs puisqu'on sait très bien qu'en France et dans un certain nombre de pays, à partir du moment où un certain secteur se féminise, il se dévalorise.

C'est le cas notamment des métiers de l'enseignement. Il faut lutter contre cela ; il faut développer cette culture de l'égalité, cette culture du modèle féminin pour diffuser partout la culture de l'égalité.

Soyons en toutes et tous convaincus : en faisant avancer la cause des femmes, ce n'est pas seulement les femmes que nous faisons avancer, c'est la société toute entière que nous faisons progresser.

La société ne rend pas service aux femmes quand elle les incite à s'engager publiquement ; ce sont les femmes qui rendent un service à la société toute entière lorsqu'elles décident de s'engager publiquement.

Si vous le permettez, j'aimerais revenir pour conclure sur cet hommage à Simone Veil qui a disparu aujourd'hui.

Les leçons quelle nous donne et qu'elle donne aux générations futures sont toujours présentes : leçon d'abord de la résilience, de savoir que quel que soit ce que vous réserve la vie, vous pouvez être forte et vous pouvez y faire face. Le témoignage que Simone Veil nous a livré en tant que survivante de la Shoah est un témoignage éminemment précieux et j'espère qu'il traversera l'ensemble des générations.

C'est aussi le témoignage également de l'amitié entre les peuples. Simone Veil est une artisanne de l'Europe de l'amitié notamment franco-allemande.

Le message qu'elle nous passe est que le message de la paix peut être plus fort que le message de la guerre. Elle n'a pas cédé d'un millimètre aux réactionnaires et, à cet égard, je pense que nous lui devons la reconnaissance éternelle de la République française.

Je rebondirai sur ce qui a été dit précédemment et j'ai vraiment apprécié le fait que vous insistiez sur l'usage du mot « petit ».

Je dis très souvent aux femmes d'arrêter d'utiliser le mot petit. Je l'ai vu pendant les élections législatives. Les femmes que nous sommes allés chercher avec notre mouvement politique nous disaient souvent qu'elles avaient créé des « petites » entreprises qu'elles nous déposaient un « petit » dossier de candidature et qu'elles aimeraient mener une « petite » campagne afin d'être une « petite » députée.

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Nous ne faisons pas de « petites » choses. Le féminin n'est pas accessoire. Nous faisons des grandes choses et vous êtes des grandes personnes.

”

La première chose que je leur ai dit c'est d'arrêter d'utiliser ce mot « petit ». Vous n'avez pas un « petit » comité vous n'avez pas un « petit » dossier vous n'avez pas une « petite » équipe. Vous avez un comité, un dossier, une équipe. Vous n'avez pas de « petites » personnes.

Je reprends pleinement ce qui a été dit précédemment. Nous ne faisons pas de « petites » choses. Le féminin n'est pas accessoire. Nous faisons des grandes choses et vous êtes des grandes personnes. Et je tiens à ajouter une phrase : on a très souvent dit à Simone Veil qu'elle allait trop loin, et elle a très souvent répondu que quand on lui disait qu'elle allait trop loin, c'est qu'elle était sur le bon chemin. Pussions-nous ensemble, souvent, aller trop loin.

## 4. CHALLENGING THE STATUS QUO

This panel discussed the role played by gender stereotypes as a barrier for change and proposed some innovative approaches that aim to promote non-stereotypical images of women and men. Participants shared their experience working to change mind-sets and build more inclusive societies. The discussion incorporated diverse issues including: an analysis of masculinities and positive fatherhood, the importance of the media and its portrayal of restrictive gender roles, the freedom of speech and the critical role for women in politics.

## PANEL PARTICIPANTS

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### MODERATOR

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- ▶ **Ms Irene Natividad**, President, Global Summit of Women, Chair of Corporate Women Directors International

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### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

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- ▶ **Dr. Michael Kimmel**, SUNY Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Gender Studies and Executive Director of the Center for the Study of Men and Masculinities in the Department of Sociology at Stony Brook University, USA

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### PANELISTS

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- ▶ **Ms Hoda Al-Helaissi**, Member of the Shura Council
- ▶ **Ms Barbara Cleary**, Executive Committee Member of the European Women's Lobby
- ▶ **Ms Zuriel Oduvole**, Independent Filmmaker, Girl Education Advocate
- ▶ **Ms Shazia Rafi**, President of AirQualityAsia, Former Secretary-General of Parliamentarians for Global Action

# CONTEXT

**Gender stereotypes have the capacity to limit the freedom of women and men, girls and boys. They affect their most profound and intimate perception of themselves and of their capacities and aspirations. Gender stereotypes are a limit to human potential and wellbeing because they condition the vision that women and men, girls and boys, have of what they can or should be and achieve. Gender categorization and portrayals may be subtle and difficult to tackle, and yet they often represent a greater obstacle than laws and norms in preventing equality between men and women. The negative effects of these stereotypes can be witnessed in all spheres of life – from local communities to the international arena – and pose a key threat to sustainable development.**

## UNESCO, WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & GENDER STEREOTYPES

Images, symbols, words and all media can reinforce or deconstruct gender stereotypes, and they condition the roles and expectations assigned to women and men in any given society. UNESCO builds its strategies to tackle gender stereotypes and prevent them from limiting the free expression and potential of every single girl and woman. Our work in this domain includes:

***Gender-sensitive Indicators for Media (GSIM):*** to contribute to achieving gender equality in the media by 2030, these indicators provide a comprehensive framework for media to analyse their content and operations and also form the basis for media training initiatives across the globe.

***Global Alliance on Media and Gender (GAMAG):*** this UNESCO initiative brings together hundreds of organisations across the world to coordinate efforts and research into gender equality strategies and policy.

***The UNESCO-HNA Partnership for Girls' and Women's Education:*** this Partnership works to remove stereotypes from teaching and learning materials. It does this by building the capacity of teachers and curriculum developers to identify and remove gender stereotypes from textbooks. Since 2014, the Partnership has supported two related projects in seven countries. The first strengthens global and regional advocacy, networking and communication to ensure girls' access to education, whilst enhancing the national capacities for gender-responsive education in Ethiopia, Ghana and Nepal. The second, coordinated by UNESCO's Regional Bureau in Bangkok, promotes gender-sensitive teaching and learning environments and practices in five countries (Cambodia, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka and Uzbekistan).

# SUMMARY

**Gender stereotypes are nourished by ignorance:** misinformation, a lack of curiosity and a lack of knowledge are among the root causes of stereotypes and prejudice.

**The media play a crucial role in producing stereotyped images and influencing public opinion:** By portraying women (and other groups) in a particular manner, the media play a key role in influencing how these groups are perceived in public opinion and in the private views of individuals. Women are often portrayed as victims or as idealized figures, in particular in the advertising industry. Women are also subject to sexist bullying in digital media. In this light, the continued under-representation of women in decision-making positions in the media is of particular concern.

**Women should be more involved in producing media:** as media are often dominated by men, the portrayal of women is often distorted and stereotyped. One way of breaking gender stereotypes is to ensure that women have the opportunity to participate in the production of objective images about themselves. For instance, through her work as an independent film maker and advocate for girls' education, Zuriel Oduwole produces films that aim to break down the stereotyped perceptions about girls' education that abound in the patriarchal societies in which she works.

**Stereotypes are inflexible and do not allow for change:** Such stereotypes perpetuated in the media are all the more harmful as they appear unchanging and do not reflect evolving circumstances. For instance, the perception of Saudi women in Western media does not acknowledge the increased implication of Saudi women in public life (education, politics) in recent years.

**Gender stereotypes create a hostile environment which makes it harder for women to participate and gain influence, including in business and in the political sphere:** gender stereotypes influence whether women choose to enter politics and whether they are elected into decision-making roles; they shape how and whether women are able to participate and have influence. For women to fully participate in political life, and for the quotas that have already been introduced to become reality, systematic work is required to build the capacities of women for political leadership in a holistic manner.

**Engaging men is of crucial importance for gender equality:** whilst an increasing number of men may be personally engaged, there is a great deal of scope to encourage men to make their commitment to gender equality explicit and public. Male support is essential to ensuring that both parents enjoy work-life balance and to guarantee gender equality in practice in the community, in the work place and in politics.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

**UNESCO should monitor gender equality in the media:** UNESCO should continue its ground-breaking work on gender equality in the media, including through the use of gender equality indicators, and identify ways to measure its impact for a possible replication and scaling up in different countries.

**UNESCO should further its efforts to support the freedom of speech and the safety of journalists:** UNESCO's work in this domain also creates a supportive environment in which more women can become involved in the media as professionals and journalists.

**UNESCO should further foster the equal participation of women and girls in the media:** UNESCO should continue to promote the positive portrayal of women in the media, as well as the increased participation of women in media, in particular at decision-making levels. UNESCO is

also invited to identify effective ways to promote gender transformative approaches through the social media.

**UNESCO should explore ways to incorporate a stronger focus on men and masculinities and the intersectionality of gender with other factors into its work:** UNESCO is invited to explore new ground for the promotion of gender equality in a holistic manner, one that includes the analysis of men's roles and masculinities, and the intersectionality with other groups and identity criteria (migration, age, disability, etc.) and better understand their impact on the lives of girls and women in a given society.



Michael Kimmel delivering his keynote speech

## THINKING LIKE FATHERS: ENGAGING MEN TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY

### KEYNOTE SPEECH

**Dr Michael Kimmel**, SUNY Distinguished Professor of Sociology and Gender Studies and Executive Director of the Center for the Study of Men and Masculinities in the Department of Sociology at Stony Brook University, USA

This really is a pleasure for me to be here and I'm going to take the sub-title of our session "Challenging the Status Quo" and I'm going to talk a little bit about engaging men.

Before I start, I have to say, being an American, coming here to talk about men supporting women's rights, I have to start by saying, I am really sorry. Every American I believe must begin any kind of public utterance with a most sincere apology. We're really working to change this, I promise you.

“ We will never fully empower women and girls without engaging boys and men. ”

I also want to speak today as a man engaged with this conversation about gender equality. I think it's fairly obvious that we need men at the table. It's obvious to me that we need to engage men. In fact, I take it as a kind of axiom that we will never fully empower women and girls without engaging boys and men. Period. We know this. There has never been a reform that women wanted that didn't require men's support. Voting. So we know we have to engage men.

What women have figured out largely, as I see it, is that the single greatest obstacle to women being able to live the lives they say they want to live is the behavior and attitudes of men. I'm going to also argue that the single greatest obstacle to men living the lives that they say they want to live are the behaviors and attitudes of other men. And it's there that is, of course where we'll talk about those stereotypes.

I want to make a case. And the case I want to make is simple; that men should support gender equality. Now, most of us, most of the time, most men, I believe actually do support gender equality. But we often don't even know it.

Because if you say to men, here's ten reforms that women have identified that they want, most men would agree with them, let alone most women. But if you say "So are you a feminist?" they would say "Of course not."

So, I think there are different ways to engage men. I'm going to point out one of the ways that is most obvious and that is that men should support gender equality quite simply because it is the right thing to do. Because it is fair, it is just, it is democratic, it is egalitarian. It is in fact encoded, enshrined in virtually every constitution in every nation on earth. Those values: fairness, justice, equality. So, I will call this the moral imperative. We should do it because it is the right thing to do. That should be enough.

A good example of this, one of my current role models these days is Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada. When he was elected in 2015, just as Macron did last month, he named half of his cabinet, women. He was asked by a journalist "Why did you do that?" His answer was "Because it's 2015, because it's right, because it's normal."

There are men in Silicon Valley, CEOs in Silicon Valley, who admit to taking a pledge that they will not participate in a meeting if there are no women present because that's not normal. It is about time we have those kinds of pledges made by members of parliament on committees throughout the United Nations, for example.

It's just not normal. That idea, that this is right and fair and just... I think if you present that to most men, you'll get the nod of agreement.

But what it doesn't do is it doesn't grab us in here. It doesn't motivate us. It doesn't compel us.

I want to talk for a minute or two and I want to tell you a couple of stories about why men don't support gender equality. What are the obstacles to engaging men? And I'm going to identify two obstacles because there are two words in the phrase, gender equality. One has to do with the word gender, the other with the word equality.

I'm going to tell you two stories. One: I think most men don't know that gender is as important to them as women understand it is. When most men hear gender what we think is women. Most men don't realize that they have a gender. This invisibility of gender to men is political.

I'm going to tell you my own story about how I first started thinking about this.

This is a story for those of you who are reading and thinking about feminism. This is a story that takes place 30 years ago when I was in graduate school. And for reasons that will be completely obvious to everyone in the room, could not possibly happen today.

But 30 years ago, when I was in graduate school, a bunch of us got together, graduate students, and we said "*You know there is an explosion of writing and thinking in feminist theory, but there's no courses yet.*" So we did what graduate students would do. We decided to have a little study group. Every week, 11 women and me got together. We would read a text in feminist theory and talk about it. And during one of our meetings I witnessed a conversation between two women that changed everything for me.

One of the women was white and one was black. The white woman said - this is the part that's going to sound 30 years old now - the white woman said, "*All women face the same oppression as women. All women have the same experience and therefore all women have a kind of intuitive solidarity or sisterhood.*"

And the black woman said, "I'm not so sure. Let me ask you a question." So, the black woman says to the white woman "When you wake up in the morning and you look into the mirror, what do you see?" The white woman said "I see a woman."

And the black woman said, "*You see that's the problem for me. Because when I wake up in the morning and I look into the mirror, I see a black woman. To you race is invisible. You don't see it.*"

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Privilege is invisible to those who have it.

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And then she said something really startling. She said “That’s how privilege works.”

Privilege is invisible to those who have it. It is a luxury, I will say to the white people sitting in this room, not to have to think about race every split second of our lives. Privilege is invisible to those who have it.

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When we say, we must make gender visible to men, it means we have to confront the privilege of not seeing it. So that’s not easy.

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So, my first story is basically to say, it is about privilege. When we say, we must make gender visible to men, it means we have to confront the privilege of not seeing it. So that’s not easy.

The second piece has to do with the word equality. And I’ll tell you another story about this. I think most men when presented with the idea of gender equality react by saying “Oh, it’s a zero-sum game. If women win, men are going to lose. So, I’m not down with that at all.”

I was on a TV talk show familiar to all of you, with a black female host who came out of Chicago, and I was on this show some years ago, opposite four white men who claimed that they - white men - were victims of reverse discrimination in the workplace. This was the beginning. This was my first encounter with a group that I came to call “angry white men.”

My most recent book is actually called *Angry White Men*. It was published in 2013 and the name Trump does not appear then. So now there are all these calls from journalists saying “Oh my god, you saw it coming.” I wrote about his followers.

So, these were four white men who believed that they, white men, are the victims of reverse discrimination in the work place.

And the reason I’m telling you this story is I want you to hear the title of this show. It was a quote from one of these men. And the quote was “A black woman stole my job.” They all told their stories, “I

was qualified for the job, qualified for the promotion, didn’t get it, I’m really angry.”

And then it was my turn to speak and I said “I have only one question for you and it’s about the title of the show “A black woman stole my job.” Actually, it’s about one word in the title. I want to know about the word “my”. Where did you get the idea it was your job? Why isn’t the title the black woman got the job or a black woman got a job?”

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Without confronting men’s sense of entitlement, we will never understand why so many men resist gender equality.

”

Because without confronting men’s sense of entitlement we will never understand why so many men resist gender equality. We grew up thinking this is a level playing field, so any policy that tilts even a little bit we think, “Oh my god. Water is rushing up hill. It’s reverse discrimination against us.”

These I think are the obstacles to engaging men. The idea that we think gender equality is a zero-sum game and that we don’t see gender in the first place. Both of them have to do with the distortion of our vision from gender inequality. That we think this is a level playing field; that we don’t have to think about gender.

Let me turn now to suggest some of the ways in.

I think we can make the case that gender equality is not simply a woman’s issue but an equality issue and it is also an issue for men. We are stakeholders in the conversation about gender equality. And there is a lot of positive information. I tend to be chronically optimistic. I don’t think I’m naïve, but I do tend to be optimistic because I’m an activist and do believe change is possible. So here are some bits I think that we can take for this idea.

One, in business, in our businesses around the world, what we are finding - and the data are evident - is that **more gender equal companies are profitable**. They’re doing better. They’re retaining better talent. They’re recruiting better talent. They have lower labor costs because they have less turnover. They have higher rates of return. They have higher rates of profitability.

If you look at the profiles of young people coming in to the workplace – millennials – young people are virtually identical. Young people coming into the work place today want to have great jobs, they want to be awesome parents.

There are virtually no differences in those profiles between young women and young men. If we ever were Mars and Venus, we are no longer. We are earthlings. But companies that figure this out will be the companies that promote better equality.

But I think also that we're stakeholders in another way.

I'll tell you one other story about how things are changing. I'm a father of an 18-year-old. I'm a baby boomer so when I was young, when I was a teenager, we were presented with this riddle. Some of you may remember this:

A man and his son are driving on the highway, and they're in a terrible crash, and the father is killed. The son is brought to the emergency room of a hospital. And at the hospital, the attending physician says "Oh I can't treat him that's my son."

How is this possible? When I was a teenager, we could not figure this out. We absolutely were completely baffled. I thought I was so clever, I said "Okay, his parents are divorced so his father was in the car and that's his stepfather." And I thought that was so clever.

My son who is 18 - this is three years ago - he's sitting around in our living room with a bunch of his team mates from his soccer team and I decide, alright, let me see how this works now. So, I presented them the same riddle, and these boys, 15 year olds, look at me like 'this is the stupidest question you could have possibly asked, of course it's his mom,' except my son who says "Well, he could have two dads."

I take this as emblematic of how things have changed. These boys all have working moms. It has become normal. This was so problematic for me. It is now utterly and entirely normal. This makes me optimistic.

Here's something else that makes me optimistic. I think we appeal to men as men in error.

I think most men already support gender equality. I don't know a single man on the face of the earth who is not genetically connected to a woman. I have

never met a man who doesn't know what it feels like to love a woman and want her to thrive.

Because we're not just men. We are fathers, we are sons, we are grandfathers and grandsons, and brothers and cousins, and colleagues and lovers and partners, husbands, friends. We all know what that feels like.

You want to meet an instant male feminist. Talk to a man whose daughter just hit puberty. And he is going to say to you, "Oh my god. There are boys out there who are looking at my daughter the way I was taught to look at girls. This has got to stop. Now."

I don't know if any of you have read *The Onion*. It's a satirical newspaper. It's actual fake news. It's real fake news and *The Onion* recently had a headline that said "*Eminem furious that his daughter's dating someone who was raised on Eminem's music.*" The idea is that finally now, he is reading his own lyrics, but through a different lens.

Every man I know knows what this feels like. But what we do is we don't do this publicly; we do it privately. We don't come out and say I support gender equality because it is in my interest to do so. But rather we still see it as an abstraction. I think what we need in our world right now is men who think less like men and more like fathers.

I was listening to this speech at our lunch, just a little while ago, and it was about climate change. And I thought if you think like a man, you're going to think differently about climate change than you think like a father and you think about the future and you think about your children's generation and their children.

“I would like politicians to be thinking like fathers; thinking in relationship as opposed to thinking abstractly.”

I would like politicians to be thinking like fathers; thinking in relationship as opposed to thinking abstractly. I think this is a way that we can make that case to men not only because it's right, but because it's in our interest. We are stakeholders in this conversation.

Let me close then with just three quick examples of how this is happening around the world. Many of these ideas, of course many people in this room know about.

Of course, UN Women’s project *HeforShe* is a very simple idea which is you go to the website and you agree with the idea that women and men should be equal. Now come on, that sets the bar kind of low. All you have got to do is go to a website and click on a button. Like what do you do after that?

But it’s an entry point, you see. It’s a moment where you say, I am saying publicly what I already feel privately. So, I think we don’t need to just... I’m not sure how this will translate, well we have this idea, well, you can talk the talk but are you walking the walk? Right, are you living that idea?

I think we have to go further. I think many men are already walking that walk at home. I think we have to talk our walk. I think we have to do it publicly. I think we have to stand up and say gender equality is right and fair and just. And it is in my interest. I will live a better life.

“I think many men are already walking that walk at home. I think we have to talk our walk. I think we have to do it publicly. I think we have to stand up and say gender equality is right and fair and just.”

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Two other quick examples. *Women Campaign*, the single greatest, the single largest organized effort to end men’s violence against women, began in Canada 20 years ago and has now spread to over 60 countries in the world.

And finally, *Men Engage* which is a collation of 750 NGOs around the world engaging men to support gender equality in all sorts of areas: violence against women, women’s reproductive rights and health, young boy’s healthy development, involved fatherhood. There are NGOs all over the world to engage men and this is an organization, *Men Engage*, that attempts to bring all those NGOs together.

I think that’s the case we want to make. I think the case we want to make to challenge the status quo is not that men are reluctant supporters or we have to be dragged, kicking and screaming, into a more gender equal world but rather we need to proclaim the fact that we already do support gender equality in our personal lives and that we are stakeholders.

Men will live better lives, lives in more accordance with our own values, what we want by supporting gender equality.

Thank you very much.



Panel: Barbara Cleary, Hoda Al-Helaissi, Irene Natividad, Shazia Z. Rafi, Zuriel Oduwole(from left)

# PART 3

# LEADERSHIP & POWER

## 5 – WOMEN IN POLITICS

In this panel, UNESCO called on the panelists to initiate a debate that can break new ground for the promotion of women in political leadership. The panel sought to identify the areas of progress and also the main barriers that exclude women from political leadership positions, as well as innovative solutions that are helping to address these challenges. It also explored whether changing laws or changing mindsets would best shape UNESCO's approach to the promotion of gender equality in the political sphere.



## PANEL PARTICIPANTS

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### MODERATOR

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- ▶ **H.E. Ms Eleonora Mitrofanova**, Ambassador-at-large of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, former Chair of the Executive Board of UNESCO

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### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

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- ▶ **The Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson**, 26<sup>th</sup> Governor General of Canada (1999-2005) and Co-Chair of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship

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### PANELISTS

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- ▶ **Ms Fatimetou Abdel Malick**, Mayor of the community of Tavrigh-Zeina in the Islamic Republic of Mauritania
- ▶ **Ms Eva Rita Katarina Biaudet**, Member of Parliament and former Minister of Gender of the Republic of Finland
- ▶ **Ms Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir**, Chair of the Women Political Leaders Global Forum Executive Board, Former Minister of Interior of the Republic of Iceland, Member of Parliament of the Republic of Iceland, and Mayor of Reykjavík
- ▶ **Ms Cécile Kyenge Kashetu**, Former Italian Minister for Integration, Member of the European Parliament
- ▶ **Ambassador Carmen Moreno**, Executive Secretary of the Inter-American Commission of Women, former Director of UN-INSTRAW
- ▶ **Ms Lydia Shouleva**, Former Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria

# CONTEXT

**Women are still severely under-represented in political leadership worldwide and a global commitment at the highest political level is needed to improve this situation. Political participation and leadership of women worldwide is not only a goal in itself, it is also a necessary precondition for the promotion of gender transformative policies and the achievement of gender equality in all other spheres of life.**

## UNESCO, WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND ROLE MODELS

Through education, culture, sciences and the media, UNESCO works to make the voices of millions of women leaders be heard and to inspire the next generation of girls worldwide to embrace their own vision of leadership in any field. Leadership takes many forms and UNESCO advocates for a strong participation of women in-house as well as among all of its partners and beneficiaries. Our work in this domain is multifaceted and involves: working with community, religious and traditional leaders; strengthening the capacity of women that serve as elected officials, public administrators, representatives of civil society organisations; and fostering partnership and cooperation with some of the most prominent and influential women in politics, academia and the private sector worldwide. Some examples include:

***Counting (on) women in politics: experiences from Morocco and Tunisia (UNESCO, 2017)***: based on fieldwork funded by UNESCO, this report explored the key challenges that women in Morocco and Tunisia face when entering the world of politics, as well as the best practices that help women enter political careers.

***Global Women Leaders' Forum, Sofia, 2016***: this high-level conference, organized by UNESCO in collaboration with the Council of Women in Business in Bulgaria, brought together leaders from politics, business and social and cultural fields to explore ways to improve the role of women in politics, business and society. The conference also aimed to provide role models for the next generation of female leaders.

***Gender and Transformative Leadership in Africa, 2012-2013***: launched in 2012, this partnership between UNESCO, Rutgers University and three African universities (University of Ghana, University of Liberia and the University of the Gambia) aimed to promote gender leadership programmes within the African universities. The partners collaborated to create a curriculum on gender and transformative leadership that would help strengthen the capacity of community leaders to advocate for gender transformative politics and programmes.

# SUMMARY

**Women's under-representation in politics is linked with everyday gender discrimination:** social norms that attribute domestic and reproductive roles to women are a key barrier to female political participation. Family duties are a key barrier to women's political participation, as women prioritize their families over their political aspirations and the two are perceived as – or are in practice – incompatible.

**The work environment and culture must change to be more conducive to women's participation:** A hostile work environment can either deter women from entering politics or lead them to cut short their political careers. However, policy measures, such as provisions for parental leave and child care, can help to overcome this barrier and provide an enabling environment for women's participation in politics. In Iceland, for instance, where women leave political office much earlier than their male counterparts due to the difficult work environment, steps are being taken to promote gender equality. Iceland is seeking to foster female political participation by promoting equal responsibilities for domestic work and using the media and social media to promote the image of women in politics.

**Laws in support of female representation in politics must be accompanied by the measures necessary to ensure their implementation:** an increasing number of countries have introduced gender quotas or have written equal political representation into their constitutions. Some countries have also passed laws sanctioning violence against women who participate in politics (e.g. Bolivia). These quotas have met with success. However, whether these laws are effective depends on their implementation, which is not yet systematic.

**International organisations and conventions are key allies for change:** international organisations can provide support both for the changes in the legal framework of female political participation and for the changes in mindset that are necessary for these laws to be implemented. International conventions play an important role in advocacy.

**Creating quotas in all domains helps level the playing field:** in Finland, creating quotas for all domains of work which state 40-60% of both sexes must be represented in each area, lead to an increased representation of men in traditionally female, care-related professions, as well as an upsurge of women entering male domains such as engineering.

**Education is a vital foundation for female participation:** in Africa, where more than half of the population is female, women are more likely to be touched by poverty or to work in the informal sector. Education is essential to help move women towards more stable employment opportunities and participation – especially in the STEM/STEAM fields and as female leaders in the development of their countries.

**Role models provide inspiration for younger women:** successful women should be highlighted as role models in order to help other women imagine potential ways of participating and to help them gain trust in themselves.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

**UNESCO is invited to continue its support for women in politics:** UNESCO supports women's participation in politics at all levels. The Organisation can further strengthen its commitment in this area and initiate activities that contribute to enhancing the capacities of women to run for political offices locally, nationally or internationally.

**UNESCO should extend its work with national parliaments:** making the political environment welcoming to women: UNESCO could assess the possibility of working with parliaments worldwide, to help them increase their inclusiveness and promote gender equality not only through their legislative work but also in their internal practices and functioning, and thus become enabling spaces for women leaders to thrive.

**UNESCO should pursue work that aims to counteract negative gender stereotypes that compliments its work to pursue change via legal frameworks:** UNESCO should seek to combine approaches that promote change through the law and through mind-sets; these elements are interlinked. An example of this is gender parity, which is effective when correctly applied in the legal system.

**UNESCO should enhance its work on gender-based violence, in particular, as an impediment to women's political participation:** UNESCO should take into account the threat posed by gender-based violence and intolerance to female political participation across the world.



Adrienne Clarkson delivering her keynote speech

## SHARING POWER: REACHING OUT TO WOMEN

### KEYNOTE SPEECH

**Rt. Hon. Adrienne Clarkson**, 26<sup>th</sup> Governor General of Canada (1999-2005) and Co-Chair of the Institute for Canadian Citizenship

C'est avec un très grand plaisir que je suis ici aujourd'hui parmi vous pour partager les idées sur les femmes, sur l'évolution politique des femmes. Et parce que je représente le Canada, et dans un sens le Canada a quand même beaucoup évolué ces dernières décennies, mais on est quand-même beaucoup de kilomètres psychiques à aller.

C'est très difficile pour nous de dire qu'on a réussi, mais quand même on fait du progrès pas à pas. Ce n'est pas quelque chose qui pour moi est une évolution vite, parce que quand j'ai commencé ma carrière à la télévision il y a maintenant 52 ans - j'ai commencé ça en 1965 avec le réseau national de Radio-Canada anglophone - à ce moment-là il y avait pas énormément de femmes qui étaient à l'écran. Ça a beaucoup évolué, mais pas assez.

So really what I want to say is that although I have lived in the public eye for over 50 years - and my life has been public both in communications and in politics - I still think that we have not done enough in Canada. We have only had one female Prime Minister in our whole history, and she was only Prime Minister for five months.

However, there is a bright light and that is that we now have a Prime Minister who says I am a feminist. And when he was asked why his Cabinet was half women, when he named it after his election in November 2015, he said "Because it's 2015." And that was an excellent answer; that's what we need to know now that we have half the power; that we share it.

We also have a number of women in extremely powerful positions.: the Minister of Global Affairs, which you might call Foreign Affairs in some of your countries, the Minister of the Environment. They are not simply token women who are put in charge of portfolios that have to do with women or education. In fact, in Canada, we don't have a National Ministry of Education. We are a federal country and, therefore, all education is handled by each province of which there are ten.

I feel that I have come a long way in my own life in terms of what women can do.

When I became the headliner of my program in 1965, I had two and half years when I did extremely well - very popular program, much watched. Then I became pregnant. Because I had already been married three years, I felt it was time. I was 30 years old.

I went to my executive producer - who of course was a man - and I said "I'm expecting a baby". He said to me, "that's fine. You have to be back here at work 6 weeks from when you have your child or you're fired."

That was the way things were then and they were that way for a long time. It only recently evolved in Canada to have maternity leave - nearly a year now of maternity leave across the country - where women are guaranteed to be able to go back to the jobs that they left when they became pregnant.

It's generational perhaps and it's education for generations of men who don't understand that.

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It is patriarchy that keeps women down. ... it is only by digging up the roots of it that we will we manage to really make the world free for women - free for women in all countries, developing or developed.

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And this morning when we heard about patriarchy I can only reiterate that I believe that it is patriarchy that keeps women down. That it is so fundamental and basic. Underlying that, it is only by digging up the roots of it that we will we manage to really make the world free for women - free for women in all countries. Whether they are developing countries or whether they are developed.

A lot of us come from developed countries which seem to have the surface of happiness We have to realize that that is not all it is about.

It's a whole other discussion about patriarchy. But, I do believe that until we get to the roots of what makes men behave the way they do - or revert to behaving the way they do or even in civilized societies, very civilized societies - still abusing women, murdering women with impunity, and the rape laws in various countries even Canada are not as developed as they should be - we are all in many ways in the same boat.

I believe fundamentally that the patriarchy resents women. It resents women not because they are intelligent or they can do better, but a very basic resentment in part of the patriarchy is that women bear children. And that the future of life is dependent upon women.

I think in any strict patriarchal society the idea that women control life and that women are responsible for that life means that there are all sorts of other controls that men attempt to put around them. That is another discussion but one that I would encourage anybody who is interested to carry on, because it has its affects not only in countries where women are not getting ahead but in the countries where they look as though they have gotten ahead. And we cannot wait for generations for this to change. That's why we have to understand it in the deepest psychological way. And we as women can only help men up to a certain point. At a certain point, they have to help themselves. And they have to understand what they are doing and they need to be implicated both by their education and by their way of living.

The education of boys is very important. The education of boys in societies means that boys have to be brought up with the responsibility for doing domestic tasks, being able to cook, being able to wash their own clothing, ironing if necessary, making beds, doing housework etc.

Those are not feminizing activities; those are activities that make you independent.

And I had no sons - I have daughters, but I have grandsons and I always say to them, this makes you an independent person. You will never have to ask anybody to do anything if you know how to cook and you know how to do dishes and you know how to do all things that women can do plus women have also done other things like become lawyers and doctors.



There are 50% of medical students that are women ... but when you go and look at who are the heads of the departments of medicine .... at the university, you do not find that proportion continuing. There is still a man's world that was made by men, for men and for their needs.



It's true that in countries that are more developed, women have made their way particularly in the most unusual professions faster. And we still, unfortunately, and certainly in my country, do see that there are 50% of medical students that are women, maybe more than 50% of law students are women.

But when you go and look at who are the heads of the departments of medicine, who are the deans of medicine at the university, you do not find that proportion continuing. There is still a man's world that was made by men, for men and for their needs. That has to be constantly looked at, re-assessed and made to look outmoded. Because it is outmoded.

And we also have to get to the point where it's not just unusual women who succeed. Ordinary, or even less than ordinary, women should succeed because ordinary and less than ordinary men succeed in everything, in the professions, in politics, everywhere, and we certainly see it in politics and I certainly saw it there.

The other way to change things is changing the manner in which things are done.

For instance, in our country we used to have night sessions of parliament; parliament would be held in the afternoon, in the morning and often there would be sessions after dinner at night. Because in the old-fashioned way, it was kind of a men's club; a nice thing to do after dinner is go and talk to your buddies and make laws. That has mostly been done away with. Those kinds of structural affects have to be done away with.

Even though we are very hopeful with the election that we had in 2015 in Canada, we still only have 28% of our parliament that is women of whom there are 88. 54 of them - this is a very telling thing though - were elected for the first time.

We had a speech just last week because the feminist values are being carried through and I'm very hopeful about that.

I put some negatives in there because even with the most positive things we must look at the negative as well.

In a recent speech, our Minister for Foreign Affairs, Chrystia Freeland, emphasized the values that we as Canadians want to live by. And she said, "*Our Canadian values include feminism, and the promotion of the rights of women and girls together with military and economic responsiveness and progressive trade.*"

In other words, feminism, military and economic responsiveness and progressive trade are the values that we are promulgating as a country. "It's a matter of basic justice," she says "and also basic economics." We know that empowering women overseas and at home makes families and countries more prosperous.

Dans les jours qui suivent le ministre du Développement international et de la Francophonie, Marie-Claude Bibeau, a lancé la nouvelle politique d'aide internationale féministe du Canada qui sera spécifiquement dédiée aux organisations des femmes locales œuvrant à promouvoir les droits de la femme, à *faire progresser le leadership des femmes et l'égalité entre les genres.*

Il s'agit de nouveaux fonds de l'aide à l'extérieur de 150 M de dollars sur 5 ans. Elle a dit : « *la politique d'aide internationale féministe du Canada reconnaît que le soutien à l'égalité des sexes et au renforcement des pouvoirs des femmes et des filles constitue le meilleur moyen de bâtir un monde plus pacifique, plus inclusif et plus prospère* ».

A cette fois elle appui les investissements ciblés, l'innovation et les efforts de défense des droits ayant les meilleures chances de combler les écarts entre les sexes et d'améliorer les chances de réussite pour tous.

L'aide internationale féministe du Canada aidera à protéger et à promouvoir les droits de la personne de tous les groupes vulnérable et marginalisé, ainsi qu'accroître leur participation à un processus de prise de décision plus juste.

Ceci permettra aux femmes et aux filles d'accéder de façon plus équitable aux ressources dont elles ont besoin pour assurer une équité économique et

sociale durable tout en favorisant leur contrôle sur ces dernières. S'engager à mettre de l'avant une stratégie féministe en matière d'aide internationale représente un changement important dans notre façon de travailler.

This putting the strategy of feminism in international aid on the agenda of Canada means an important change in our way of working.

Une approche féministe ne se limite pas à centrer nos efforts sur les femmes et les filles mais représente la meilleure façon de s'attaquer aux causes profondes de la pauvreté qui peuvent toucher tout le monde : les inégalités et l'exclusion.

Inequality and exclusion are the result of women not being taken care of and not being paid attention to.

I'm very proud of my country that we have started on this. It's about time, I should say, but that sometimes is worth generational change. I have found that with our politicians now, who are under 45 years old, these are taken as givens, that feminism is taken as a given by a Prime Minister of our country. I find that wonderful.

“ Inequality and exclusion are the result of women not being taken care of and not being paid attention to. ”

It also means for us all that we are seeking to have diversity in our world. Seeking not to have one way of thought means that feminism gives us another way of thought, together with the other kinds of diversity of different genders, of different ethnicities, different religions.

In Canada, of course, we are an immigrant nation and we are very happy to be an immigrant nation. We accept something like 300,000 immigrants a year. We make about 180,000 new Canadian citizens a year. And my foundation, the Institute for Canadian Citizenship, deals completely with the integration of new Canadian citizens.

We as Canada are the only country in the world with a policy of immigration. We have a Ministry which is called the Ministry of Refugees, Immigration and Citizenship, IRCC, and that is what we do. We

receive refugees, we integrate them; we receive immigrants, we integrate them. And within 3 to 5 years, our refugees and our immigrants become citizens of the country. Only through citizenship are you going to get the economic benefits of having people who have arrived from other countries and who learn your two official languages and take part in the economy of Canada.

Our studies have shown that immigrants particularly benefit not only from our country, but give back in terms of their economic value and in their investment in our country. They are 3% more likely to start their own businesses than people who are born in Canada. We have all those studies to prove that.

“Women fit into this because women are the motors and engines and the stabilizers of society especially when the family has the courage or the necessity to move from one country to another. We have a country filled with courageous people who are immigrants because they have had to lose ... what they were before and they come to something new and they are transformed.”

Women fit into this because women are the motors and engines and the stabilizers of society especially when the family has the courage or the necessity to move from one country to another. We have a country filled with courageous people who are immigrants because they have had to lose or have had taken away from them what they were before and they come to something new and they are transformed.

We are very happy that we have that, because it does make us more, a country that has an imagination and a way of accepting and seeing what other countries can offer us. That is what we hope for the future.

This is where women will play an enormous role. We make a great effort to educate women who come who do not speak either English or French. There are language lessons which we give in the basements of apartment buildings where immigrants live, because often some immigrant husbands do not like their wives to leave the house by themselves. So, we give them the language lessons where they live, where they're doing their laundry in the basement of the apartments. We have all kinds of programs that reach people where they are.



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“Some immigrant husbands do not like their wives to leave the house by themselves. So, we give them the language lessons where they live, where they’re doing their laundry in the basement of the apartments. We have all kinds of programs that reach people where they are. And that’s what we need to do. We need to reach women. We need to say to women you belong.”

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And that’s what we need to do. We need to reach women. We need to say to women you belong. We haven’t gone as far as we can.

We have to narrow the gap between those of us who have everything and everything within our grasps and those who have not.

And those mostly are women in the world.



Panel: Eleonora Mitrofanova, Adrienne Clarkson, Carmen Moreno, Fatimetou Abdel Malick, Lydia Shouleva, Eva Biaudet, Hanna Birna Kristjánsdóttir, Cécile Kyenge (from left)

## 6 – WOMEN IN BUSINESS

This panel began by exploring the extent to which progress has been made in the field of women and business, as well as the main barriers that continue to prevent women from reaching leadership positions. It then sought to identify new pathways for the promotion of women's leadership in business worldwide, drawing on the experience of the speakers to build on UNESCO's work in the field of women's economic empowerment.

## PANEL PARTICIPANTS

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### MODERATOR

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- ▶ **Ms Bonnie Hagemann**, Chief Executive Officer of Executive Development Associates

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### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

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- ▶ **Ms Gabriela Ramos**, OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa to the G20

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### PANELISTS

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- ▶ **Dr Maliha Hashmi**, Executive Director of the Red Sea Foundation
- ▶ **Dr Ing. Boriana Manolova**, CEO of Siemens Bulgaria, Chair of the Executive Board of the Council of Women in Business in Bulgaria
- ▶ **Ms Sasha Krstic**, Country Manager – Nordics & Baltics at Mastercard
- ▶ **Ms Isabella Lenarduzzi**, Founder and Director of JUMP
- ▶ **Ms Pascale Thorre**, Nokia Global Diversity and Inclusion Head, Founder of StrongHer
- ▶ **Ms Debra Vanderburg Spencer**, Curator, Arts Management Specialist and Contributor at The Harlem Times

# CONTEXT

Whilst women remain under-represented in business at every level, gender inequalities are particularly striking at the highest managerial levels. This remains the case despite research that has demonstrated the business benefits of gender diversity; increased female participation at the top of the corporate pipeline is known to boost prosperity, as well as profitability. However, despite these benefits for companies themselves and the need for women to participate in business as a matter of human rights, gender bias and gendered domestic roles continue to impede full female participation in the economic sphere.

## UNESCO, WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT & BUSINESS

UNESCO contributes to women in leadership across all of its major programmes and from different angles. Through education, culture, sciences and the media, UNESCO works to make the voice of millions of women leaders heard and inspire new generations of girls worldwide for them to embrace their own vision of leadership in any sector or field. Some examples include:

***Gender Equality in the Workplace Training Program, Turkey (2015)***: UNESCO and the Centre for Gender Studies of *Koç University*, Istanbul, organized this training program for 198 managers from different sectors and industries.

***Working Group on the Digital Divide (2016)***: since March 2016, UNESCO has co-chaired this working group along with the Broadband Commission. It aims to support SDG 5 by promoting gender equality in Internet and

broadband access and by using this as a vector for women's empowerment. Its work involves producing evidence-based recommendations to reduce the gender gap and sharing best practices. Members of this Working Group have committed to adopting some of these recommended actions. For instance, VimpelCom are integrating a gender perspective into their plans and programmes, as well as including women as a target segment for their financial services in Algeria, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

***Global Women Leaders' Forum, Bulgaria (2016)***: this high-level conference brought together female leaders from across the world to share their experiences and best practices for advancing gender equality at the highest levels of leadership. It resulted in the Sofia Declaration to advance women's leadership in all spheres and to inspire future generations.

# SUMMARY

**Promoting the full participation of women starts in childhood:** Gender stereotypes continue to shape career aspirations. Some sectors, in particular STEM/STEAM, are perceived as male domains, which discourages women from pursuing a career in these sectors. Young girls and boys must be able to imagine themselves as doctors and engineers with equal ease. Programmes that help girls become familiar with technology can help with this work.

**The domestic division of labour still weighs heavily on women:** women remain predominantly responsible for reproductive work in many cultures. Still today, in Europe, women do around three-quarters of unpaid work. In addition to the practical constraints, there are also emotional barriers associated with these domestic duties such as a sense of guilt and feeling responsible for the well-being and happiness of the family. These emotional barriers lead women to limit their career choices and make them more reluctant to seek out leadership roles.

**Unconscious biases make it difficult for women to show the self-confidence they need to get ahead:** unconscious biases impede the ability of women to be self-confident, a quality that can be mistaken in women for arrogance; a lack of female confidence has been linked with the continuing gender wage gap. The same biases often lead to women being interrupted and unable to express themselves in the business environment. It is essential to remember the intersectionality of gender with other factors (such as race, sexuality, class) that may be linked with further forms of unconscious bias that impede female participation.

**Women's empowerment is both the right thing to do and the smart thing to do for business:** recent research affirms the benefits of inclusive and diverse leadership for boosting productivity. Mixed teams are also said to improve non-financial indicators such as happiness at work, client retention and facilitating the creation of partnerships.

**Some progress in female leadership has been observed:** in Europe, for instance, the number of female leaders is rising. As most graduates in Europe are women, this also provides a supply of potential future female leaders to continue this trend in the future.

**Business leaders play a key role in fostering inclusivity and starting change at the top:** the ability of leadership to be open-minded and to create an environment in which inclusivity is paramount is key if we are to work towards gender equality in business. Changes in business culture in favour of women's empowerment can also create a favourable environment for gender equality in society at large. Management also play a role by attending to their own unconscious biases and ensuring that the image that the company projects helps to promote a positive image of female leadership.

**Mentorship and women's networks provide vital support for women, especially those entering traditionally male domains:** as well as being a source of practical advice and providing a positive role model, mentorship helps women grow their self-confidence by having someone who is experienced in the field believe in them and their capacities. Male mentors can also provide valuable support for women. Nokia, for instance, has created a network of women leaders to allow them to learn from and support each other. Networks for young, female professionals starting their careers help them to become the next generation of women leaders.

**Concrete measures and policies can help women in business:** quota systems and transparent human resources policies (for instance, removing names from CVs for anonymous selection, parental leave for both parents, extended family leave in the event of a bereavement) can help avoid unconscious bias and can support female candidates in the business world.

**Women should be encouraged to become entrepreneurs:** discussions of women in business often highlight the issue of female CEOs and leadership. It is also important to increase the presence of women in the numerous small- and medium-sized businesses that are often a key driver of an economy.

**Men must be engaged to help foster women's participation in business:** a shift in the male mind-set is required for progress to be made. UNESCO plays a role in empowering female leaders; it boosts the credibility of the female leaders who take part in its events among their male colleagues and helps to shed light on the issue of gender equality.

# RECOMMENDATIONS

**UNESCO should pursue its focus on gender equality as a global and cross-cutting priority:** the creation of the Division for Gender Equality enables UNESCO to work on many different aspects related to Gender Equality that fall under its mandate. UNESCO should continue to leverage its leadership on gender equality at the highest level to advocate for gender equality and women's empowerment. UNESCO should also continue its efforts on gender mainstreaming and gender budgeting within the organization.

**UNESCO should continue organizing high-level events to promote gender equality and female leadership:** these events raise awareness and share best practices to help inspire the next generation of women leaders. They also invigorate the conference participants who are able to return to their home countries and put into action the lessons learned.

**UNESCO should enhance its work with the private sector on gender:** UNESCO should continue its dialogue with the private sector to identify needs and gaps for women to take on leadership positions.

**UNESCO should harness its expertise to promote women in business:** UNESCO has the know-how to build networks of leaders, innovators and game changers, and can use this competitive advantage at the service of women in business worldwide that want to connect, support each other and excel in different settings.

**UNESCO is encouraged to monitoring the progress of gender equality in corporate settings:** UNESCO data has made it possible to chart the progress of girls and women in education, science and technology. UNESCO is encouraged to expand this work to encompass the business world.



Gabriela Ramos delivering her keynote speech

## 'YOU CAN DO IT': BOOSTING THE CONFIDENCE OF WOMEN IN BUSINESS

### KEYNOTE SPEECH

**Ms Gabriela Ramos**, OECD Chief of Staff and Sherpa to the G20

It is great to be here with this impressive panel. You're very impressive, actually. I'm joined by colleagues Morris and Fiona from the OECD.

Let me tell you that when I was invited to come I was offered some options in terms of which panels I should be in. Of course, I love education and I love employment.

But the panel which is really the one that needs to move forward is this one. It is entrepreneurship, the firms, the business sector. I have to say that that's the place we're lagging behind.

I have it very close to my heart. You will not believe it, but yesterday I received a phone call from Senator Diaz, who is a Senator in Mexico who is trying to promote a soft target of 20% women on boards, and

that sounds familiar to all of you. And then many men in Mexico, I'm sorry to say it, we have a gender quota in congress and there is equality which works - but the senator said, "No. But there's not enough women." But we said "No. That's not true. Of course, there are women." No, there are not enough women. We need 15 years of graduation for 20%. This is the mindset that we confront.

It's great to have these women in the businesses, leading operations, leading the business sector. Because just because by being there, you're transmitting a very strong message that we need to reproduce and reproduce and reproduce because it's really very tough to fight against this deeply entrenched way of handling businesses, very entrenched way of handling the economy in general that brings so many challenges for women.

Let me tell you that at the OECD, we launched the gender strategy that covers education, employment, entrepreneurship and then also the leadership of women in the public and the private sector.

“ 80% of OECD countries increased their share of women sitting on boards between 2013 and 2016. But the fact is that we’re also starting from a very low pace. Women sat only on 20% of boards and slightly from 16.4 in 2013. ”

We know that it’s moving in the sense of people and countries becoming conscious of the fact that we need to advance towards gender equality. In our latest report, that we presented two weeks ago, we noted that 80% of OECD countries increased their share of women sitting on boards between 2013 and 2016.

But the fact is that we’re also starting from a very low pace. Women sat only on 20% of boards and slightly from 16.4 in 2013.

Only 5% of CEOs are women. And their number doubled from 2.4 in 2013.

Among OECD countries, France has seen the greatest progress in getting more women on board, so we need to ask the French what they’re doing right along with Australia, Belgium, Italy, Poland and Sweden. Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg and Australia: these countries have seen the biggest rise of female CEOs. Progress however is modest, for example, in other countries like Belgium, Italy, and Sweden which are already a leader but is lagging behind.

The whole point comes to the question of the chicken or an egg. Women are less prone to launch themselves into the business sector and the business sector is less welcoming for women. How do we break this cycle? How do we encourage women to go for entrepreneurship but also create a setting that is more welcoming?

Indeed, women are much less likely to become entrepreneurs. Only 1 in 10 employed women is self-employed in the OECD economies compared to double the rate for men. And then you think about the wage gap. The wage gap in general in our economies is around 18%. This is the kind of numbers that we are managing.

Only 30% of women in OECD countries report having the skills, knowledge and experience to start a business compared to 50% of men. You have heard it before: women really need to feel very comfortable to put their names forward, while men will just raise their hands and just do it. This has nothing to do with the framework. It has to do with stereotyping. It has to do with self-confidence. And this has to do with the societal cultures that lead these women to have less self-confidence.

In our PISA report, that measures of course the outcomes of mathematics, science and literacy, we also asked women how confident they feel about addressing math questions and they always report half the confidence of men even if they are as good as men. So, controlling for their performance, they always report half their confidence and this is something that we need to tackle because it has to do with the family, it has to do with the school, and it has to do with the setting.

And then of course, you are in this cultural context where you are told not to dare, not to get into the trees, not to take risk, don’t do that, that’s for men, that’s for boys and then you want women entrepreneurs taking risks. It’s kind of a counter-intuitive. So, one of the main obstacles of course has to do with gender bias and stereotyping.

“ You are in this cultural context where you are told not to dare, don’t do that, that’s for men, that’s for boys and then you want women entrepreneurs taking risks. It’s counter-intuitive. One of the main obstacles has to do with gender bias and stereotyping. ”

But then even if women get into entrepreneurship, we know they have less access to finance, we have documented that. Again, is it because they ask for less or they are granted less. Well, it doesn’t matter. The reality is that they really have less access to it. For example, financing ranges from 1.5 % increase gap to 17 % in 2013.

There are many reasons why and we know it. The same reasons that affect women not getting a career, a very high profile career, in the public or the private sector affect women in the business sector. These have to do with the infrastructure that they need



to operate. Access to childcare facilities, support systems in all the different areas that they have to deal with, the sharing of the burden of taking care of their families, taking care of the elderly. That's another aspect that European countries are facing; it's not only the children, it's also the parents.

Women, on average in OECD countries, spend two extra hours on unpaid care work per day compared to men. Imagine two hours! You think about it! Make it real, two of your hours every day. You spend more on unpaid work than me and this is the average. I have to say in my country it is four hours and I don't know how women there can even get to work.

We also did an interesting report that is called the "Missing Entrepreneurs." Of course, some of them are women and there are some other groups like young people or immigrants.

But what women report in terms of what or why they are not getting more into these area is of course because they don't have the skills, the business skills, the management skills.

They do not have access to the networks that they would require to advance their businesses. Sometimes they don't have the mentoring programs; sometimes they don't have the guaranteeing program.

And then they, of course, do not know a lot of business incubators, accelerators, and all those things that are just so obvious that we need to make them available for women, but with an emphasis for women.

Many countries in the OECD are already putting up not only funds, not only programmes, but even banks, national development banks dedicated for women.

And I think that's one of the messages that we could get out from these conversations and these issues that are important.

Quotas always raise a lot of questions about how we do it. I have to say for me there is no other way. There is no other way. I think it's true that women might not feel comfortable about getting a job because you arrive due to a quota. However, if you take the necessary measures to ensure that it's merit-based but with equal results and you choose a woman, that would be very important to defend this kind of thinking.

And I have to say again, once I was in Mexico, discussing the quota in Congress and the fact that we have 50% representation, and one of the leading Senators told me "This is awful. We are going to be

*filling ourselves with very incompetent women thanks to that quota."*

And I said "Mr. Senator, we have a lot of incompetent men without a quota." So, what would the difference be, and they don't even need to be qualifying or anything.

We need to change this mindset and we need to know that there are tools, there are frameworks, there are policies, but more than anything, there are mindsets that need to be changed. There are stereotypes that need to be changed. We are born out of them. We really need to change it. We need to change even the media; we need to change the television.

I was never into the gender issues. I'm more in the economic, inclusive growth agenda. But when you get into the gender issues, and when you go anywhere, you are inoculated to recognize something is not working. You go to the cinema, where fantastic plays where they give prizes to all these films and then you ask how many women directors have received a prize? You know how many in 100 years? You know it. One. Do we notice? No. We don't notice. When you go to a philharmonic orchestra, do you notice whether there is a women conductor? No. We don't notice. Do you notice who composed the music being played? Men or women? We don't notice.

“ We really need to change the way we see things. We need to realize and we need to notice when there are no women. ”

I would say, and probably I will finish by that, that for a start, we really need to change the way we see things. We need to realize and we need to notice when there are no women.

As I said, there are many policies that can be put into practice: the soft target. 8 countries in the OECD have adopted soft targets to get women on board or on management. You can have hard quotas.

But one thing that is very interesting in the business sector - and I would like to put that to our panelists - is disclosure. Just disclosure. To go in public and for companies to say, what is the composition of the management in terms of gender equality.

Also for stock exchanges - and some stock exchanges have done so like in Australia - to say "Okay. You

are a public company. You need transparency to tell me how many women you have on the board. And beyond that you need to tell us how you settle wages. And you need to tell us if there is a wage gap and how are you going to be addressing that.”

I think transparency is one of the most important elements we have to address.

“ All these measures, all these infrastructures, all these tools, will not mean anything if we do not change the mind-set. If we don’t change the stereotyping.

But as I have said, all these measures, all these infrastructures, all these tools, will not mean anything if we do not change the mindset. If we don’t change the stereotyping.

One way to do it that I also want to share with you to finish, in Mexico, we launched - and this was an idea we got in G7 from Chancellor Merkel - a program of role models.

Of course, she’s a role model just by being a leader. But she launched this idea of having role models and I copied it to bring it to the girls in Mexico. And we launched an initiative that is “STEM girls you can do it” (“Niñas, STEM pueden”).

The only thing we did was to say “how many very prominent women there are in Mexico in science, in astronautics, in robotics, in engineering, in ITC because that’s another area we’re really very low in terms of representation.

We found so many that we constituted a group of women mentors who will go to schools The Minister of Education took the initiative go to the schools and tell the girls “you can do it.” To try to break at least this part of the stereotyping.

And they did something that is also very interesting. They just deleted any gender stereotyping from the textbooks. No more girls dancing. No more boys with a big truck and a helmet. No stereotyping. Everybody is equal. I think it will be just two recommendations that I would put there to see how far we can get. It encourages women to be more daring and it encourages women to go into the business sector and to make it more gender friendly.



Panel: Gabriela Ramos, Isabella Lenarduzzi, Pascale Thorre, Boriana Manolova, Bonnie Hagemann, Sasha Krstic, Maliha Hashmi, Debra Vanderburg Spencer (from left)

# PART 4

# NEW PATHWAYS FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

# 7 – CLOSING REMARKS

## PARTICIPANTS

- ▶ **Ms Irina Bokova**, Director-General of UNESCO
- ▶ **H.R.H. Princess Dana Firas**, President of the Petra National Trust in Jordan
- ▶ **H.E. Ms Aminata Touré**, Special Envoy of the President, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Senegal
- ▶ **Ms Tzipi Livni**, Former Foreign Minister of the State of Israel, Member of the Knesset
- ▶ **Dr Alema Alema**, Deputy Minister of Refugees and Repatriation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

# SOFT POWER: TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE AND PEACEFUL 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

**Ms Irina Bokova**, Director-General of UNESCO

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I must say this has been a very special day for UNESCO.

I wish to thank all our distinguished speakers, moderators and participants.

This Conference is inspired by the idea at the very heart of UNESCO, that peace must start in the minds of women and men, through *“the democratic principles of dignity, equality and mutual respect.”*

As you know, UNESCO was created after a devastating war that left the world in ruins.

You may not know, however, that our Constituent Conference was held in London, in November 1945, and presided by a woman named Ellen Wilkinson.

Ellen Wilkinson was the first female British Minister of Education – she was also a former suffragette.

She was born to a working-class family, and, as she said, she had to “fight her way” into university.

Her example of fortitude, optimism and tenacity remains inspiring today.

I have seen the same determination in girls and women across the world... in refugee camps... after natural disasters... in conflict situations... in Small Island Developing States... in the poor neighbourhoods of developed countries.

This is the soft power the world must nurture today.

...the aspirations of girls to shape their future.

...the will of women to lead their communities.

I believe the first message of this Conference is clear.

“

Girls and women face discrimination in societies across the world, and this is simply unacceptable.

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Girls and women face discrimination in societies across the world, and this is simply unacceptable.

We cannot accept that only 20 percent of the world leaders are women.

We cannot accept that women earn 10 to 30 percent less than men for the same type of work.

We cannot accept that in South and West Asia, 80 percent of out-of-school girls are unlikely to start school, compared to 16 percent for boys.

This is a lost generation of leaders.

Our second message is equally clear.

These challenges are not insurmountable.

We can change the situation if we act together, backed by strong will, adequate resources, effective joined-up policies.

Examples abound that show what can be done, and we have heard many today, from across the world, including in Senegal, in Israel, in Jordan.

I often recall the example of Karima, a mother who lives in Mazare Sharif in Northern Afghanistan. She never went to school. She could not read the instructions on her child’s medicine, or understand traffic signs.

At 24, Karima enrolled in the UNESCO literacy course and this changed her life: she has opened her own tailoring business; she has gained confidence and respect.

“

We can change the situation if we act together, backed by strong will, adequate resources, effective joined-up policies.

”

Take the 2016 Laureates of the *UNESCO Prize for Girls and Women's Education* – the Directorate for Early Childhood Education in Indonesia is improving girls' access to quality education, while the *Female Students Network Trust* in Zimbabwe is empowering female students in tertiary education.

Mesdames et messieurs,

Nous avons entendu de nombreux témoignages.

... sur le pouvoir de l'éducation à transformer des vies...

... sur l'importance des mentors féminins dans l'évolution des normes culturelles, la rupture des stéréotypes...

... sur le rôle central que les femmes peuvent jouer dans la gestion et la résolution des conflits, pour une paix plus durable...

... sur les défis auxquels sont confrontées les femmes aux postes de direction, en politique et dans le monde des affaires, et comment elles les abordent.

“

Nous devons agir à plusieurs niveaux en même temps. Nous devons lier plus étroitement les questions d'éducation avec les priorités de l'emploi et de la santé ... Nous devons changer les comportements individuels – et nous avons besoin de nouvelles politiques, de lois antidiscriminatoires, d'égalité des chances - des salles de classe aux salles de réunion.

”

Pour avancer – et j'y vois le dernier message clé de cette conférence – nous devons agir à plusieurs niveaux en même temps.

Nous devons lier plus *étroitement* les questions d'éducation avec les priorités de l'emploi et de la santé.

Nous devons resserrer les liens entre les secteurs public et privé.

Nous devons changer les comportements individuels – et nous avons besoin de nouvelles politiques, de lois antidiscriminatoires, d'égalité des chances - des salles de classe aux salles de réunion.

C'est l'esprit de la Déclaration de Sofia pour le leadership des femmes et l'*égalité des genres de 2016* – c'est le *principe qui nourrit notre action* pour réaliser l'Agenda 2030 pour le développement durable.

Il y a vingt ans, j'ai eu l'honneur d'assister à la *4ème Conférence mondiale sur les femmes à Pékin*.

Je me souviens encore de l'excitation de cette période, l'*énergie* que nous avons mise dans la Déclaration et la Plate-forme d'action.

D'énormes progrès ont été faits. Mais cela ne suffit pas.

Nous devons renouveler notre engagement, l'adapter aux besoins nouveaux du temps présent.

“

C'est une lutte où tout le monde a son rôle à jouer, filles et femmes, garçons et hommes, partout dans le monde.

”

C'est une lutte où tout le monde a son rôle à jouer, filles et femmes, garçons et hommes, partout dans le monde – et je souhaite remercier la délégation de la Suède pour l'organisation de l'exposition, *Swedish Dads*, qui sera lancée après cette session.

“

Le développement durable n'est pas un concept abstrait : c'est une réalité très concrète, qui a le visage d'une fille qui a aujourd'hui 12 ans, qui vit et apprend en sécurité, qui est respectée à l'école et dans sa famille, qui n'est pas forcée à se marier ou à travailler.

”

Le développement durable n'est pas un concept abstrait : c'est une réalité très concrète, qui a le visage d'une fille qui a aujourd'hui 12 ans, qui vit et apprend en sécurité, qui est respectée à l'école et dans sa famille, qui n'est pas forcée à se marier ou à travailler.

Si ces conditions sont réunies pour cette jeune fille, nous aurons demain le développement durable.

“

C'est le soft power qui façonnera un 21ème siècle plus inclusif, plus juste et plus pacifique pour les hommes et les femmes.

”

L'UNESCO peut agir, et l'UNESCO doit agir pour lui donner les droits, la formation et les compétences de devenir tout ce qu'elle désire être. C'est le soft power qui façonnera un 21<sup>ème</sup> siècle plus inclusif, plus juste et plus pacifique pour les hommes et les femmes.

Je vous remercie.



Aminata Touré delivering her closing remarks  
Panel: Saniye Gülser Corat, Alema Alema, Dana Firas, Irina Bokova, Tzipi Livni (from left)

# CULTURAL HERITAGE & WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

**H.R.H. Princess Dana Firas**, President of the Petra National Trust in Jordan

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Your Excellency Mrs. Irina Bokova

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to start by paying tribute to a most exceptional group of women. We are reminded today of the inspiring work women do every single day, in every part of the world, to improve the lives of people and make this world a better place. Thank you for your leadership – all of you – at a time when the world is in dire need of good leadership. I am honored to stand among you. Also, I am convinced, more than ever before, that if more women were in charge, the world would be in a much better place!

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When women are empowered, everyone benefits. Women's empowerment leads to more prosperous, more peaceful, healthier and more creative societies.

”

There is absolutely no doubt today that when women are empowered, everyone benefits. Women's empowerment leads to more prosperous, more peaceful, healthier and more creative societies.

At the same time, barriers to women's full empowerment remain. And that is true at all levels: in socially constructed gender roles that limit the space in which girls can participate, even dream; in educational opportunities; in the work place through positions and wage gaps; in the public space; in laws and policies; and of course, in leadership and decision-making.

While we, as a global community, have made significant progress, there is much more to be done. And where there is progress, sometimes it is uneven, in terms of sectors and geography. We have seen

that first hand through our work in cultural heritage preservation in Jordan.

There are synergies between cultural heritage and women's empowerment that can contribute to sustainable and equitable development and reinforce positive social transformation. Throughout the world, women play a key role in the preservation and vitality of cultural heritage and diversity. For example, much of what constitutes our “identity” is formed within the domain of the family, through stories, religious practices, food and clothes – which constitutes intangible heritage. More often than not, women play the principle role in raising children, keeping and passing on intangible culture to future generations. In that process, women also recreate and transform culture.

The value society places on heritage, and various aspects of heritage, is impacted by the role of women in society and the unequal power dynamics between men and women that exist. Heritage, like other policy areas, is defined by the prevailing national discourse and network of institutions and laws. Individuals or groups who are marginalized from the decision-making process will have no influence on which expressions of heritage are valued, and how and why “value” is determined.

In our work at the Petra National Trust we have witnessed the invaluable role of women in the protection and transmission of heritage.

The women of Petra, for example, are the principle source of information on clothes and the importance of embroidery patterns, colors and stitches. They hold the secrets to the medicinal herbs of the region and their uses. They keep oral and written records of the culinary heritage of their region and the recipes of past and present. But while we appreciate the value of that knowledge, its importance is not reflected adequately in the public sphere because of the limited role women play in decision-making in that community.



The Petra National Trust is Jordan's oldest non-governmental organization in the field of cultural heritage preservation. Our mission is to protect and preserve the archeological, natural and cultural heritage of Petra and its region.

We achieve our goal through three main focus areas: through preservation projects when monuments or visitors are in danger; through advocacy to ensure that cultural heritage is a policy priority; and through an innovative and interactive cultural education program for public school children ages 7-18 and their teachers.

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Women must achieve “voice, visibility and agency” not only within narrowly defined spheres but also realize and exercise full and equal rights in the public domain.

”

In every aspect of our work, we seek to promote girl and women empowerment and leadership – not merely as one component of what we do but as a foundation for all that we do. Through our advocacy efforts we are insistent and rather vocal about the role of women in cultural heritage identification, preservation and dissemination; and in policy- and decision-making. Women must achieve “voice, visibility and agency” not only within narrowly defined spheres but also realize and exercise full and equal rights in the public domain.

In our projects, we work in collaboration with local communities to open dialogue and promote gender equality, an approach that has underpinned all our capacity-building activities. We are conscious of discriminatory professional barriers in heritage, many of which reflect prevailing attitudes and stereotypes in society and we work to implement targeted measures are more inclusive, encourage equal participation and support women in business.

We have made major strides towards achieving our girl and women empowerment goals in our cultural education programs. Our programs have a deliberate targeted gender component that seeks to instill in our children and youth a full appreciation for the equality in rights and responsibilities of men and women.

We challenge gender roles and stereotypes in every activity that we do. If you visit our workshops, you will see 13-15-year-old boys busy making bead necklaces and other pieces of jewelry – generally considered “girly” activities. Our young men, 16-18 years old, spend time in the kitchen learning culinary skills and recipes traditionally relegated to the women of the family.

I am especially proud of some of our program outcomes in Rajef, a small village in the Petra region, inhabited by the Rawajfeh tribe - a semi nomadic conservative tribe of about 3,000 people.

After one of our workshops, a group of boys chose as their group project to interview and document their grandmothers' knowledge of local medicinal herbs, preparations and uses. I was touched by how proud they were of the female role models in their family, and how they valued this traditional knowledge as part of their own heritage and identity.

In that same community, and following a PNT Youth Engagement Workshop on job opportunities for 16-18-year-old young women, the ladies expressed to Nasser Rawajfeh, a prominent member of the community and President of the Rajef Charitable Society, strong concerns about obstacles to complete their education and to participate in voluntary activities. He was so impressed with them that he offered to talk to parents and more conservative elements in society to provide the young women with opportunities to volunteer. The young women have since launched a campaign, which they called “Change: Our Common Responsibility” and organize regular “volunteer days” for boys and girls to clean up public places in Rajef.

I have many more examples I would love to share with you, were it not for time constraints!

Many opportunities and challenges exist at the intersection of cultural heritage and women empowerment. But there is no doubt that gender equality and women's empowerment and leadership in cultural heritage, as in all other sectors, will engender more creative, prosperous, sustainable and equitable development.

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Girls must have equal access to education, to civic rights and to opportunities and we must eliminate fixed perceptions about the roles of men and women from a very young age, among both boys and girls.

”

But targeted and deliberate measures are required. Girls must have equal access to education, to civic rights and to opportunities and we must eliminate fixed perceptions about the roles of men and women from a very young age, among both boys and girls.

We must work to overcome the all-too-familiar challenges of limited participation of women in decision-making, separation into certain activities, restricted opportunities for professional development, training, capacity-building and networking and other barriers to full participation.

But in heritage we have the added challenge of who makes the decisions about heritage: its identification, conservation, transmission and management, all of which impact the role of heritage within the community.

There are many success stories and we must work individually, within our fields of interest, and collectively, as a global community, to empower more women and support women in leadership positions.

Ultimately, this is the key to a better future for us all.

Thank you very much.

# UNITING FOR GENDER EQUALITY

**H.E. Dr. Aminata Touré**, Special Envoy of the President, Former Prime Minister of the Republic of Senegal

First of all, congratulation to UNESCO for this fantastic day of reflection.

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the transforming leadership of Director General Ms. Irina Bokova. As a gender and human right expert, I have enjoyed since my time in the United Nations your commitment and leadership style, convivial and consensual, but always strong and firm on principals and rights.

I like to convey my special greetings to my friend and sister, Gülser Corat, your Gender Director. We were once part of what I would call the UN feminist gangsta to paraphrase rappers' rhetoric and we are still proud to have worked hard as UN interagency gender group for the inception of UN Women few years ago.

Dear friends,

It is also a joy to be among likeminded people in this never-ending battle for what has been obvious for me since I was a child; men and women have no personal merit because they are a man or a woman. It is just sheer accident. So, why then are they given different treatments and preferences based only on chance, luck or accident?

“  
Conservatism and extremism are both using women's bodies as extended battlefields.

I asked myself that naive question long ago when I did not yet understand the complexity, the sophistication I should say, of patriarchy as a cultural, social and even economic system. As we know, it is not random that women everywhere earn much less than men.

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It is not random that women everywhere earn much less than men.

Dear friends, it is also good to be together at a time where we are worldwide as feminists and women's rights, let admit it, are a bit depressed as we have suffered few setbacks in the political fronts and as we see it with our own eyes, conservatism and extremism are both using women's bodies as extended battlefields.

But we know what men also know: it does not take a few setbacks to stop a woman. On the contrary it just raises our stamina and our eagerness to win the next battles. N'est-ce pas ?

Dear friends

We are in strong agreement on the situation analysis of gender-based discriminations and I would like to focus on the "what's next" perspective.

First of all, we, women and women's leaders, are very strong individually but, my friends, most of the time, we are scattered, we are split, we are spread, for mostly geographic reasons. That must be overcome in these day and age of virtuality.

We must build stronger networks among us, we must raise our voices for each other, no matter how far we live from each other. That is what men do much better than us. And let us not let the false sovereignty reasons stop us, let us let women's rights know no boundaries!

My second point: we should reflect on building alliances, coalitions with men who are feminists. There are close to none. I am interested in discussing the issue with Mr Bouamatou, President of "*Égalité des Chances en Afrique, Equal opportunities for all in Africa*" and with Professor Kimmel whose excellent work on masculinities I appreciate very much.

This Women and Men feminists' joint-venture is necessary because many progressive men would like to be involved in the struggle but don't have the appropriate platforms where they could interact and act together with female feminists. To access and change the core of conservative places like religion or men-led traditional structures, to my experience,

it takes also other men with progressive and transformative views to get the necessary traction to get the discussion going and the negotiation starting.

My third point: Democracy is offering us a tremendous chance to turn the table around, like in football or soccer we need to create a situation of excessive number of players in the adversary's camp to be able to score. What I mean is that we need to create coalition between Women and Young people which would represent almost 3/4 of the electorate in my great country of Senegal for instance.

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It is important that we work with children and youth to counter patriarchy, especially regarding gender roles, image of women and fighting violence and the disrespect of women.

”

Women and young people, in most places, both have an interest in changing the status quo and we know that in their formative age it is important that we work with children and youth to counter patriarchy, especially regarding gender roles, image of women and fighting violence and the disrespect of women.

Both women and young people are interested in a more just and fair distribution of power. This should be part of our tactic to accelerate change because we all agree that change is too slow, too fragile and too reversible.

My forth and last point: we must look into the life cycle of women to develop a strategic package to accelerate gender equality and sustain women's rights. I am eager to talk about realizing women's rights from the birth to the grave. This is how I see the life cycle battle. Of course, it is a bit reductionist, because of the lack of time: Reproductive health would be the beginning of the journey with still too many women dying from childbirth in developing countries including in my own, Senegal.

In this respect, I pay tribute to the memory of the late Simon Weill for her immense work to advance reproductive rights.

In the life cycle package, in good stead we must include the objectives of:

- o access to education for all girls, including in STEM (science, technology engineering and maths),
- o access to decent jobs with equal pay, and
- o access to resources for women in business and political and civil participation on equal footage.

The overriding principles of changing gender-based cultural roles in strong partnership with the media, ending gender-based violence and enacting and implementing laws must be strongly present throughout the life cycle approach strategy.

Dear friends, this could be a way to organize our work together and bring it under a same umbrella.

Finally, I am very aware that none of us is about to retire because fighting for gender equality is a lifelong commitment, but it is very important that we foster the next generation of women and men feminists and activists to counter the wind of conservatism blowing worldwide. Let us stand shoulder to shoulder with our younger peers, young women and men, to reverse the game.

Thank you very much.

# STRONG POWER: FIGHTING FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

**Ms Tzipi Livni**, Former Foreign Minister of the State of Israel, Member of the Knesset

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Thank you for your leadership, Director-General Bokova. We are all really inspired by what you are doing here in UNESCO.

And it was an enlightening day. I heard speeches and I felt that almost each and every speech could have been mine. So, what's the use of saying the same thing?

But I feel that even when we are talking about personal experience in politics or elsewhere we face the same problems, the same challenges, and even the same feeling by trying to achieve our goals, our political goals.

But, here we are today, women from all over the world, from different countries. From my perspective as an Israeli, and with countries and successful women from countries that we don't have diplomatic relationships with but with whom we share the same vision and understanding, what is the importance of empowerment of women? And it's about education. It's about peace. It's about values. And I believe that values are something that we women share. And this is something that we can teach our colleagues, male colleagues in politics.

Now these days are days that we all face different challenges. Frankly - not only as an Israeli, as a citizen of the world - I feel that the world is changing. When we see more extremism, on the one hand. On the other hand, we have more and more high technology. And the world is becoming a kind of science fiction that we used to see in the past. This is the upside of the changes in the world.

But the downside is, it looks like the world is going backward. And we see more and more extremism and we see terrorists cutting heads off. And it is clear to me, as it is clear to you, there are those politicians that are abusing and exploiting fear. And these populists are getting more and more support from those that see these changes in the world and believe - a false belief - that usually men are those

that can give them the answer to their fear because we live in a world of images and perception. And the perception is that the male politicians, those that are speaking in a populist manner, those that are exploiting fear, are those that can give an answer and change the world in which we are living.

I believe that the opposite is true. And first and foremost, we need to understand that the first one - and we heard this from others - that the first who are being challenged and unfortunately paying the price of this extremism are women. Because when societies change, the women are the first ones to pay the price of this violence.

The revolution started many years ago by giving voting rights for women - thank you. But the world is changing. What about our revolution now?

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We all need to cooperate not only women.

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This is why, I really embrace and congratulate UNESCO and your Director-General for the initiative because there is a very important role for leadership these days. And there is a critical role for democracies and democratic states these days.

We all need to cooperate, not only women. I know it's about us and I know that if we don't fight for our rights, nobody will fight for us. But I hope that next time, next year we would see in this place, not only women fighting for women rights and women equality and gender equality but also men in an understanding that it's about the nature of the society in which we live.

Yet, it is also clear to me that if we do not fight for our rights nobody will do so. But I want to make a confession, because it was not clear to me at first when I joined politics. And it is true that I joined politics because I wanted influence and hopefully

achieve peace between Israel and Palestinian; this was my goal; this is still my goal in politics. This is the reason for me to be in politics and frankly I hate politics.

But, it took me some time to understand that I cannot be in politics without representing others: other women that are staying at home, looking at us, waiting for us to make steps and decisions for them as well. When I was in the Israeli cabinet, I understood for the first time, the importance of the United Nations Resolution 1325 about having women as part of the peace process. And as the chief negotiator on the Israeli side, I understood how important it is. But then, when I decided to run for office, to be the Israeli Prime Minister, for me it was obvious. I served as the Foreign Minister in Israel, as the Vice Prime Minister in Israel, made decisions, unfortunately sometimes on war and peace. I discovered that yes, you remember this question "who would take the phone 3 am?" I mean it's okay for them if a woman takes the phone and says "Yes. Just a minute. I'm giving you the Prime Minister." Now it's about decisions that we need to make.

And then I ran for office and I discovered also how important it is for us to give power to others. I saw women - I don't know, whether they were thinking about other issues in Israel - but they supported me. And I felt their strength and I understood that I give them strength as well. And it's not important whether this is the strength to join politics or the strength to come to the boss and say 'I want the same salary as the other guy next door'. Or whether it is just to say to a husband "you will not beat me anymore."

“

Running for office in one of the campaign meetings, a 12-year-old girl, a new immigrant from Ethiopia, came to me with flowers and a letter. She wrote "Congratulations, we love you. And I want to be a Prime Minister myself when I grow up." And I said "Wow. If I run for office and this young girl, a new immigrant in Israel, thinks that it's possible for her to become Prime Minister in the future, we did something.

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And you know running for office in one of the campaign meetings, a 12-year-old girl, a new immigrant from Ethiopia, came to me with flowers and a letter. She wrote "Congratulations, we love you. And I want to be a Prime Minister myself when I grow up." And I said "Wow. If I run for office and this young girl - a new immigrant in Israel - thinks that it's possible for her to become Prime Minister in the future, we did something."

I wrote this story to Hilary Clinton after the elections in the US and in a bizarre situation, both of us, won the popular vote, but didn't take the position as Prime Minister in Israel or as the President of the United States. Maybe also this kind of politics is something that men know how to do better than us.

Here, I meet women who come from all over the world. I hear these voices saying that, we should unite, we should put aside geographic gaps or boundaries. But it's not just about this. And I want to say something; I said that I had a first confession and now I have a second one.

I hesitated before coming here as an Israeli, because we faced in UNESCO, member states that are putting on the table, decisions, distorted decisions, on Jerusalem, on the holy sites of Jerusalem, and next week we are going to face another distorted decision based on lies about Hebron and the Cave of the Patriarchs.

I'm here as an Israeli opposition leader, but I'm not in opposition of history, I'm not an opposition of the history of my own people, and I'm not an opposition of truth. And these decisions would not change the ties of my people to these places, but they would do something else, and this is the reason I want to share this with you.

Politicizing UNESCO would make it impossible for all of us to work together on other important issues like the empowerment of women, like peace, like education. The last thing that we need here in UNESCO is the politicization of UNESCO. There are other places, where we have disputes and we can argue. The last thing that UNESCO needs is those who are trying to abuse and exploit this place in order, instead of being united for things that we all believe in, to be, to be divided. And, therefore, I believe that all together if we should put aside the different opinions or divisions, on some of the issues - and I know that there are other issues that divides different nations in UNESCO. So, it's not only about

Israel. But it's about the idea that UNESCO shouldn't be politicized.

However, I decided to come because I believe that the right thing to do is to be here and to be with you. And to fight together for the same beliefs.

Since I am sharing with you my own experience - and I said that the Resolution 1325 is very important - I want to add something to this. Because I believe that Resolution 1325 is about peacemaking and the need for women to be part of peacemaking. But I want women to be part of any decision, including unfortunately decisions on war and when we reach the moment when we enter into peace talks. These are good news. But let's have women be part of any and every decision - also when it comes to security, to wars - before we start wars or security decisions.

Now I feel, as I said before, women's empowerment was not part of my agenda. Yet, now, I feel this sense of sisterhood. Because I feel that when I hear something has happened to children, to girls in Nigeria, Boko Haram, I feel that it happens to me.

When I read about a young girl that is being forced to get married, I feel like that this is happening to me.

When I hear about a woman who is being killed and murdered by her own husband - and it's not important whether it's in Israel and, unfortunately, we have this as well, or elsewhere in the world - I feel that this is happening to me.

I know that this is the way you feel as well. Therefore, I feel so upset that instead of sometimes working together, we are focusing on other issues. The problem is that we are here today are speaking about the empowerment of women and we have a good feeling and we will leave this room and feel that we are united.

But then, let's admit it! We'll come back home - me to Israel, others to Jordan, to Senegal, to all these places - and the agenda will be, trust me, completely different. We should raise this as part of the agenda in our own states. And in order to do, I want to call "Women of the world unite!" As I want another girl to say "Liberals of the world unite!" Because all together we need to face these changes in the world.

I don't know whether you saw the "Handmaid's Tale" on television? Well, it's a kind of dystopic story about women that are being kept without their names. They are named after the man that are going to

serve in order to bring babies to the world. And their names are, for instance, "of Fred".

I want to say that in some places this is not a dystopic film or TV show. It's the reality of some of the women in the world. And we shouldn't accept it.

“ I don't believe that any religion is based on discrimination. It's about love. I believe that for women, the whole idea is about the freedom to choose and freedom to choose is... we can choose everything as long as they don't educate young girls that we have only one choice.

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I want to say few words also about the elephant in the room that nobody is speaking about. And this is about those who are abusing religions and beliefs in order to say that women cannot have equal rights. And it's not important whether it's Judaism, Islam, or Christianity. I don't believe that any religion is based on discrimination. It's about love. I believe that for women, the whole idea is about the freedom to choose and freedom to choose is... we can choose everything as long as they don't educate young girls that we have only one choice.

And, therefore, going back to *The Handmaid's Tale*, I think that we should be all of us of ourselves; I would be "of Tzipi", "of Irina". We belong to ourselves, our minds and our bodies. And if we need to fight for this, we should.

To finish, what I want to say: all of us are referring to these two words: "soft power." Some say "just power not soft power" and other say "smart power." And I say let's speak about "strong power." It's time.

Thank you.

# WOMEN, PEACE & SECURITY

**Dr Alema Alema**, Deputy Minister of Refugees and Repatriation of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Ladies and Gentlemen good afternoon!

Let me begin by expressing my support and gratitude for such a conference held by UNESCO, organized at a time when the world is observing massive changes and is in need of peace. And when a strong urge for maintaining peace is more than ever felt in the world. I also strongly support your role in enhancing gender equality and the international initiatives and actions which UNESCO has, fortunately, kept at the forefront of its mission.

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Afghan women have gained some outstanding achievements in various social, political, economic, judicial, and cultural areas since 2001 after going through a very politically and socially isolated period.

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Dear friends, as you may be well aware, Afghan women have gained some outstanding achievements in various social, political, economic, judicial, and cultural areas since 2001 after going through a very politically and socially isolated period.

This, of course, has happened with the support of the international community as well as the implementation of various short-, medium- and long-term strategic plans by the governments. Among them is, of course the UN 1325 resolution, Women, Peace, and Security, which the Afghan government has taken many initiatives to implement. In particular, Afghan President, His Excellency Mohammad Ashraf Ghani launched the National Action Plan for resolution the Afghan government has taken many initiatives in 2016 and a budget was allocated for the purpose of its implementation.

The first thing Mohammad Ashraf Ghani did after becoming president was to visit women prisons and ensure a safe atmosphere and respect for female prisoners inside the prisons. So far, 9,358 legal

cases involving women have been heard by Afghan courts and 2,263 cases have been resolved with legal counsel provided by the Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Ministry of Justice.

In the security sector, Afghan government has been really focusing on increasing the number of women security forces; we currently have more than 3000 policewomen all over Afghanistan.

15 years ago, Afghanistan used to have the lowest government female employees in the world, but now it has the fastest pace of attracting women to the government, particularly, to the security sector over the last 15 years. The Ministry of Defense has allocated 5,000 posts for women and a 10% quota has been established at the Afghanistan National Army for women. This is the most important point 1325 resolution poses in terms of gender policy. Moreover, among Islamic governments, Afghanistan is one of the countries whose women security forces have the moral support of the country's First Lady.

Coming to the point where women's role is important in negotiations and the peace building processes, it is worth mentioning that we now have a woman as the Deputy to the High Peace Council and three women at leadership level.

Mrs. Sorabi, Deputy to the High Peace Council, was supposed to address in this panel today. Unfortunately, she was unable to obtain the Schengen visa in time to join this conference.

I know this number is never enough but Afghanistan is taking its first baby steps and by the passage of time women's role in political negotiations will be enhanced and increase, an example of which is Ms. Sarabi's presence in the negotiation process with the Islamic Hizb who recently joined the government.

Another great example of women's involvement in peace building is of course the Women's Symposium under the title '*Afghan Women, Messengers of Peace*', held in May 2017 with the leadership of the country's First Lady, Rula Ghani. It saw more than



300 participants from all 34 provinces of the country and proved the fact that as long as we do not reach social peace, political peace will not be achieved in the country.

It was discussed and concluded in the Symposium that women can play a major role by having unity among each other and using ways to convince their husbands and children not to reach out to their weapons for every big and small conflict, but conversely, use conflict-resolution methods and communication to solve conflicts.

Women have succeeded in playing a vital role as peace mediators at the Local Peace Councils. However, - and unfortunately - these processes are at times short term and not sustainable, because they are the result of periodic and profit-based projects. We should, with the help of our international friends, move from project-oriented programs to long-term and sustainable processes so as to make our role and activities sustainable and impactful.

What Afghans deem important and demand from the international community in the peace process and security maintenance is merely that they play an honest and sincere role. Today, Afghanistan is at war with around 20 foreign terrorist groups. If it is not paid attention to, it might turn into a battleground for proxy wars of neighboring and regional countries. Thus, we request from our international organizations their active diplomatic presence in all the cases related to Afghanistan.

I would like to conclude my speech by sharing a couple of suggestions:

Help us in shifting from periodic unsustainable projects towards more sustainable processes and real institution building.

At the local administration level, structures and institutions should be created and strengthened to help the administration start dialogues in order to solve any kind of conflict; women must be involved as mediators in such dialogues.

We also need UNESCO's Support in spreading the culture of peace and your lobbying force so that peace is included in the school curriculums.

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No negotiation should happen without the active role and participation of women ... Negotiations and dialogues without women's presence often end in failure.

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Attention should continue to be paid to strengthening and supporting networks of civil society who are working for women's, youth, and children's rights.

No negotiation should happen without the active role and participation of women in order to maintain gender equality at the national and international levels.

Negotiations and dialogues without women's presence often end in failure.

The International Community, with all its continued support, has always looked upon women's issues as political rather than strategic. We need strategic support because it is sustainable. Institutions such as UNESCO, and UN Women should provide women with more strategic opportunities. Effective dialogues and exchanges should be organized at a wider level.

## 8 – CONCLUSIONS & FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This final section outlines some of the cross-cutting challenges that were evoked at the conference. It also sums up some of the key types of action that were cited that have been used to successfully advance women's leadership and work towards gender equality.

# CONCLUSIONS

**Gender equality plays a key role in the realisation of most, if not all, of the SDGs on the 2030 Agenda:** gender equality is linked with beneficial outcomes for the society as a whole, from sustainable economies to sustainable peace agreements.

**Gender equality and the rise in extremism:** work on gender must also take the current political climate into account, marked by a rise in terrorism and extremism.

**Stereotypes and unconscious bias:** gender inequality begins at home as we are socialised into our gendered roles. Stereotypes and unconscious bias continue to create a mental barrier that impedes gender equality. Stereotypes prevent more girls from imagining a career in science and from having the self-confidence to pursue it. Unconscious bias means they are less likely to be selected than a male candidate if they do follow this path.

**The gender revolution is driven by soft power and softly powerful leaders:** a durable, cultural change is required in order to make gender equality a reality and this transformation should be instigated within each culture. Leaders – male and female – play a key role in creating an environment that is ripe for gender equality, whether in politics, business or the media; in the process these leaders help set the tone for society at large.

**Engaging men and boys is essential:** the right approach and arguments should be selected to

attract rather than alienate men, many of whom may already be convinced by the justice of gender equality. Male role models can encourage others to speak out. Starting from childhood, boys need to be educated to participate in domestic chores and 'female' domains. Equally, "female" domains need to be revalued to encourage more boys and men to participate.

**The gendered division of labour remains a key barrier to female participation especially in leadership positions:** as well as being a mental barrier, the gendered division of labour that dominates in patriarchal societies also serves as a practical impediment to women's empowerment and leadership. Even where there are supplies of educated and qualified women, there are far fewer women who rise to the highest decision-making levels; this is, in part, due to the difficulties of combining professional and family life.

**Legal frameworks and policies that favour gender equality and women's empowerment are essential, but implementation is required to make gender equality a reality:** deeper work is required to counteract the social norms and stereotypes that prevent these laws and policies from being translated into tangible actions and results.

**Not enough women make the media:** the media play a key role in shaping these gendered stereotypes. There are still too few women in decision-making levels.

# FUTURE DIRECTIONS

**Advocacy:** organisations like UNESCO play a key role in keeping gender equality at the top of the global agenda.

**Monitoring for evidence-based advocacy:** collecting data to track progress and to use in evidence-based advocacy makes an important contribution to advancing the gender agenda.

**Education:** education at all levels – in the family, in formal schooling, and as life-long learning – is an essential tool to combat the negative, gender stereotypes which are a key foundation for gender inequalities.

**Role models and mentors:** strong role models and mentorship programmes help to shape girls' aspirations, give women confidence and help us acknowledge the important contribution that women have made in each and every domain.

**The power of convening:** bringing people together to discuss gender equality and women's empowerment encourages knowledge exchange and helps boost the confidence of conference participants who continue to lead by example when they return home.

**Building innovative partnerships:** international organisations, including UNESCO, can play a key role in creating innovative partnerships at all levels (grass-roots, corporate, public sector).

# UNESCO'S PROMISE FOR GENDER EQUALITY

ON THE OCCASION OF THE HIGH-LEVEL CONFERENCE, "FOSTERING WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND LEADERSHIP", ORGANIZED WITHIN THE FRAMEWORK OF "UNESCO'S SOFT POWER TODAY" SERIES, PARIS, 30 JUNE 2017

**Reaffirming** the critical importance of "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals" (SDGs),

**Recalling** that gender equality is a shared vision of social justice and human rights, and as such is essential to achieving the 2030 Agenda aspirations for ensuring prosperity and well-being for all women and men, while protecting our planet and strengthening the foundations for peace,

**Noting** that gender equality was designated in 2008 as one of the two global priorities of UNESCO and that, since then, UNESCO has been at the forefront of the international dialogue on gender equality and women's empowerment, serving as a global reference for innovation and leadership,

**Recognizing** the personal dedication and commitment of Ms. *Irina Bokova* – the first woman Director-General of UNESCO – and her great achievements for the promotion of gender equality as one of the two global priorities of the Organization,

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## UNESCO HEREBY

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**Reiterates** its commitment to an integrated approach to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda that fully reflects the interrelated nature of the 17 SDGs, drawing on its universal humanist mandate and areas of specialized expertise;

**Confirms** its determination to accelerate the process of mainstreaming gender equality in all of its programmes to support the implementation of SDG 5 on gender equality and women's empowerment, as well as the implementation of the gender equality and women's empowerment components of all the other SDGs, including but not limited to the following: promoting girls' and women's education; promoting women in science, especially at decision-making levels; promoting women as agents of social transformation; promoting the full participation of women in cultural life; reinforcing gender equality in and through the media; empowering girls and women through information and communication technologies; and combatting violence against girls and women in all its forms;

**Encourages** its Member States to incorporate SDG 5 and the gender equality and women's empowerment components of all the other SDGs in their national planning processes, policies and strategies, and to benefit from UNESCO's support in developing methodologies for the generation, collection and

systematic use of sex-disaggregated data, as well as for contextualizing specific gender equality and women’s empowerment targets and indicators in all UNESCO domains;

**Continues to foster** multi-stakeholder partnerships in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in all of its domains and to pursue stronger coordination within the United Nations system – in particular with UN Women, UNFPA, UNDP, and UNICEF with other global and regional organizations such as the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, African Development Bank and European Union, as well as with national and local partners including civil society, the private sector and academia – thus ensuring a coordinated approach to promoting gender equality and women’s empowerment at the global, regional and country levels;

**Expresses** warm appreciation to the participants of the Conference for their contribution to mobilizing knowledge and intellectual capital on gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment in all areas of UNESCO’s mandate, and for bringing this Promise to the attention of the international community as a call to rally efforts for gender equality and women’s empowerment in the years to come.



Presenting UNESCO’s Promise for Gender Equality

# LA PROMESSE DE L'UNESCO EN MATIÈRE D'ÉGALITÉ DES GENRES

A L'OCCASION DE LA CONFÉRENCE DE HAUT NIVEAU, « PROMOUVOIR L'AUTONOMISATION ET LE LEADERSHIP DES FEMMES », ORGANISÉE DANS LE CADRE DE LA SÉRIE «LE SOFT POWER DE L'UNESCO AUJOURD'HUI»  
PARIS, 30 JUIN 2017

**Réaffirmant** l'importance cruciale de « Transformer notre monde : le Programme de développement durable à l'horizon 2030 » et ses 17 objectifs de développement durable (ODD),

**Rappelant** que l'égalité des genres est une vision partagée de la justice sociale et des droits humains, et qu'elle est donc essentielle pour atteindre les objectifs de l'Agenda 2030 afin d'assurer la prospérité et le bien-être de toutes les femmes et de tous les hommes, tout en protégeant notre planète et en renforçant les fondements de la paix,

**Prenant en compte que** l'égalité des genres a été désignée en 2008 comme l'une des deux priorités globales de l'UNESCO, et que, dès lors, l'UNESCO a été à l'avant-garde du dialogue international sur l'égalité des genres et l'autonomisation des femmes, servant de référence mondiale pour l'innovation et le leadership,

**Reconnaissant** le dévouement personnel et l'engagement de Mme Irina Bokova, la première femme Directrice générale de l'UNESCO, et ses grandes réalisations pour la promotion de l'égalité des genres comme l'une des deux priorités globales de l'Organisation,

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## L'UNESCO PAR LA PRÉSENTE

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**Réaffirme** son engagement envers une approche intégrée de la mise en œuvre de l'Agenda 2030, qui reflète pleinement la nature interdépendante des 17 ODD, en s'appuyant sur son mandat humaniste universel et ses domaines d'expertise spécialisée;

**Confirme** sa détermination à accélérer le processus d'intégration de la perspective de genre dans tous ses programmes afin de soutenir la mise en œuvre de l'ODD 5 sur l'égalité des genres et l'autonomisation des femmes, ainsi que la mise en œuvre des éléments portant sur l'égalité des genres et l'autonomisation des femmes dans tous les autres ODD, y compris, mais sans se limiter à : promouvoir l'éducation des filles et des femmes ; promouvoir les femmes dans le domaine des sciences, en particulier dans les postes décisionnels de haut niveau; promouvoir les femmes en tant qu'agentes de transformation sociale; promouvoir la participation à part entière des femmes dans la vie culturelle; renforcer l'égalité des genres dans et à travers les médias;

autonomiser les filles et les femmes à travers les technologies de l'information et de la communication; et combattre la violence envers les filles et les femmes dans toutes ses manifestations ;

**Encourage** ses Etats membres à incorporer l'ODD 5 et les éléments portant sur l'égalité des genres et l'autonomisation des femmes dans tous les autres ODD dans leurs processus de planification nationale, politiques et stratégies, et de bénéficier du soutien de l'UNESCO dans le développement de méthodologies pour générer, recueillir et utiliser systématiquement des données ventilées par sexe, ainsi que pour contextualiser des objectifs et des indicateurs spécifiques en matière d'égalité des genres et d'autonomisation des femmes dans tous les domaines de l'UNESCO;

**Continue à favoriser** les partenariats multipartites dans la mise en œuvre de l'Agenda 2030 dans tous ses domaines, et à renforcer la coordination au sein du système des Nations Unies - en particulier avec ONU Femmes, UNFPA, le PNUD et UNICEF, avec d'autres organisations internationales et régionales telles que la Banque mondiale, la Banque asiatique de développement, la Banque africaine de développement, la Banque Interaméricaine de Développement et l'Union européenne, ainsi qu'avec des partenaires nationaux et locaux, y compris la société civile, le secteur privé et le milieu universitaire - assurant ainsi une approche coordonnée pour promouvoir l'égalité des genres et l'autonomisation des femmes à l'échelle mondiale, régionale et nationale;

**Exprime** une chaleureuse reconnaissance aux participants de la Conférence pour leur contribution à la mobilisation des connaissances et du capital intellectuel sur l'égalité des genres et l'autonomisation des femmes et des filles dans tous les domaines du mandat de l'UNESCO, et pour attirer l'attention de la communauté internationale sur cette promesse à poursuivre les efforts en ce qui concerne l'égalité des genres et l'autonomisation des femmes dans les années à venir.



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## UNESCO'S SOFT POWER TODAY CONFERENCE SERIES

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UNESCO fulfils its mission through advocacy for peace and development and through the soft power of persuasion. To highlight this key instrument, UNESCO is organizing a series of thematic conferences within the framework of "UNESCO's Soft Power Today."

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## UNESCO'S DIVISION FOR GENDER EQUALITY

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UNESCO's commitment to promoting gender equality and women's empowerment is coordinated by the Division for Gender Equality in the Office of the Director-General, located at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris, France. The Division for Gender Equality ensures gender mainstreaming activities and initiatives within all UNESCO domains.

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## THE FONDATION POUR L'EGALITÉ DES CHANCES EN AFRIQUE

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The Fondation pour l'Égalité des Chances en Afrique, a Belgian philanthropic organization, supports non-profit projects for Africa that contribute to reinforcing: the Rule of law and democracy; equal opportunities made possible by education, the legal system, health, culture and human rights and transparency in the public sector and the fight against corruption.



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