



UN to spotlight the need to increase investments in women and girls on International Women's Day 2008

WHAT: International Women's Day observance at United Nations Headquarters

WHEN: Thursday, 6 March 2008 — Event 10:15 am, Press Briefing 12:20 pm

WHERE: UN Headquarters, First Avenue at 46th Street

The public and private sectors, multilateral organizations as well as civil society have a critical role to play in stepping up investments for programmes that empower women: that is the message to be shared with thousands of women delegates and activists at the UN observance of International Women's Day on 6 March.

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon will be the featured speaker at the event, along with Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi, South Africa's Minister of Public Service and Administration, and Lloyd Blankfein, Chairman and CEO, the Goldman Sachs Group. The high-level segment will be followed by a panel discussion with women entrepreneurs and representatives from government, corporate and banking sector.

"As we know from long and indisputable experience, investing in women and girls has a multiplier effect on productivity and sustained economic growth," says Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon in his message for the Day. "No measure is more important in advancing education and health, including the prevention of HIV/AIDS. No other policy is as likely to improve nutrition, or reduce infant and maternal mortality."

While gender equality has been widely recognized as a pre-requisite for the achievement of peace and security, human rights and development goals, lack of resources for programmes that benefit and empower women is a reality the world over. To draw global attention to this urgent need, the theme for International Women's Day 2008 is "Investing in Women and Girls".

Coinciding with International Women's Day, Mr. Blankfein, Chairman and CEO of the Goldman Sachs Group (NYSE:GS), recently unveiled *10,000 Women*, a global initiative that will provide 10,000 underserved women, predominantly in developing and emerging markets, with a business and management education. Through partnerships between universities in the U.S. and Europe and business schools in emerging and developing countries, *10,000 Women* will seek to have a lasting impact on the quality and capacity of business education in developing regions around the world. Goldman Sachs will commit \$100 million to this initiative over the next five years.

Over the last few decades, agreements at major UN conferences and meetings—including the Beijing Platform for Action, Monterrey Consensus and the 2005 World Summit Outcome — have urged government and international organizations to provide sufficient resources to programmes that support women's empowerment. However, a serious gap remains between policy and practice in many countries. Of the 867 million adults who cannot read today, 64 percent are women, according to World Bank estimates. Of the approximately 113 million children aged 6-11 years who do not attend school, the majority are girls.

EVENT DETAILS

International Women's Day Observance: UN Secretary-General **Ban Ki-moon** will open the International Women's Day celebrations along with **Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi**, South African Minister of Public Service and Administration, and **Lloyd Blankfein**, Chairman and CEO, Goldman Sachs Group. The high-level segment will be followed by a panel discussion with **Sabine de Bethune**, Senator, Belgium; **Zara Khatib**, Technology Manager, Shell Exploration and Production International; **Inez Murray**, Vice President for Technical Assistance and Programs, Women's World Bank; and **Muriel Siebert**, Founder, Chairwoman and CEO, Muriel Siebert & Co., Inc.. The event will be moderated by **Rhonda Schaffler**, Anchor of "Open Exchange", Bloomberg Television.

Venue: Conference Room 2, 10:15 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Live webcast: www.un.org/webcast

Event organized by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women, Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the Department of Public Information.

Press Conference: **Rachel N. Mayanja**, the Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Gender Issues and the Advancement of Women, will brief the press about the theme and importance of investing in women and girls for International Women's Day. She will be accompanied **Geraldine Fraser-Moleketi**, South African Minister of Public Service and Administration and **Inez Murray**, Vice President for Technical Assistance and Programs, Women's World Bank.

Venue: Press Briefing Room, S-226, 12:20 p.m. approximately (guest at daily noon briefing).

Live webcast: www.un.org/webcast

MEDIA ARRANGEMENTS

Accreditation: Journalists without UN accreditation who wish to attend the events should send a request on company letterhead signed by a supervisor to Gary Fowlie, Chief, UN Media Accreditation Unit, fax +1 (212) 963 4642 or call +1 (212) 963 6934. More information at www.un.org/media/accreditation

For further information or for interviews, please contact:

UN Department of Public Information

Oisika Chakrabarti: Tel: +1 (917) 367 9498, e-mail: mediainfo@un.org

Martina Donlon: Tel: +1 (212) 963 6816, e-mail: mediainfo@un.org

See also: www.un.org/events/women/iwd/ or www.un.org/womenwatch

Goldman Sachs:

Lucas van Praag: Tel: +1 (212) 902 5400