

Preparatory process for the Third International Conference on Financing for Development
First drafting session

Statement on behalf of UN Women

Zohra Khan, Policy Advisor, Governance and National Planning

28 January 2015

- Excellencies, distinguished Permanent Representatives, co-facilitators and colleagues. As this is UN Women's first opportunity to take the floor, allow me to convey our gratitude to the co-facilitators and the Financing for Development office of DESA for putting together a strong, substantive Elements Paper that provides a comprehensive basis for our discussions this week.
- UN Women notes with concern that commitments related to gender equality in the Monterrey and Doha processes have not been realized – it remains “unfinished business”.
- In fact, co-facilitators, **no country in the world has closed the gender gap**. Despite numerous national and global commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment, national reports from the Beijing+20 review tell us that one major reason for the lack of progress on the ground is inadequate financing. **Financing has just not kept pace with our commitments**.
- In 2006, the estimated gap in financing for gender equality issues was projected to rise to as high as **USD 83 billion by 2015**. This underinvestment has seriously impeded realization of the rights of women and girls.
- An ambitious post-2015 development agenda must be matched with **equally ambitious level of financing for gender equality**. This requires enhanced domestic resource mobilization, a stepping up of ODA commitments, and financing from all sources including private sector and non-traditional donors – with full regard for women's human rights. How might this be done?
- First, **all policy actions at the national level must be used to mobilize resources** for gender equality. These include the reorientation of macroeconomic policies to increase fiscal space, as well as efforts to broaden the tax base, improve tax compliance, and address both the implicit and explicit gender biases in tax systems.

- It is equally important to ensure that resources generated through tax are used to advance gender equality and women's rights. **Implementing gender-responsive budgeting and strengthening accountability mechanisms will ensure more efficient, transparent, and effective financing.**
- Second, **States must use all policy actions to ensure women's access to financial services, land and productive assets.** This would require taking measures to eliminate gender based discrimination in access to and control over bank loans, mortgages and other forms of financial credit, **and** giving women full and equal access to economic resources, including the right to inheritance, right to land ownership, natural resources and access to technologies.
- Third, while States have the primary responsibility to deliver results for women, we must not forget the **complementarity of international public finance in achieving gender equality and women's empowerment.** Official development assistance can provide additional sources of revenue and ease financial constraints for lower income countries. All developed countries should meet the 0.7% target for ODA commitments, including the commitments to least developed countries of 0.15% of GNI by 2015, ensuring a stronger focus on gender equality, with attention to sectors where spending remains inadequate, such as **peace and security, women's economic empowerment, sexual and reproductive rights and health, and violence against women and girls.**
- For financing for gender equality to be truly transformative it requires efforts by all actors to address both the **structural causes and consequences of gender inequality**, and, therefore, it is central to build multi-stakeholder partnerships in achieving **adequate, predictable and robust** financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women. This cannot be done without the full and equal participation of **women and women's organizations** in decision-making at all levels.
- Co-facilitators, we celebrate this historic moment in 2015 with the convergence of a number of global processes that will chart a new way forward for us all. In addition to the SDG and FFD process, we commemorate of the 20th anniversary of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which set benchmarks for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. As we assess progress now, we need to strengthen our efforts to ensure that we eradicate both poverty and gender inequality by 2030.
- I thank you again, co-facilitators, for this opportunity and assure you of UN Women's continued support on the road to Addis. We remain at your disposal.