



THE PRESIDENT
OF THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY

28 November 2018

Excellency,

As the fourth woman to assume the Presidency of the General Assembly in the history of the United Nations, I have dedicated my term to women and girls around the world. During my Presidency, I will focus on the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as one of my top priorities.

In this respect, I have the honour to inform you that I will host a high-level event on “Women in Power” on 12 March 2019 on the margins of the sixty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women. Please find enclosed the concept note and preliminary programme of the high-level event.

It is my hope that the event will attract the highest possible level of participation from your Government.

For further information, your Office may contact my Deputy Chef de Cabinet, Ambassador Yanerit Morgan (yanerit.morgansotomayor@un.org) and Adviser, Ms. Eva Schafer (eva.schafer@un.org).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in purple ink, reading 'MFEspinosa'.

María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés

All Permanent Representatives and
Permanent Observers to the United Nations
New York



High-level Event on Women in Power

12 March 2019, Trusteeship Council Chamber, UNHQ

CONCEPT NOTE

Background:

Women's equal participation and leadership in all spheres of life is essential to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century. In the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Member States acknowledged that women are a fundamental force for leadership, conflict resolution and the promotion of lasting peace. In the same vein, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development calls for women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic and public life.

Women and girls represent half of the global population, yet, women continue to be underrepresented in leadership positions in every region of the world. As of October 2018, only 9 per cent of UN Member States have a female Head of State or Government. Globally, only 24 per cent of parliamentarians are women. In 31 States, women account for less than 10 per cent of parliamentarians in single or lower houses, including 4 chambers with no women at all. Similarly, among the 2018 Fortune 500 companies, only 24 have women CEOs and 12 companies have no women at all on their board.

In 2011, the General Assembly expressed its concern that women in every part of the world continue to be largely marginalized from the political sphere often as a result of discriminatory laws, practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes, low levels of education, lack of access to health care and the disproportionate effect of poverty on women. The General Assembly also invited States to exchange experience and best practices on women's political participation and encouraged States to support programmes that facilitate women's participation in political and other leadership activities (A/RES/66/130).

Objectives:

In this context, the high-level event will be an opportunity for participants to identify barriers that hinder women's full participation and leadership, and to share best practices that can accelerate women's empowerment in this area. The high-level event will also engage young women leaders to foster an environment of mentoring and dialogue between present and future leaders.

Participation, Format and Outcome:

The high-level event will bring together senior leaders and other participants from governments, the UN system, private sector and civil society, including youth organizations, to share experiences and learn from success stories on advancing women's leadership.

The program will feature an opening segment and two high-level roundtables. The President of the General Assembly will also host a working luncheon with young women leaders. A President's summary of the discussions at the high-level event will be circulated to all Member States and other stakeholders.



Preliminary Programme:

<p>10:00 – 10:30 am Trusteeship Council Chamber</p>	<p>Opening segment Speakers (tbc)</p>
<p>10:30 - 11:45 am Trusteeship Council Chamber</p>	<p>High-level Roundtable 1: <i>How Women Leaders Change the World</i></p> <p>The roundtable will explore the contribution of women leaders to building peaceful, inclusive and prosperous societies. Participants will share success stories and lessons learnt based on their experience as decision-makers.</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Why is women’s leadership essential to address today’s global challenges? - How do women contribute to sustainable development, peace and security and human rights? - What can we learn from the experience of prominent women leaders? <p>Moderator and Panelists (tbc)</p>
<p>11:45 am – 1:00 pm Trusteeship Council Chamber</p>	<p>High-level Roundtable 2: <i>Future of Women’s Leadership</i></p> <p>The roundtable will identify existing barriers that hinder women’s leadership and best practices to accelerate progress for present and future generations.</p> <p>Guiding questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What are the legal, social and cultural barriers holding back women’s leadership? - What are the best practices to empower women to become agents of change? - How can we overcome discriminatory practices, attitudes and gender stereotypes to advance women’s leadership? <p>Moderator and Panelists (tbc)</p>