

**Statement by Mr. Mayank Joshi, First Secretary, at the first Regular  
Session of UN Women Executive Board, 9<sup>th</sup> February, 2015**

**Mr. President,**

At the outset, I, on behalf of delegation of India, congratulate you and the bureau on elections at this important juncture, when we this year, would commemorate Beijing +20 in March 2015, and also are embarking on drawing the post-2015 development agenda. I assure you of full support of my delegations in your work.

I also compliment Executive Director and Under-Secretary General, Madam Phumzile Mlambo-Nguka for her leadership and able direction to the organization and for her informative statement today.

**Mr. President,**

In a short but exemplary journey of five years, UN Women, with 6 regional offices, 6 multi-country offices and close to 50 country offices has built considerable strengths and capacities for implementing its mandate as outlined in the GA resolution 64/289.

The unique mandate of UN Women signifies that it is “Fit for Purpose” and we are confident that its significant work and contributions would provide an important reference point for the realization of women’s rights in relevant goals of the post-2015 development agenda, including humanitarian and climate change. Post-2015 development agenda would bring us nearer to the realization of our vision to achieve a sustainable gender-equal world.

**Mr. President,**

As we welcome the reports on evaluation and audit, enlisted in the Agenda today, it is important to accord a high priority to evaluation which is central to the achievement of UN Women’s mission and in supporting fulfillment of its transformational and mandated role. The “International Year of Evaluation 2015”, kick-started by the UN Women India Multi-country office in January 2015, provides a unique opportunity to strengthen and safeguard the independence, credibility and utility of evaluation function and integrated into UN Women’s mandate and function.

Linking of decentralized evaluations with national gender-responsive evaluation capacity development would be welcome, however, one must be cautious and not adopt a “one-size-fits-all” approach. Also, harnessing existing and new South-South and triangular initiatives that can link institutions in countries where effective capacities already exist with partners where support is wanting, would further bring us closer to realizing our objectives.

We look forward to a successfully launch of 2016-2020 *Global Evaluation Agenda at the EvalPartners Global Forum* in November 2015.

We also note with appreciation the proposal of UN Women for establishment of a separate budget line for evaluation within the organizational budget to be approved by

the Executive Board with an aim of achieving 3% programme budget target in the Evaluation policy.

**Mr. President,**

The worth of a civilization can be judged by the place given to women in the society. India's ancient culture has granted a honorable place to women. In India it is said '*where women are honoured there reside the gods*'. Equality is enshrined in Indian constitution and the vision of India is "Empowered women living with dignity and contributing as equal partners in development in an environment free from violence and discrimination".

India has nearly 1.5 million elected and empowered women representatives. The recently launched "*Beti Bachao Beti Padao*" (Save daughter educate daughter) programme is envisioned to break the intergenerational cycle of multiple deprivations faced by girls and women, critical for more inclusive and sustainable growth and arrest gender differential. Education, health, development and empowerment of women and girls remain a high priority in our government policies.

Legislations have been enacted aiming at elimination of violence against women in India and ensuring their protection from sexual offences. The National Rural Health Mission is working on improvement of many indicators pertaining to gender and women, particularly from vulnerable communities. Schemes like Sabla and Saksham, aim at all round self-development of adolescent girls and boys, make them gender sensitive, aware and healthy citizens. Mainstreaming gender concerns in the policies and programmes of different Ministries/Departments of Government of India & State Governments through gender budgeting has been specially emphasized.

During her visit to India in November, 2014, the Executive Director (ED) inaugurated the 2nd MenEngage Symposium which included a HeForShe conversation on male accountability for gender equality, in the context of Beijing + 20. India fully supports the HeForShe Campaign, a laudable step based on the principle of shared power and responsibility among women and men at home and in the workplace.

ED also visited Gujarat for interacting with "Making Women's Voices and Votes Count – An ICT-based Intervention", which is supported by UN Women's Fund for Gender Equality. I would like to re-emphasize, as done by my delegation on earlier occasions, that empowering women using enabling Information, Communication and Technology (ICT) could be a game changer if harnessed and applied to its full potential, especially in areas of education, healthcare, water and sanitation, energy and help in expediting addressing the challenges of digital divide. Technology-enabled women would lead to a technology-enabled society faster.

**Mr. President,**

We are also happy to note the continued reaffirmation of mandates of QCPR Resolutions in gender equality and empowerment and in the Strategic Plan. Though it is reassuring to note that the voluntary contributions are growing and UN Women has a good financial health, aspirations of targets continue to outstrip commitments and programmes remain underfunded. There is an urgent need to attract more predictable multi-year capital, with a stronger core base in a transparent and informed manner. UN Women should also enhance visibility of donations and introduce incentives for donors, who in turn should now move beyond mere political rhetoric of stated commitments.

On our part, I would like to inform that India, the largest donor among developing countries, fulfilled its commitment of US Dollars five million to UN Women, having made USD one million contribution last year in November.

Mr. President,

Swami Vivekananda, a great saint, believed that “*there is no chance of the welfare of the world unless the condition of women is improved*”. India is committed to steadfastly continue to work together with UN Women and the international community for achieving a “gender-equal world”.

Thank You.

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