

## **First Regular Session of the Executive Board of UN Women**

### **India Statement**

**by**

**Mr. Asokan Amarnath, Counsellor**

**14 February 2020**

Thank you Mr. President. At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and the other members of the 2020 Bureau on your election. I would also like to thank Executive Director for her able leadership of the organization and her inspiring statement. Permit me to also thank the UN Women Secretariat for the timely issuance of documents and for consulting member-states in a transparent fashion throughout the preparation for this Session.

In 2020, we are marking the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women and adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. A five-year milestone will be reached towards achieving the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. As we begin this pivotal year, India is satisfied to note the progress achieved by UN-WOMEN so far, for the accelerated realization of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, everywhere. We are also fully conscious that the task ahead of us is equally enormous.

Mr. President,

I belong to a country that is home to more than 500 million women. My government is implementing a series of flagship programmes that focus on significantly expanding financial inclusion, healthcare, safety and security, education, employment, rural livelihood, entrepreneurship of women. To celebrate the girl child and enable her education, the Government of India launched the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' (Save daughter, Educate daughter) Scheme in 2015. I am happy to inform you that UN-Women is an important partner in some of these programs.

In India, we are convinced that ensuring the rightful place of women in society is not only a moral imperative but an essential pre-requisite for achieving prosperity and sustainable development. We also firmly believe that the only way to achieve the 2030

Agenda is to move away from women development to women-led development. The discourse on women empowerment has to shift from viewing women as mere recipients of welfare benefits to mainstreaming their concerns.

Mr. President,

Among the various issues discussed by the Board in this session and during this year, one of the most crucial is the implementation of UNDS reforms. We have taken note of the progress update by UN-WOMEN on the implementation of the UNDS repositioning process in ensuring a smooth transition to the new system.

While it is understandable that every reform measure would need time to take roots before delivering its fruits, it is also imperative that the implementation of reforms is constantly monitored and evaluated to ensure that they provide the results for which they were instituted in the first place. In this regard, we underscore the importance of implementation of the key reform measures without adversely affecting the overarching original objective of gender equality. For India, and indeed most of the developing world, there cannot be any compromise on the ambition of the Agenda 2030 and its fulfilment.

Mr. President,

We are also happy to note that financial resources available with UN-Women has been rising steadily over the years. It is indeed a commendable effort and is reflective of the agency consistent focus in reaching out to members states, civil societies, business and philanthropic partners to deliver on objective of achieving gender equality.

Let me conclude, Mr. President, by reaffirming India's steadfast commitment to the global, regional and national effort to achieve gender equality, the empowerment of women and gender mainstreaming.

Thank you.

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