

STEP IT UP

Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment:
A COMMITMENT TO ACTION



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Twenty years ago, in September 1995, the world came together in Beijing, China, for the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women. Adopted on that occasion, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action articulated a powerful vision for women and girls to have equal rights and opportunities and to live their lives free from want, fear and violence. To this day, the Platform for Action remains the inspiring roadmap and foundational global normative framework for realizing gender equality, the empowerment of women, and the human rights of women and girls.

On the occasion of this anniversary, the People's Republic of China and UN Women co-organized and co-hosted the Global Leaders' Meeting on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment: A Commitment to Action, on 27 September 2015 at United Nations Headquarters in New York. The Global Leaders' Meeting was convened in conjunction with the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda (A/RES/70/1).

The Global Leaders' Meeting aimed to build support and renew political commitment, at the highest level, for the full, effective and accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. It also aimed to galvanize implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls –, and the gender-specific targets across the entire 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Global Leaders' Meeting provided an opportunity for Heads of State and Government to pledge concrete steps and measures, at the national, regional or global level, to overcome persistent obstacles and galvanize all societies into action. Through UN Women's initiative Planet 50-50 by 2030: Step it Up for Gender Equality, political leaders at the highest level were called

upon to make commitments to address the gender equality gaps identified in the 20-year review and appraisal of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. They were invited to Step It Up to make equality a lived reality for all women and girls, everywhere, with significant progress in the next five years, and full gender equality by 2030.

The Global Leaders' Meeting was chaired by Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, and Ban Ki-moon, United Nations Secretary-General, as well as Enrique Peña Nieto, President of Mexico, the host country of the First World Conference on Women held in 1975, Lars Løkke Rasmussen, Prime Minister of Denmark, the host country of the Second World Conference on Women held in 1980, and Uhuru Kenyatta, President of Kenya, the host country of the Third World Conference on Women held in 1985. Sigmundur Davíð Gunnlaugsson, Prime Minister of Iceland, Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović, President of Croatia, and Michelle Bachelet, President of Chile, also contributed to chairing the event. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, opened the meeting and made closing remarks.

In total, 140 countries participated in the Global Leaders' Meeting: 64 Heads of State and Government, eight Deputy Heads of State and Government, and leaders of four regional organizations made commitments. Four civil society representatives, including the former Secretary-General of the Fourth World Conference on Women and one youth advocate, called on Governments to take action. One private sector representative and one philanthropist pledged their support for gender equality and women's empowerment.

In addition to Member States, representatives from civil society, the private sector and eminent persons witnessed the event. The event was extensively covered by the media, including press and social media.



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