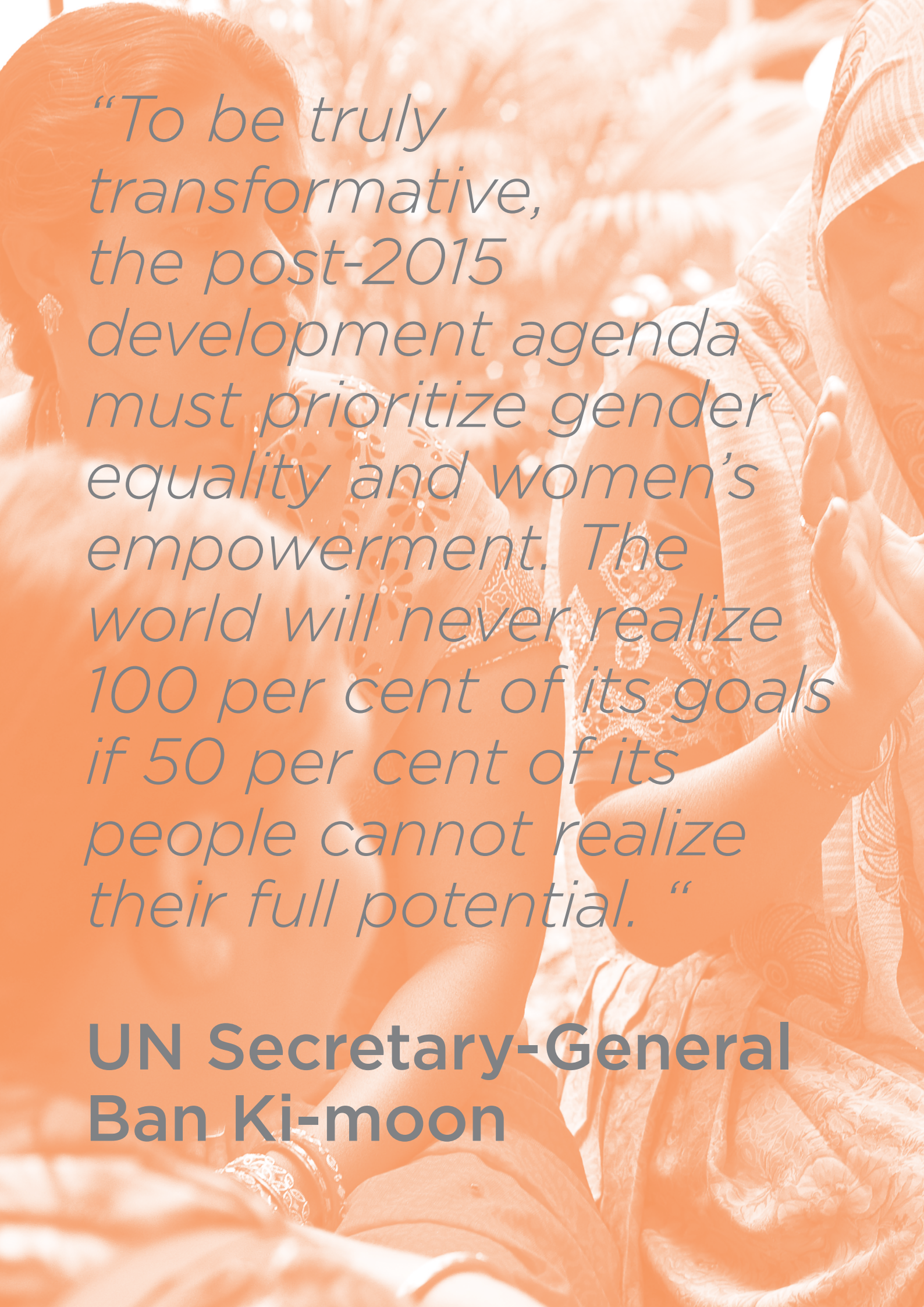




BEIJING + 20: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

The Representation of Women and the United Nations system



“To be truly transformative, the post-2015 development agenda must prioritize gender equality and women’s empowerment. The world will never realize 100 per cent of its goals if 50 per cent of its people cannot realize their full potential. “

**UN Secretary-General
Ban Ki-moon**



BEIJING + 20: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE: THE
EQUAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN AND THE
UNITED NATIONS SYSTEM 1995 - 2030

FOREWORD

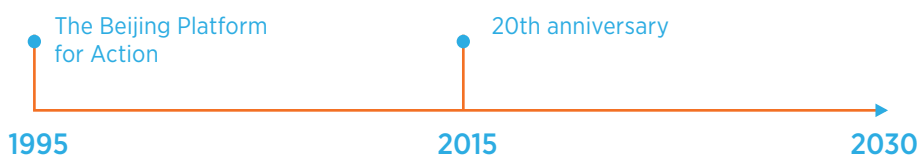
The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of 1995 is a visionary agenda for the empowerment of women. It remains the most comprehensive global policy framework and blueprint for action, providing the most valuable source of guidance and inspiration to realize gender equality and human rights for women and girls, everywhere.



Since 1995, Governments, civil society, the United Nations and other stakeholders have worked to eliminate discrimination against women and girls and achieve equality in all areas of life, in public and in private spaces. Discriminatory legislation is being removed, and violence against women and girls and harmful practices addressed. There have been significant gains in girls' school enrollment, and women's participation in the labour force and the economy is growing in some regions. Women's representation in national parliaments now exceeds 20 per cent globally compared to 11.3 per cent in 1995. Significant normative advances have been made in the global agenda on women, peace and security. Much has been achieved; but, equally true is the reality that progress has been unacceptably slow and uneven, particularly for the most marginalized women and girls who experience multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination. Unfortunately in no country in the world has true equality for women and girls been achieved.

As we enter the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, there is a new sense of real urgency, a recognition that we are at a turning point for women's rights, a recognition that realizing gender equality, the empowerment of women and the human rights of women and girls must be a pressing and central task. Gender equality is not only a goal in itself, but a means for achieving all other goals on the global agenda. Today, more than ever, urgent and sustained action is needed to transform the structures, institutions and norms – economic, political and social – that are holding back progress on gender equality. These systemic changes must be deep and irreversible.

This is certainly true within the UN system itself, and it is necessary for the UN to lead by example. After decades of uneven progress toward an equal representation of women at all levels within the UN system, where women were over represented at the lower P1-P3 levels and under represented at the higher levels, UN Women was created in July 2010 as the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. UN Women



brought together resources and mandates for greater impact, merging and building on the important work of four previously distinct parts of the UN system.

To develop a more systematic, accountable and coherent approach towards achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women with all UN entities, UN Women led the development in 2012 of a UN system-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, or UN-SWAP. The UN-SWAP assigns common performance standards for the gender-related work of all UN entities and uses a framework with 15 performance indicators based on intergovernmental mandates. All UN system organizations will need to adopt clear and actionable policies on gender equality and women's empowerment. Fifty-five UN entities and departments contributed to developing the UN-SWAP; eight piloted it to test for technical soundness and today 62 entities, departments and offices report on it. This report showcases the past, present and future of the aspects of the Action Plan focused on the representation of women – admittedly a foundational requirement for progress towards gender equality and the empowerment of women within the UN system, as in any institution.

As this report highlights, we have made progress over the past years throughout the UN System and our projections for the future show advancement towards parity within all UN entities. Yet much work needs to be done to ensure progress is systematic and institutionalized. UN Women will continue to be a strong champion for women and the equal representation of women at all levels and in all occupational categories, and together with Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's commitment to gender equality and the empowerment of women we will continue to strive forward. It is important that the UN System itself be a model for women's empowerment and gender equality. *I hope this report will be a tool to this end.*

Gender equality is a shared vision of social justice and human rights. Everyone has a responsibility to act. **We must seize all opportunities at institutional, national, regional and global levels and give new impetus to the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of women and women's and girls' enjoyment of their human rights.** Key elements of change encompass transforming norms and stereotypes; transforming economies to achieve gender equality, such as through decent jobs and significantly boosting investments in gender equality; and last but not least, ensuring women's full and equal participation in all levels of decision-making; and strengthening accountability to measure, propel and ensure that we attain and sustain our goal.

Let's make the UN system 50-50 by 2030: Step it Up for Gender Equality!

Dr. Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Under-Secretary-General
Executive Director, UN Women

THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND PLATFORM FOR ACTION

The Beijing Platform for Action, developed during the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and adopted at the 15th Plenary meeting on September 15, 1995, remains the most overarching blueprint for advancing women’s rights. As a defining framework for change, the Platform for Action made comprehensive commitments under 12 critical areas of concern that are as relevant today as 20 years ago: poverty; education and training; health; violence; armed conflict; economy; power and decision-making; institutional mechanisms; human rights; media; environment; and the girl child. For each critical area of concern, strategic objectives were identified, as well as a detailed catalogue of related actions to be taken by Governments and other stakeholders, at the national, regional and international level. Significantly, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action mandates the full participation of women “in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision making process and access to power, [as] fundamental for the achievement of equality, development and peace”¹.

This includes women’s participation in decision making process within the UN system.

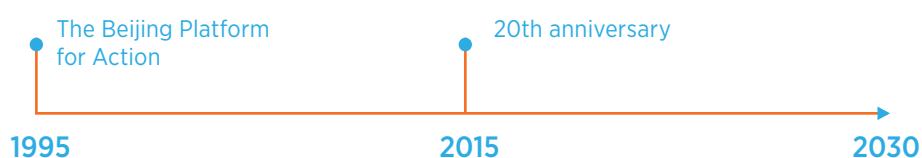
The Declaration urges the United Nations system, regional and international institutions, as well as non-governmental organizations and civil society, to fully commit themselves and contribute to the implementation of the Platform for Action, stating that the responsibility for ensuring its implementation and the integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes of the United Nations system must rest at the highest levels.

Paragraph 193 of the Platform for Action mandates actions to be taken by the United Nations, including²:

- a. Implement existing and adopt new employment policies and measures in order to achieve overall gender equality, particularly at the Professional level and above, **by the year 2000**, with due regard to the importance of recruiting staff on as wide a geographical basis as possible, in conformity with Article

¹ Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Chapter II, Global Framework.

² Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, Actions to be taken by the United Nations.



101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

- b. Develop mechanisms to nominate women candidates for appointment to senior posts in the United Nations, the specialized agencies and other organizations and bodies of the United Nations system;
- c. Continue to collect and disseminate quantitative and qualitative data on women and men in decision-making and analyze their differential impact on decision-making and monitor progress towards achieving the Secretary-General's target of

having women hold 50 per cent of managerial and decision-making positions by the year 2000.

As we near the 20th anniversary of this landmark document, it is time to reaffirm the principles of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action for the equal representation of women in all institutions, with the United Nations being no exception. Twenty years after the Beijing Conference, the United Nations system continues to face significant challenges in achieving the equal representation of women, particularly at senior decision-making levels.



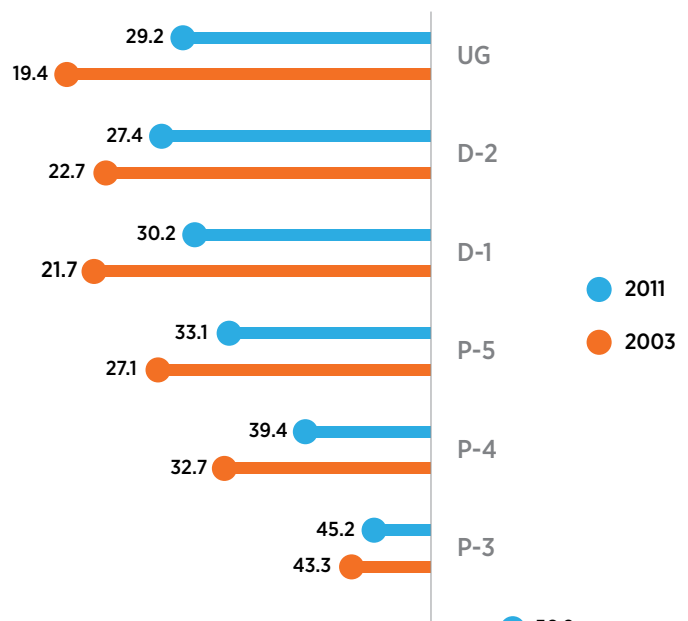
PAST: 2003 - 2011

In **2003**³, eight years after the conference in Beijing, women accounted for only **36.3 per cent** of the UN Professional and higher categories workforce. Women occupied 19.4 per cent of posts at the UG⁴ level, 22.7 per cent at the D-2 level, 21.7 per cent at the D-1 level, 27.1 per cent at the P-5 level, 32.7 per cent at the P-4 level, 43.3 per cent at the P-3 level, 56.3 per cent at the P-2 level and 61.1 per cent at the P-1 level.

Five years later, in 2008, the representation of women in the Professional and higher categories had reached **38.4** per cent, a total of 1.5 per cent between December 2004 and December 2007, which equals an annual average increase of 0.5 per cent.

By **December 2011**, the representation of women in the Professional and higher categories in the UN system had reached **40.9** per cent, finally passing the 40 per cent threshold. It had taken seven years to fill a 4.3 percentage points gap. However, the inverse relationship between level and the representation of women that had emerged during the decade had consolidated. with

32.7 per cent of P-5, 39.0 per cent of P-4, 45.5 per cent of P-3, 57.1 per cent of P-2 and 61.0 of P-1. Interestingly, the overall representation of women at the D-1, D-2 and ungraded levels increased by 1.1 per cent points between 2009 and 2011. This progress was greater than at the Professional levels (0.8 per cent) demonstrating that, with determined leadership and focused policy and practice, gender equality in the UN system could indeed be meaningfully accelerated.



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