



UNGA Gender Mapping Report 2017



BY: Alexandra Lukamba, Andre McDonald, Ching-Kang (Ken) Wang, Elise Bragard, Saeeda Rizvi and Sunayana Limbu

EDITORS: Dayana Perez, Francesco Palumbo, Ilana Gelb, and Susan O'Malley

FINAL EDITOR: Jennifer Shang

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome Remarks from the Chair of NGO CSW/NY	<u>1</u>
Introduction	<u>2</u>
Poverty	<u>3</u>
Health	<u>8</u>
Education	<u>12</u>
Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment	<u>17</u>
Indigenous people	<u>27</u>
Youth Rights and Inclusion	<u>31</u>
Climate Change/Climate Change & Gender	<u>36</u>
Refugees/Migrant Women/Women in Conflict	<u>48</u>
Next steps	<u>57</u>
Works Cited	<u>58</u>

WELCOME REMARKS FROM THE CHAIR OF NGO CSW/NY

Welcome to The UNGA Gender Mapping Report, a record of what Presidents and Ministers from UN Member States said on eight of the SDGs during the 2017 General Assembly. This is an invaluable advocacy tool for Civil Society to be used when making visits to member states to discuss strategies and plans to implement the SDGs.

The Gender Mapping Report of the 2017 UNGA was researched, organized and written by the eight interns of NGO CSW/NY from Nepal, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the United Kingdom, Pakistan, Italy, China, Colombia and the United States.

Each intern was assigned an SDG. They then listened to the proceedings of the UNGA to record what presidents and ministers from the member states said on their SDG. Finally, they then wrote an introduction to their SDG and organized the comments of the dignitaries on their SDG and edited the entire document.

I urge you to read the Report. It is both important and fascinating. Some countries discuss partnerships they had formed to implement the SDGs; others discuss the problems of migrants and refugees and the need to respect their human rights; some countries thank other countries for the work they have done with migrants and refugees; El Salvador and Jamaica speak poignantly about their countries not producing carbon dioxide pollution but being seriously affected by the countries that do; small island countries stress that we must fight climate change together. And all of this is through a gender perspective.

Susan O'Malley

Chair, NGO CSW/NY

INTRODUCTION

The 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly's theme was 'Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet.' The General Debate gave the opportunity to leaders from all 193 UN member states to share their countries' standpoints on the Sustainable Development Goals. More specifically, this report focuses on the issues and concerns related to gender equality and women's rights and empowerment, including intersectional topics such as education, poverty, climate change, youth rights & inclusion, refugees & migration, health, and indigenous people. Most of the countries analyzed are members of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Although the theme of the assembly was Focusing on People, many heads of states did not do so, especially on the topic of gender equality or women's rights/empowerment. However, many member states spoke at length on issues that unjustly and disproportionately affect women and girls, such as climate change, mass migration and the refugee crisis.

The goal of this report is to provide an analysis of selected UN Member States' positions on gender and related topics. The brochure is divided into thematic sections. Each section lists quotes from the member states that addressed specific issues during the UNGA 2017. The report includes full quotes wherever possible, as well the time-stamp should readers wish to watch the speech in full on UNTV.

POVERTY



Source: UN [SDG 1: No Poverty](#)

Canada
Costa Rica
Germany
Liberia
Malawi
Namibia
Niger
Norway
Peru
Qatar
Spain
Tajikistan
Tunisia
United States of America
Uruguay

“One in five children in high-income countries lives in relative income poverty”

- United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF)¹

The Sustainable Development Goals aim to achieve the elimination of poverty by 2030 in all of its forms. Stakeholders question the insurmountable rate of poverty in the world. The UN put forth that “poverty has many dimensions but its causes include lack of education, low productivity of work, low income, social exclusion, and high vulnerability of certain populations to disasters and diseases.”²

At the 72nd General Assembly, countries and their respective representatives addressed the concern of poverty in their country and what they are doing to combat the issue. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau of Canada told his constituents that Canada improved their child benefits program which is “estimated to decrease child poverty by approximately 40%”. Additionally, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Germany, Mr. Sigmar Gabriel, told the General Assembly that he was appalled that 1.7 trillion USD is spent each year on arms. In order to achieve the goal of eradicating poverty by 2030, only 10% of that amount is needed. He stated that the “World Food Programme receives less than 50% of funding needed to combat the world’s hunger crises.”

African leaders testified that their countries are seeing a decline in poverty. President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia said, “the poverty rate has decreased from 63.8% in 2007 to 50.9% in 2016”; President Hage Geingob of Namibia said, “poverty has declined from a high of 70 percent in 1993 to 18 percent in 2015. This was part due to the introduction of a wide range of social safety nets that cover close to 16 percent of the entire population.”

There are many actionable tasks that can be done to help eradicate poverty by 2030. An active engagement in policy making can make a difference in addressing poverty. Engagement in policy making ensures that one’s voice is heard, knowledge is transparent, and innovation and analysis are encouraged at all ages to support transformational change in people’s lives. The government can help to create an enabling environment to generate productive employment and job opportunities for the poor and marginalized. They can formulate strategies and fiscal policies that stimulate growth and reduce poverty by including poor people in the decision-making process.

The private sector as an engine of economic growth has a major role to play in determining whether the growth it creates is inclusive and hence contributes to poverty reduction. It can promote economic opportunities for the poor, focusing on segments of the economy where most of the poor are active, namely on micro and small enterprises, and those operating in the informal sector.

The academic and education community have a major role in increasing the awareness about the impact of poverty. Science provides the foundation for new and sustainable approaches; solutions and technologies tackle the challenges of reducing poverty and achieving sustainable development. For example, science has enabled access to safe drinking water, reduced deaths caused by water-borne diseases and improved hygiene to reduce health risks related to unsafe drinking water and lack of sanitation.

¹ United Nations. “One in Five Children in Rich Countries Lives in Poverty, UNICEF ‘Wake-up Call’ Report Shows.” *UN News*, 15 June 2017, news.un.org/en/story/2017/06/559572-one-five-children-rich-countries-lives-poverty-unicef-wake-call-report-shows.

² United Nations in Ghana. “Goal 1: End Poverty in All Its Forms Everywhere.” *United Nations in Ghana*, United Nations, gh.one.un.org/content/unct/ghana/en/home/global-agenda-in-ghana/sustainable-development-goals/SDG-1-no-poverty.html.

Canada - H.E. Mr. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister

“We improved child benefit payments. Our new program gives 9 out of 10 families more money to help with the high cost of raising their kids, and because of that, we expect to reduce child poverty in Canada by 40%.” (12:01)

Colombia - H.E. Mr. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President

“Their health, housing, education, infrastructure and poverty issues are being addressed. More than 10th of Colombia’s population are out of poverty.” (07:48)

Costa Rica - H.E. Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President

“Only a multidimensional vision of development, especially a multidimensional vision of poverty, will allow us to understand the needs of populations, families and their members in terms of access to healthcare, social equality, gender equality and addressing social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities among other challenges of developing countries.” (08:30)

Germany - H.E. Mr. Sigmar Gabriel, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“We must not limit ourselves to the "traditional questions of peace and war," but must also work towards overcoming "world hunger, mass misery and alarming disparities between the living conditions of rich and poor.” (01:51)

“We currently spend just under 1.7 trillion US dollars each year on arms around the world. In order to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations, i.e. to eradicate extreme poverty in the world by 2030, we would need only 10 percent of that.” (14:40)

“The World Food Programme receives less than 50% of the funding needed to combat the world's hunger crises today.” (19:40)

India - H.E. Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs

“Mudra yojana has enabled government to fund the unfunded. Those who had never dreamt that bank credit was within their options, today, through Mudra, are getting soft loans without collateral to begin micro businesses. Over 70 percent of these loans have gone to women.” (05:48)

Liberia - H.E. Ms. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President

“We transformed the economy from a growth rate of less than zero to more than 8.7% in 2013 until the health crisis and plummeting commodity prices brought a downturn to our economic recovery. Our focus today is towards strengthening the agriculture sector for value addition and infrastructure development with emphasis on roads and energy for industrialization.” (08:00)

“Life expectancy progressed from a low 47 years to a hopeful 62 years with reduction in maternal death from 1400 to 1100, an annual rate of reduction of 3.4%. The poverty rate has decreased from 63.8% in 2007 to 50.9% in 2016.” (09:09)

Malawi - H.E. Mr. Arthur Peter Mutharika, President

“The eradication of poverty and the pursuit of prosperity across the world should be based on raising the potential of the people we seek to support. Development cannot be taken to any people and succeed unless it is driven from within. No human community can take off socio-economically without empowering its people to drive their own development agenda.” (02:30)

Namibia - H.E. Mr. Hage Geingob, President

“In Namibia, we overcame the inhumane scourge of colonial oppression and racial segregation. Through a deliberate policy of reconciliation, we succeeded in entrenching peace, security and stability as the pillars of our democracy. We also made significant progress in reducing absolute and relative poverty during the past 27 years. Poverty has declined from a high of 70 percent in 1993 to 18 percent in 2015. This was in part due to the introduction of a wide range of social safety nets that cover close to 16 percent of the entire population. While income inequality has also declined during the same period, it did not decline by the same magnitude as poverty. We have come to realize that as long as we continue to have poverty in Namibia, even if just one percent, we can never have lasting peace and social justice. Similarly, as long as the wealth of the country is disproportionately in the hands of a few, we cannot have lasting peace and stability. It is for this reason that we have declared full-scale war against poverty and income inequality. Similarly, we have declared full-scale war against corruption because corruption is one of the root causes of poverty and inequality.” (04:37)

Niger - H.E. Mr. Ibrahim Yacoubou, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“The government of Niger implemented the socio-economic development plan of 2012-2015 to resounding success and government has just adopted a second such plan 2017-2021.” (03:31)

Norway - H.E. Mr. Tore Hattrem, Permanent Representative to the UN

“Extreme poverty has been more than halved. People live longer, child mortality rates are falling and more girls attend school than ever before.” (00:42)

Peru - H.E. Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative to the UN

“Rights-based focus: promoting revolution to eradicate poverty through quality public services.” (04:10)

Qatar - H.H. Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Amir

“The State of Qatar ranked first in the Arab world and 33rd in the world in the field of human development.” (18:43)

“We have continued to provide support to countries facing challenges to help them implement their development plans. This proves the effectiveness of our humanitarian and development policy. We look forward to achieving the goals of the United Nations Plan for Sustainable Development, which we have all committed to realize.” (19:01)

Spain - H.E. Mr. Alfonso Dastis Quecedo, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“We are preparing for the voluntary review of progress on the Agenda in July 2018. The 2030 Agenda requires an enormous collective effort to ensure that no one is left behind. We must work against inequality, promote prosperity and provide job opportunities to young people in order for our planet to remain habitable for future generations.” (07:30)

Tajikistan - H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President

“We regard peace and stability as guarantors of sustainable social and economic development, a dignified and peaceful life, creation of favourable conditions for further development of civil society and observance and protection of human rights in each of the UN member states.... Only through peace and stability in society have we been able to achieve sustainable economic development, reduce poverty and improve people’s wellbeing.” (08:15)

Tunisia - H.E. Mr. Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Financing/tech transfer/capacity building would scaffold African nations attempts to end poverty, marginalization.” (08:10)

United States - H.E. Mr. Donald J. Trump, President

“The stock market is at an all-time high – a record. Unemployment is at its lowest level in 16 years, and because of our regulatory and other reforms, we have more people working in the United States today than ever before. Companies are moving back, creating job growth the likes of which our country has not seen in a very long time.” (01:58)

Uruguay- H.E. Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Inequality is the main cause of most of the difficulties and threats we face; with technology today, hunger and poverty are unacceptable.” (07:10)

HEALTH



Source: UN [SDG 3: Good Health and Well-Being](#)

Congo
Costa Rica
El Salvador
India
Jamaica
Japan
Kenya
United States of America

SDG 3, “Good Health and Well-Being”, aims to “ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages”.³ According to the United Nations, major progress has been made on increasing access to clean water and sanitation, reducing malaria, tuberculosis, polio and the spread of HIV/AIDS, but more effort is needed to fully eradicate a wide range of diseases and address many different persistent and emerging health issues.⁴

The goal of health encompasses a wide range of issues, including child health, maternal health, HIV/AIDS and other diseases, as well as traffic safety, health coverage, pollutions and substance abuse. Other SDGs relate to the issue of health, such as SDG 1 on poverty, SDG 2 on hunger, SDG 13 on climate change, SDGs 6 and 7 on sustainable water and energy, and SDG 5 on gender equality. An example of an interlinkage would be between SDG 5 and SDG 3, as women in developing countries frequently do not receive the healthcare they need.⁵ Efforts must be made to reduce maternal mortality and ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services, including family planning, information, and education.

During the 72nd General Assembly, nine countries mention issues of health and promise efforts to achieve the goal of “Good Health and Well-Being.” Both Japan and Costa Rica addressed health care. Jamaica singled out the issue of non-communicable diseases by promoting healthy lifestyles from birth and increasing awareness. The United States of America listed a variety of health programs invested in AIDS, malaria and other epidemics. El Salvador mentioned the issue of child malnutrition. Most countries in this category stated that issues of health are particularly urgent for developing countries, and most of these are countries in Central or South America, Asia or Africa. No European country addressed this topic.

Some countries consider health as an intersectional issue. Costa Rica mentions the issue of health with social equality, gender equality and social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities. Columbia addresses housing, education, infrastructure and poverty together with health. Though the intersectionality of health was touched upon, the issues of maternal mortality and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare services were left out. To fully achieve the SDGs by 2030, more health-related issues should be addressed by more member states, such as paying more attention to maternal and infant health, ending the epidemic of AIDS and substantially increasing health financing and the recruitment, development, training and retention of the health workforce in developing countries.

³ United Nations. “Sustainable Development Goal 3: Ensure Healthy Lives and Promote Well-Being for All at All Ages.” *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*, United Nations, sustainabledevelopment.un.org/SDG3.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ George, Erin. “Women Still Face Big Gaps in Access to Health Care.” *Partners In Health*, 8 Mar. 2013, www.pih.org/article/women-still-face-big-gaps-in-access-to-health-care.

Congo - H.E. Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President

“A decent life for all means also protecting the health of our people. The proliferation of counterfeits which are substandard by nature is increasingly a grave threat across the globe, particularly for developing countries.” (14:38)

“In addition to the work done by the World Health Organization, we must undertake vigorous actions at the level of the United Nations General Assembly, so as to elaborate a global strategy to combat this threat.” (16:17)

Costa Rica - H.E. Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President

“Only a multidimensional vision of development, especially a multidimensional vision of poverty, will allow us to understand the needs of populations, families and their members in terms of access to healthcare, social equality, gender equality and addressing social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities among other challenges of developing countries.” (08:30)

El Salvador - H.E. Mr. Salvador Sánchez Cerén, President

“We have seen important successes in reducing child malnutrition.” (03:33)

India - H.E. Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs

“Ujjwala is a signature scheme of our government. Free gas cylinders are being provided to the poor so that women do not have to suffer the dangerous consequences of wood-fired kitchens. Uniquely, gender emancipation is at the creative core of this programme.” (06:28)

Jamaica - H.E. Ms. Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

“I now turn to the issue of non-communicable diseases, which exact a high socioeconomic and developmental cost on all countries, but disproportionately so in Small Island Developing States. Jamaica agrees that an effective response to this global pandemic is best addressed through multi-stakeholder partnerships, in a comprehensive whole-of-government response. We are firmly on this path. Jamaica is addressing NCDs by promoting healthy lifestyles from birth, increasing awareness of NCDs and encouraging physical activity across the country. We are also strengthening our policy and regulatory frameworks to address obesity and other risk factors.” (09:42)

“Such efforts should be complemented by action taken at the global level, and we, therefore, look forward to the 2018 High-Level Meeting on NCDs and reiterate the call for greater access by developing countries to the findings of modern research and technology.” (13:05)

Japan - H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister

“I have been saying we will make universal health coverage part of the ‘Japan brand.’ We will hold a major conference this December in Tokyo taking up UHC as the theme.” (00:30)

United States of America - H.E. Mr. Donald J. Trump, President

“We have invested in better health and opportunity all over the world through programs like PEPFAR, which funds AIDS relief; the President's Malaria Initiative; the Global Health Security Agenda; the Global Fund to End Modern Slavery; and the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative, part of our commitment to empowering women all across the globe.” (28:04)

EDUCATION



Source: UN [SDG 4: Quality Education](#)

Chile
Colombia
Democratic Republic of the Congo
El Salvador
Eritrea
Ghana
India
Norway
United Republic of Tanzania

Education was not a priority topic for the majority of countries. Only 9 countries made explicit reference to education, and most of these states just spoke briefly about the steps they had made to increase enrollment. The strength of SDG 4, Quality Education for All, lies in its call for inclusive education policies that ensure girls, minorities, children/young people with disabilities, refugees or children in conflict and indigenous communities receive equitable education. This requires focus on the structural and cultural barriers that prevent vulnerable or marginalized groups from receiving quality education.

Norway is a strong ally on global equity in education. They are invested in improving global education, and this is reflected in their increased aid. Norway highlighted the particular educational challenges that children in conflict areas face, have been active in funding and creating policy that ensures children stay in school, and ensuring that these schools are safe.⁶ Many other countries spoke about the migrant and refugee crisis in Europe, but Norway was the only country to draw attention to how education is a vital component of post-conflict reconstruction. Norway calls for increased domestic and external financing to achieve SDG 4.

A number of the countries spoke about the steps they had taken within their countries to achieve SDG 4. El Salvador and Colombia commented on their increased education spending, and Chile highlighted that education levels among low-income families have increased. Ghana spoke of their recent implementation of free secondary education for all. This is a key difference between the Millennium Goals, which called for universal primary education, and the 2030 Agenda, which calls for universal secondary education.

An important issue not mentioned by any of the countries is the role of education in promoting tolerance of diverse cultures. This is particularly relevant to the migrant/refugee crises, because the ethnic and racial diversity of schools in Western and Northern European countries is changing. The backlash from nationalist and white supremacist groups have led to the discrimination and demonization of refugees and migrants.⁷ Inclusive education, which includes bilingual teaching and culturally relevant curricula, can change attitudes and discriminatory practices.⁸ Countries also need to address educational access for indigenous peoples. Efforts must be made to retain quality teachers in rural areas, and work with communities to ensure that classroom content reflects the cultural identities of the students.

A few countries promoted actionable steps that other nation states might employ to achieve SDG 4. Tanzania highlighted an effective bilingual strategy around educating local governments and community stakeholders about the SDGs. This is an important intervention because it will allow grassroots promotion of the SDGs. Norway encouraged other countries to endorse the Safe Schools Declaration, which shows country's "commitment to protect students, teachers, schools, and universities from the worst effects of war".⁹ These guidelines advocate for data collection on school attacks, victim assistance, "conflict sensitive" pedagogy, and continued education during conflict.¹⁰ Additionally, Ghana spoke about their Free Senior High School

⁶ Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. "Safe Schools for Children in Conflict Areas." *Government.no*, 27 Feb. 2018, www.regjeringen.no/en/topics/foreign-affairs/humanitarian-efforts/safe-school/id2538336/.

⁷ Einbinder, Nicole. "How the Far Right Has Reshaped the Refugee Debate in Europe." *Frontline*, 22 Jan. 2018, www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/how-the-far-right-has-reshaped-the-refugee-debate-in-europe/.

⁸ Open Society Foundations. "The Value of Inclusive Education." *Open Society Foundations*, Oct. 2015, www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/value-inclusive-education.

⁹ Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack. "Safe Schools Declaration and Guidelines for Protecting Schools and Universities from Military Use during Armed Conflict." *Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attack*, protectingeducation.org/safeschoolsdeclaration.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

programme, which releases funding to schools to ensure secondary education is free for all students. Ghana believes that the cost of this program is less than the costs of an uneducated workforce, more young people will be able to go to university, and there will be higher equality among people from all socioeconomic backgrounds. Moreover, Congo made specific reference to access for girls; however, generally there was little attention paid to girls' education. Access is insufficient, as there are many barriers girls face to attending and thriving in schools. Girls face violence and sexual harassment both in schools, and on their journeys to schools.¹¹ Stigma around menstruation causes school absences, and cultural norms around early marriage prevents girls from completing their education.^{12,13} Also, discrimination against girls of colour in the US has led to criminalization and school pushout.¹⁴

In line with the targets laid out in SDG 4, we recommend the following calls to action. Member states should collaborate with civil society to collect disaggregated data around age, gender, race, ethnicity, immigration status, and disability, to ensure that achievements in school enrollment is inclusive of all persons. Secondly, countries should develop school curricula and educational media campaigns around tolerance of diverse cultures, while promoting bilingual education and culturally relevant teaching practices. Finally, member states must work with local governments and educational authorities to implement safe reporting structures for girls to obtain justice for sexual harassment and violence in schools.

¹¹ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner. *The Right to Education – Violence against Women and Girls in Schools*. United Nations, *The Right to Education – Violence against Women and Girls in Schools*, www.un.org/en/events/women/iwd/2011/pdfs/Infonote_Violence_in_schools.pdf.

¹² Rop, Rosemary, et al. "Globally, Periods Are Causing Girls to Be Absent from School." *The World Bank*, 27 June 2016, blogs.worldbank.org/education/globally-periods-are-causing-girls-be-absent-school.

¹³ Nestel, Yona, et al. *Addressing Child Marriage through Education: What the Evidence Shows*. The Girls Not Brides, *Addressing Child Marriage through Education: What the Evidence Shows*, www.girlsnotbrides.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/Addressing-child-marriage-through-education-what-the-evidence-shows-knowledge-summary.pdf.

¹⁴ Lopez, German. "Black Kids Are Way More Likely to Be Punished in School than White Kids, Study Finds." *Vox*, Vox, 5 Apr. 2018, www.vox.com/identities/2018/4/5/17199810/school-discipline-race-racism-gao.

Chile - H.E. Mrs. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President

“We are guaranteeing increasing levels of free education for families with low incomes and we hope to reach universal free education.” (08:45)

Colombia - H.E. Mr. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President

“Education has been the leading item in our budget receiving more allocation than those going to defence.” (07:18)

Democratic Republic of Congo - H.E. Mr. Joseph Kabila Kabange, President

“More specifically, in support of the Global Action Plan for Education, we have been focusing on expanding access equality and improving the quality of teaching and learning and the improvement of governance in the education sector. We are already seeing promising result namely the increase Access to School for the Girl Child, whose school enrollment rate has over ten years, increased from seventy percent to nearly 105 %. We are also building new schools not to mention in depth reforms in this area as a whole.” (09:48)

El Salvador - H.E. Mr. Salvador Sánchez Cerén, President

“We spend more than half of our public expenditure on education, healthcare, and social protection in order to reduce extreme poverty and promote social development.” (03:00)

Eritrea - H.E. Mr. Osman Saleh Mohammed , Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Eritrea is, quietly and without fanfare, engaged in comprehensive nation-building. It is pursuing policies and taking concrete measures to strengthen the unity and harmony of its people, foster their political participation and unleash their energies and talents. It is laying the ground for broad-based and sustainable economic development. It is step by step putting in place modern infrastructure. It is working to ensure that all its citizens get good access to nutritious food, clean water, electricity, shelter, transport, communications, health and educational services as well as cultural, sports and recreational facilities” (08:22)

Ghana - H.E. Mr. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President

“We have just started the Free Senior High School programme, which aims to guarantee secondary education for all of Ghana's children. The programme will ensure that all our children will be educated to at least secondary level, and money, or the lack of it, will no longer mean a denial of education. This has already led to an increase of over 90,000 children, who have entered secondary school this academic year, who would otherwise have dropped out at this stage. SDG 4, which aims at ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for all, will be within our reach by the target date” (08:13)

Norway - H.E. Mr. Tore Hattrem, Permanent Representative to the UN

“Extreme poverty has been more than halved. People live longer, child mortality rates are falling, and more girls attend school than ever before.” (00:42)

“This is why investing in education, particularly for girls, is the most effective way of promoting sustainable development. And that is why we are working hard to promote education globally, and why Norway has doubled its aid to global education over the past four years (from 1.7 billion NOK in 2013 to 3.4 billion NOK in 2017).” (06:50)

“Education creates stability and hope for children and young people in conflict areas. Preventing children from having gaps in their education is also important for post-conflict reconstruction and development.” (07:10)

“Norway has helped initiate the Education Cannot Wait fund. The purpose is to facilitate global funding to keep children in school during conflicts and crises. Schools must be protected from attack. That is why Norway has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, and encourages others to do the same.” (07:41)

“Further increases in both domestic and external financing are required in order to reach SDG 4 on quality education for all.” (08:15)

United Republic of Tanzania- H.E. Mr. Augustine P. Mahiga, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“In collaboration with development partners and other stakeholders, we have developed frameworks for implementing the SDGs which include communication and dissemination strategies on SDGs to make the goals understood to everyone. Dissemination is in both English and Kiswahili, our national language spoken by all Tanzanians. Sensitisation workshops on SDGs are also being conducted for regional administrations and local government authorities so that the goals can be mainstreamed in their local plans and budgets in order to directly affect the ordinary people who are the main focus of the 2030 Agenda.” (05:40)

GENDER EQUALITY & WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT



Source: UN [SDG 5: Gender Equality](#)

Albania
Australia
Bahrain
Bangladesh
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Canada
Chile
Costa Rica
Democratic Republic of Congo
Estonia
Ireland
Jamaica
Japan
India
Liberia
Liechtenstein
Malawi
Mexico
Namibia
Nepal
Nigeria
Norway
Switzerland
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
United Kingdom
United Republic of Tanzania
Uruguay

“We need women and girls to succeed because that’s how we grow stronger economies, and build stronger communities.” - Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada¹⁵

Gender Equality & Women Empowerment remains a sensitive topic that affects the world as a whole. Women represent half the world’s population and, therefore, half of all the accomplishments. A world where all men and women are treated equally gives the opportunity for nations to develop at their full potential.

So far, efforts have primarily been made through the works of governments and NGOs. However, more needs to be done. Africa and Asia remain regions that need the most changes because they have the highest level of girls out of school, early marriage and trafficking.^{16,17,18} Within the area of gender equality, advancement has been made on the economic empowerment of women through equal pay and microcredit. Take Japan, for instance, with their implementation of the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative or "We-Fi."¹⁹ Unfortunately, countries with the most sexual violence and lack of women in decision-making roles have the fewest improvements.²⁰ The Democratic Republic of Congo, where women have been raped and targeted for SGBV (sexual and gender based violence), has condemned and sentenced perpetrators, irrespective of their ranks, for committing such acts.²¹ Most member states mentioned women’s empowerment in their speeches, which falls under the theme of this year’s UNGA “Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet.”

Nations have the ability to advance gender equality in each region of the world. For example, most countries from Europe and North America and some Caribbean as well as South American countries like Costa Rica, Jamaica and Trinidad have achieved high levels of participation of women in decision-making.²² They are now working to learn about the impact of women’s economic empowerment on their economies. Africa and Asia are fighting rape and other forms of sexual violence, early child marriage and trafficking. Heads of states recognize these issues and are enacting laws that are more effective on the local levels. However, one element that needs to be mentioned is that cultural norms are often more powerful than laws, especially in regard to women and girls.²³ A step toward changing this in the rural areas, where cultural norms are more present, is to include all the members of society (men, women, youth and elders) in the process of gender equality by showing the economic, social and development benefits.

¹⁵ Trudeau, Justin. “Prime Minister Justin Trudeau’s Address to the 72th Session of the United Nations General Assembly.” *Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister of Canada*, 21 Sept. 2017, pm.gc.ca/eng/news/2017/09/21/prime-minister-justin-trudeaus-address-72th-session-united-nations-general-assembly.

¹⁶ Rose, Pauline. “The Bottom Ten Countries for Female Education.” *World Education Blog*, World Education Blog, 9 Nov. 2012, gemreportunesco.wordpress.com/2012/11/09/the-bottom-ten-countries-for-female-education/.

¹⁷ UNICEF. *The State of the World’s Children 2017: Children in a Digital World*. UNICEF, 2017, *The State of the World’s Children 2017: Children in a Digital World*, www.unicef.org/publications/files/SOWC_2017_ENG_WEB.pdf.

¹⁸ Khazan, Olga. “A Fascinating Map of the Worst Countries for Modern Slavery.” *The Atlantic*, Atlantic Media Company, 20 June 2013, www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2013/06/a-fascinating-map-of-the-worst-countries-for-modern-slavery/277037/.

¹⁹ “Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative.” *Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative*, we-fi.org/.

²⁰ Selby, Daniele. “These Are the Worst Countries to Be a Woman.” *Global Citizen*, 12 July 2016, www.globalcitizen.org/en/content/worst-places-woman-yemen-congo-saudi-arabia/.

²¹ Maclean, Ruth. “Congolese Fighters Convicted of Raping Young Girls in Landmark Case.” *The Guardian*, 13 Dec. 2017, www.theguardian.com/world/2017/dec/13/congolese-fighters-convicted-raping-toddlers-young-girls-landmark-case.

²² UNDP. “Women’s Participation in Decision-Making.” *United Nations Development Programme*, www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/gender-equality/women_s-participation-in-decision-making.html.

²³ Kalra, Gurvinder, and Dinesh Bhugra. “Sexual Violence against Women: Understanding Cross-Cultural Intersections.” *Indian Journal of Psychiatry*, vol. 55, no. 3, July 2013, pp. 244–249., doi:http://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5545.117139.

Albania - H.E. Mr. Edi Rama, Prime Minister

“Women count for around 30% of the members of the Parliament and 45% in the public administration. These may sound just mere statistics; instead they are the reflection of a platform to ensure that the role of women to development and change is recognized, their rightful place in the society is secured and their voice is heard.” (08:00)

Australia - H.E. Ms. Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“There must be more women in senior positions.” (06:08)

“Empowering women and girls to reach their full potential lifts a country's productivity and underpins stability.” (10:47)

Bahrain - H.E. Mr. Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Princess Sabeeka bint Ibrahim Al Khalifa Global Award for Women Empowerment was launched in full conformity with the objectives of the UN in enhancing the role of women in development.” (04:33)

“It issued an act prohibiting all forms of human trafficking. Bahrain is committed to international instruments related to the family and women, including CEDAW.” (06:50)

Bangladesh - H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister

“We maintain a ‘zero tolerance’ approach to any allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse. As an endorser of the “Voluntary Compact” on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, I have committed myself to the Secretary General’s “Circle of Leadership” to combat this scourge. I am also pleased to announce a token contribution of USD 100,00 to the Victim Support Fund established for this purpose.” (09:08)

Bosnia and Herzegovina - H.E. Mr. Dragan Cović, Chairman of the Presidency

“Whether I look back to our past or look into the present and the future, women in my country hold high positions, which rightfully and naturally belong to them. The role of women is vital for the development and prosperity of the family, as well as the society as a whole. In post- conflict environments, women are always the first to extend the hand of reconciliation. In times of great challenges and risks, we need the strength and natural ability of women to pursue peaceful solutions more than ever. Although we are extremely proud of the significant progress we have made in implementing the provisions of the historic Security Council resolution 1325 (Women, Peace and Security), we are also aware of the areas where it is possible and needed to do considerably more. We will certainly continue to invest additional efforts to strengthen and empower Bosnian-Herzegovinian women and girls in accordance with the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.” (9:33)

“We appreciate the decisive role of women in all processes of recovery and rebuilding of societies destroyed by the wars, and we will especially promote and encourage the increase in their engagement.” (13:19)

Canada - H.E. Mr. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister

“Our efforts also include a stronger focus – in Indigenous communities, across Canada, and around the world – on SDG #5: combating gender-based violence and giving women and girls equal opportunities to succeed.” (15:23)

“We need women and girls to succeed because that’s how we grow stronger economies, and build stronger communities. That is why our government will be moving forward shortly with legislation to ensure equal pay for work of equal value.” (15:45)

Costa Rica - H.E. Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President

“Gender equality, Mr. President, remains an objective of the greatest importance for all countries. Everyday, women strive for a world where the full recognition and exercise of their rights is more tangible. Their fights are inherent to the building of truly democratic societies and the inclusive coexistence in all our countries. Even more, the fight to achieve full women's rights is an exercise that needs to be fully implemented to make the SDG's a reality within the time expected by this Organization.” (12:05)

“Gender inequality is not an alien topic that manifests in a hidden way within the inner relations of countries beyond our sight. Inequality is everywhere before our eyes. Take a moment to look around; it is imperative to take concrete actions and make more women our peers fully at these important premises.” (13:30)

“My country has understood this commitment and embraces the proposals of the International Gender Champions which aim to reverse gender inequality within the United Nations and take specific actions in this 72nd Session to call upon these gender champions in order to promote gender balance within the delegations attending the General Debate during the high-level week of the General Assembly.” (13:45)

“Women's effective participation in the economic sectors of their societies has a deep and significant impact in other areas of autonomy because a woman economically empowered is a person with the tools and capabilities necessary to make a positive impact in her community. While it is true that many women work, are entrepreneurs, and work in the public and private sectors, millions work in the informal sector, and others do domestic work and unpaid care. It is estimated that the unpaid work of women is equivalent to 10,000 million US dollars per year, or 13% of the world GDP. However, if I were to choose a singular insulting and absurd example of this discrimination, the one that causes me the most indignation is that the average woman's salary is 25% lower the average man's for the same job.” (15:25)

“Care is also an economic activity which contribution should be reflected in the country's productivity. Men should have a shared responsibility of fulfilling this labour and private companies as well as public institutions must facilitate it. Women have the challenge of accessing digital and financial services as well as being tenures in land redistribution. It is urgent that macroeconomic policies of States empower women and promote decent jobs; it is necessary that enterprises recognize women leadership.” (15:50)

“Laws causing and perpetuating discrimination must be amended and those encouraging equality must be enacted. Affirmative policies on hiring women must be extended to public institutions and private companies and women-owned businesses must be promoted. It is necessary to reinforce the support to informal workers and agricultural workers.” (16:15)

“With no hesitation, it is necessary to adopt a multidimensional and inter-sectoral strategy to address the barriers to women's economic empowerment. In this sense, Costa Rica has a public policy that guarantees women's employability on an equal basis. As its main objective, this policy addresses the work access and permanence gap, whose main actor is the private sector, as the main source of employment and national development. This practice is part of the new tendency of international markets and global economy, where companies seek to increase their productivity through innovation, improvement of work environment, talent attraction, and adoption of values and practices under a Human Rights-based approach. Nevertheless, we recognize that multiple challenges remain towards substantive equality for women. Our determination is to achieve women's incorporation in paid work, with measures that eradicate division based on sex in the workplace and facilitate economic autonomy and high quality of life as necessary conditions for the full enjoyment of Human Rights.” (16:43)

“Today, I would like to recognize all women on Earth. You are capable enough to move ahead despite the rigid and rude patriarchal heritage that tends to not acknowledge your abilities and accomplishments and that fills with doubts and dangers your road towards your full autonomy. You are an example for others: your internal strength leads you to break the chains of oppression, rise above tearing migrations and forced displacement, free entire communities from unexpected forms of slavery. And within this grim march that your life is, you devote with deep passion to your people, with whom you are sensible and protective even when your love and generosity are not understood nor repaid. You are masters of resilience, since you have learned how to deal with the wrong people and painful moments. You know how to fulfil your roles of mother, partner, friend, or leader and you dedicate to them even if you need to sacrifice yourself because of a superior responsibility, a greater good that you accomplish with sincere devotion, aware of the risks and bearing in mind that you are an example to other women that follow your steps. Definitely, it's not easy being a Khaleesi. Whether in fiction or in real life, the goal of equality is much greater than we that are circumstantially here. Today is a good day to look ourselves in the mirror, start to create truly equal relations, and take this long night to its end.” (18:03)

Democratic Republic of Congo - H.E. Mr. Joseph Kabila Kabange, President

“On the issue of combating sexual violence, I am pleased by the remarkable progress that has been made by the courts of our country that have condemned and sentenced many perpetrators of such crimes of sexual violence and rape. No one has been spared of justice, no matter what their social position in the military rank, proof of no immunity in this area.” (08:35)

Estonia - H.E. Mrs. Kersti Kaljulaid, President

“One of the most prominent guarantees for empathic, inclusive development, for democracy and the rule of law is to mainstream gender equality into all areas of life. It is proven that equitable treatment of women and men has a multiplier effect in eradicating poverty. Estonian welfare development plan for 2016-2023 covers policy areas from employment and social inclusion to equal opportunities in applying one's talent in all walks of life. Our goal is balanced participation of women and men in all levels of decision-making and management - both in public and private sectors.” (09:57)

“It is important not to forget about gender balance in conflict situations either. Engagement of women already in the early stages of prevention, resolving crises, and building peace reduces the probability of relapses to violent conflict. Therefore, we need to encourage women's participation in peace processes and acknowledge them as actors of change with great potential. And we must never tire in implementing UN Security Council resolution 1325 and related resolutions on women, peace and security on every level. The adoption of the Peacebuilding Commission's gender strategy last year is a worthy milestone on this road.” (10:43)

“For women to fully enjoy their role in the society it is crucial to eliminate gender based violence. We should ensure that survivors are treated with dignity and that the perpetrators are held accountable for their crimes. Estonia continues to support actions addressing gender based violence and reproductive health needs of most vulnerable women and adolescent girls, for example via UNFPA in Ukraine 2017, and by supporting #shedecides initiative. I am convinced that Sec General Guterres' s commendable effort to bring more women into UN decision making is an inspiration to women globally. It will also have tangible effect on UN policy development, making it more empathic and inclusive.” (11:36)

India - H.E. Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs

“Ujjwala is a signature scheme of our government. Free gas cylinders are being provided to the poor so that women do not have to suffer the dangerous consequences of wood-fired kitchens. Uniquely, gender emancipation is at the creative core of this programme.” (06:33)

“Our "Save the girl, Educate the girl" campaign is reducing gender inequality. “Our Clean India” programme is generating what can only be described as a revolutionary change in social attitudes and habits.” (07:27)

“Mudra yojana has enabled government to fund the unfunded. Those who had never dreamt that bank credit was within their options, today, through Mudra, are getting soft loans without collateral to begin micro businesses. Over 70 percent of these loans have gone to women.” (05:53)

Ireland - H.E. Mr. Simon Coveney, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

“Ireland is committed to doubling the number of women in our Defence Forces. I was the Minister of Defence when the decision was made with the aim also of increasing female participation in peacekeeping. As the Secretary General said at the Security Council this week, and as we know from the Women Peace and Security agenda, increased female participation leads to better decision making, improved situational awareness, a better focus on protection of civilians and enhanced reporting of and accountability toward sexual exploitation and abuse.” (11:49)

“The UN Charter does not begin "We the Member States", but rather "We the Peoples". Our policies and actions must reflect this, the inherent equality of humanity at the core of our multilateral system. In practice this means listening to and heeding the voices of women, the voices of young people, the voices of the marginalized. The Women Peace and Security agenda has had a hugely positive impact globally with the realization that we can create more durable and sustainable peace by working to ensure that women play their rightful role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding efforts. Ireland will play our part, including as chair of the Commission on the Status of Women during the next two years.” (17:13)

Jamaica - H.E. Ms. Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

“Jamaica is committed to the empowerment of women and girls, as well as young people. We have revitalized our National Youth Parliament and have created the National Youth Advisory Council to ensure that young people have a voice at policy-making levels in our country. We are strengthening our legislative and policy frameworks to address violence against women and girls and to foster economic opportunities. We will also protect our children from abuse by maintaining vigilance with respect to new and emerging threats, such as cyber-bullying and sexual exploitation online. Earlier this year, Jamaica became a party to The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and enacted legislation for its implementation. As we strengthen our national institutional framework to address trafficking in children, we also look forward to participating in next week's High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.” (14:10)

Japan - H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister

“I wanted to tell you why the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative, or "We-Fi," is important to me personally as well as to the Government of Japan.” (01:00)

Liechtenstein - H.E. Ms. Aurelia Frick, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Human Trafficking and modern slavery are perhaps the biggest human rights scandal of our time. They are a global phenomenon. But they thrive especially in circumstances that create high levels of vulnerability.” (08:30)

“As is the case so often, women and girls are disproportionately affected. We have agreed, many decades ago, on the abolition of slavery in all its forms. The relevant legal norm has universal application. And yet, reality is: There is a disturbing level of impunity for them.” (08:50)

“Human trafficking and modern slavery are not only crimes. They are also a profitable form of organized crime. We see big potential in applying the tools developed to combat other forms of organized crime. Following the money can lead us to the perpetrators.” (09:18)

“Levels of political participation decrease. The numbers on gender pay gaps are still shocking. And yet, I remain not only committed, but also optimistic: Simply because I strongly believe that many of our common goals will only become achievable if we indeed achieve gender equality. In the Sustainable Development Goals, the domestic and the international come together. If there is one area where the UN must show the way, this is certainly it.” (12:49)

Malawi - H.E. Mr. Arthur Peter Mutharika, President

“The inclusion and empowerment of women begin with a focus on the girl child. We need to do away with early marriages. Indeed, I am pleased to note a global drop of marriages from 36% to 26% over a period of two years since 2015.” (04:30)

“[Malawi] has passed a law against marriage below the age of 18. By law, Malawi provides an opportunity for girls to grow, mature and make informed choices about their education and future life. Girls are protected by law in this regard.” (04:50)

“...Proud to reiterate my Government's commitment in promoting gender equality, women and girls' empowerment in order to reduce the vulnerabilities of women and adolescent girls to violence and all forms of abuse.” (05:17)

“Further, Malawi has made strides in efforts to eradicate vicious and irrational attacks against persons with Albinism. There was a time when these attacks became rampant in some parts of the country. I am glad to report that there have not been any new attacks in the past six months.” (06:43)

Mexico - H.E. Mr. Luis Videgaray Caso, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Mexico is committed to empowering women and gender equality as a prerequisite for achieving a world where peace and security are sustainable.” (13:02)

Namibia - H.E. Mr. Hage Geingob, President

“People centered development should not only extend to a small part of the population. It must cover all demographic components. Too often, the largest demographic component in our societies, namely our mothers, sisters and daughters, are excluded from development. We, in Namibia, believe that gender equity is equally important for a stable and harmonious society. In this regard, a policy decision by the ruling party to introducing a 50-50 representation at all party levels has led to a significant improvement of the representation of females, to 48 percent in Namibia's National Assembly. This is the second highest level of representation on the continent and among the top five in the world. To give further meaning to this policy directive, Women have also been appointed in key positions in the Executive. These include:

- The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, who is also the Minister of International Relations and Cooperation;
- The Minister and Deputy Minister of Education, Arts and Culture;
- The Minister and Deputy Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology;
- The Minister and Deputy Minister of Urban and Rural Development; and the Minister of Home Affairs and Immigration.” (08:53)

“We also recognize the contribution of women in promoting global peace, both in peace negotiations and active participation in peace missions. Namibia supports efforts to increase the representation of women in peace missions around the world, especially in leadership capacities.” (13:05)

Nepal - H.E. Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Prime Minister

“Recent local level elections have firmly established women’s role in politics and development. The constitution guarantees 40% women representation at the local level and one third in the federal and provincial parliaments.” (19:10)

“On sexual exploitation and abuse, we must move from zero tolerance to zero case scenario. It is in this spirit that Nepal endorsed the Kigali Principles in its entirety, and signed the Secretary-General's Voluntary Compact on the Elimination of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse.” (08:33)

Nigeria - H.E. Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President

“In the last year, the international community came together to focus on the need for gender equality, youth empowerment, social inclusion, and the promotion of education, creativity and innovation. The frontiers of good governance, democracy including holding free and fair elections, and entronement of the rule of law are expanding everywhere, especially in Africa.” (04:30)

“In all these crises, the primary victims are the people, the most vulnerable being women and children. That is why the theme of this session: Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet" is most apposite.” (09:24)

Norway - H.E. Mr. Tore Hattrem, Permanent Representative to the UN

“Ensuring inclusivity in conflict resolution is both the right and the smart thing to do. Experience shows that women's participation in peace processes tends to increase the chances of sustainable peace.” (05:25)

Switzerland - H.E. Mrs. Doris Leuthard, President

“Trust is also an important aspect. Success in prevention requires the trust of the people concerned. For the UN, this means that a good partnership with the host state and its people is crucial. Sexual exploitation and abuse destroy such trust. Switzerland, therefore, supports the commitment of the Secretary-General to fight any form of sexual exploitation or abuse by UN staff in the field. As part of its commitment, Switzerland will make a contribution to the UN Trust Fund for victims of sexual exploitation and abuse.” (06:35)

Trinidad & Tobago - H.E. Mr. Dennis Moses, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tobago

“The Constitution of Trinidad and Tobago protects the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all citizens and residents without discrimination based on race, origin, colour, religion or sex. Our Government accords high priority to achieving gender equality, the empowerment and advancement of women which are pivotal to the achievement of the SDGs. In the words of UN Secretary General, "Women's rights are human rights". One cannot overstate the importance of protecting the rights of women and ensuring their full participation on an equal basis with men.” (10:40)

“In placing women at the forefront of our development, it should be noted that a Trinidad and Tobago national is one of two women who sit on the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (CLCS), which comprise 20 members.” (11:35)

“With regard to the advancement of girls, the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago recently passed the Miscellaneous Provisions (Marriage) Bill. This Bill provides for outlawing child marriage in Trinidad and Tobago by raising the legal age of marriage to 18 years.” (11:45)

Tunisia - H.E. Mr. Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Tunisia since 2011 has made great strides on democratization... adopting institutions that promote... human rights, rights of women and the status of youth” (02:10)

United Kingdom - H.E. Ms. Theresa May, Prime Minister

“Supporting UN reform: It will require the UN to deliver better cooperation on the ground between agencies, remove competition for funding and improve gender equality.” (07:20)

“So, I welcome the Secretary-General’s new circle of leadership on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse in UN operations and I’m pleased to be part of this initiative.” (07:30)

“On Benazir Bhutto: Murdered for standing up for democracy, murdered for espousing tolerance and murdered for being a woman.” (12:20)

United Republic of Tanzania - H.E. Mr. Augustine P. Mahiga, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“This growth can be achieved by, among other things, increasing employment in both rural and urban areas; providing financial support through soft loans to youth and women.” (07:20)

Uruguay - H.E. Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“New type of terror during conflict that “disproportionately attacks the rights of women and girls. History has shown us that regardless of region or religion, there is a constant pattern in conflict... women and girls are those who suffer the most... war invades their lives, and the feeling of security is deeply threatened. In this framework...Uruguay gives great importance to fighting sexual exploitation and abuse in armed conflicts ... we are deeply committed to the zero tolerance policy.” (17:35)

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

Canada
Guatemala



Source: UN [SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities](#)

During the 72nd United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), world leaders engaged in discussions on global issues surrounding the theme “Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and a Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet”. In regards to the Indigenous people, states like Canada and Guatemala made important references to Indigenous people and their issues. Guatemala recalled the Esquipulas Peace Processes and the signing of the Procedure for the Establishment of a Firm and Lasting Peace in Central America, which benefitted vulnerable groups of people, such as Guatemala’s Indigenous men and women.

Canada’s position on Indigenous issues has been monumental during the UNGA. Dissimilar to most nations, Canada has remained vigilant concerning the experiences of its Indigenous people. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau mentioned that Canada remains a work in progress when it comes to many issues, especially those involving its Indigenous population. Canada is seeking to “right the wrongs.” He pointed out that there has been an absence of safe drinking and bathing water in Indigenous communities across Canada. Canada is also working to fix the government’s elimination of more than two dozen boil-water advisories to the Indigenous communities.²⁴

Trudeau gravely expressed that Canada is “in partnership with other orders of government, and with Indigenous leaders in Canada, to correct past injustices and bring about a better quality of life for Indigenous Peoples in Canada.” Following Trudeau’s speech, changes in Canada have been taking place: the Canadian Senate approved legislation to amend a 141-year-old law that has prevented Indigenous women and their descendants from obtaining the same rights allotted to Indigenous men.²⁵ With the assistance of such amendments, Canadian Indigenous women have the ability to vote for indigenous governments, have access to land on reserves and expanded health coverage.

As indicated by the UN Women, there are more than 370 million Indigenous people in over 70 countries worldwide.²⁶ Shockingly, relatively very few states talked about the issues that Indigenous communities face across the globe. Indigenous women often suffer the most burden, pain and humiliation from abuses and conflicts.²⁷ Not only that, they also face disproportionate difficulties when it comes to accessing health care, they have higher rates of maternal and infant mortality rates and are more inclined to malnutrition and infectious diseases.^{28,29,30}

The implementation of the UN Declaration on the Rights of the Indigenous Peoples by member states has achieved success on the empowerment of the Indigenous people on the local, national and international levels.

²⁴ Shore, Randy. “Two Decade Boil-Water Advisory Ends for First Nations Communities Using UBC Tech.” *Vancouver Sun*, 15 Feb. 2018, vancouver.sun.com/news/local-news/two-decade-boil-water-advisory-ends-for-first-nations-communities-using-ubc-tech.

²⁵ Levin, Dan. “Canada Moves Closer to Gender Equity for Indigenous Women.” *The New York Times*, 14 Nov. 2017, www.nytimes.com/2017/11/14/world/canada/indigenous-indian-act-gender-equality.html.

²⁶ UN Women. “International Day of the World’s Indigenous Peoples.” *UN Women*, 5 Aug. 2015, www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2015/8/indigenous-people.

²⁷ Amnesty International. “Indigenous Peoples.” *Amnesty International*, www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/indigenous-peoples/.

²⁸ United Nations Population Fund, et al. *Fact Sheet: Indigenous Women’s Maternal Health and Maternal Mortality*. 2018, *Fact Sheet: Indigenous Women’s Maternal Health and Maternal Mortality*, www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/04/factsheet_print_Mar27.pdf.

²⁹ United Nations. “Progress against Hunger, Poverty Hinges on Empowering Indigenous Women – UN Agriculture Chief.” *UN News*, 15 Jan. 2018, news.un.org/en/story/2018/01/1000432.

³⁰ United Nations. “Health For Indigenous Peoples.” *UNDESA Division for Inclusive Social Development: Indigenous Peoples*, United Nations, www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/mandated-areas1/health.html.

However, there remains a wide gap between the formal recognition of the Indigenous people and the implementation of policies.

States should work on addressing such a gap by empowering Indigenous communities. By enhancing the lives of Indigenous communities and implementing policies that are comprehensive of Indigenous peoples' issues, it would facilitate the accomplishment of all SDG Goals, including gender equality. Indigenous women, one of the most vulnerable populations, must be economically empowered through various inclusive programs and workshops. Current law and policies that exclude Indigenous people should also be amended or abolished.

Canada - H.E. Mr. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister

“In the words of Canada’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Declaration provides “the necessary principles, norms and standards for reconciliation to flourish in twenty-first-century Canada.” (10:30)

“In short, we have been working hard, in partnership with other orders of government, and with indigenous leaders in Canada, to correct past injustices and bring about a better quality of life for Indigenous Peoples in Canada.” (12:28)

“Our efforts also include a stronger focus – in Indigenous communities, across Canada, and around the world – on SDG #5: combating gender-based violence and giving women and girls equal opportunities to succeed. We need women and girls to succeed because that’s how we grow stronger economies, and build stronger communities.” (15:23)

Guatemala - H.E. Mr. Jimmy Morales, President

“In a historic event for the indigenous peoples, we drew up with consensus and by means of an inclusive dialogue an operational guide for the implementation of consultation with the indigenous peoples pursuant to convention 169 of the ILO. This guide will show public institutions how to comply with their obligations regarding their consultations of indigenous peoples on the sort of development they wish to achieve. (03:15)

YOUTH RIGHTS AND INCLUSION



Source: UN [SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities](#)

Bangladesh
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Canada
Chile
Ireland
Malawi
Norway
Namibia
Trinidad and Tobago
Tunisia
United Republic of Tanzania
Uruguay

“Young people must have a role in shaping a future that they will ultimately inherit.”

- Simon Coveney, Minister of Foreign Affairs & Foreign Trade of Ireland

Innovation and youth go hand in hand. As the world is becoming globalized and highly reliant on technology, it is essential to involve youth in the decision making within different sectors of their countries. Youth rights and inclusion is a topic that many member states have not started valuing; however, involving the youth can be beneficial for the development of member states. SDG 10 (Reduced inequalities) puts at its core the importance of the inclusion of everyone in laws, legislations and decision-making processes.

SDG 10 mentions poverty and the lack of opportunity. Today there is the largest youth population that has ever existed.³¹ As Malawi mentioned, “Africa has the fastest growing and most youthful population in the world. In giving the Youth the focus they deserve, the African Union agreed to make 2017 the Year of the youth”. It is, therefore, very beneficial for African countries to invest in their youth. By focusing on people, the UNGA 72 also cares for the wellbeing and the equal treatment of youth. This means including youth in peace talks, reconstruction, economic development and education, and giving them labor opportunities.

It is essential for youth to have a good education. However, unemployment remains an issue many youth face; they are well-educated but are unable to find adequate jobs. The involvement of the youth in the government is essential, and Jamaica is leading the way. Jamaica has established a National Youth Parliament and created the National Youth Advisory Council “to ensure that young people have a voice at policy-making levels in our country”.³²

The principle issue of youth remains the same in different parts of the world from Southeast Asia, Africa, Europe and South America, which is the unemployment rate.³³ Member states that recognize the importance of youth all agree that more needs to be done in this area. Following the example of Jamaica, creating a youth parliament would give advantages to many countries by better training the youth. The investment and funding in youth projects should be advertised as a way of creating more jobs, motivating the youth in innovation of digital development or becoming active participants in the development of their respective countries.

³¹ Edwards, Steven. “10 Things You Didn't Know about the World's Population - Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth.” *Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth*, United Nations Population Fund, 17 Apr. 2015, www.un.org/youthenvoy/2015/04/10-things-didnt-know-worlds-population/.

³² Smith, Kamina Johnson. “Statement by Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica on at the General Debate of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly.”

³³ Holodny, Elena. “47 Countries Where Young People Are Living in an Unemployment Crisis.” *Business Insider*, 3 Dec. 2015, www.businessinsider.com/countries-with-worst-youth-unemployment-2015-11.

Bangladesh - H.E. Ms. Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister

“There is now a public primary school in every village of the country, 38,311 educational institutions have been equipped with digital laboratories and multimedia classrooms. Special emphasis is being given on promoting technical and vocational education and training for young people.” (16:25)

“Our youth are the main movers in realizing my vision for a knowledge-based 'Digital Bangladesh'. We are working towards creating an environment to allow them to pursue transformative education, find decent jobs and turn into truly global citizens.” (16:43)

Bosnia and Herzegovina - H.E. Mr. Dragan Cović, Chairman of the Presidency

“There is another social group that deserves special attention. Young people are a constant source of change and an incubator of innovative solutions to our problems of the past. Healthy, educated, and employed, they represent the engine that drives our societies forward. Environments where young people have limited access to education, economic development and decision-making processes are subject to frustration, social unrest and instability. For this reason, a significant part of the reform processes in Bosnia and Herzegovina is dedicated to creating conditions for reducing the youth unemployment, which corresponds to Goals 8.5 and 8.6 of the Agenda 2030.” (10:34)

Canada - H.E. Mr. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister

“We improved child benefit payments. Our new program gives nine out of 10 families more money to help with the high cost of raising their kids, and because of that, we expect to reduce child poverty in Canada by 40%.” (12:01)

Chile - H.E. Mrs. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President

“Chile supports democracy and inclusion, end to corruption and greater freedom for people.” (07:26)

Ireland - H.E. Mr. Simon Coveney, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

“A similar strategic approach must also be taken in engaging youth, in all our countries. Young people must have a role in shaping a future that they will ultimately inherit. We have a phrase in Irish, "mol an síge agus tiocfaidh sí" which, broadly translated, states "praise the youth and they will come". I can't think of any continent where this is more relevant today than in Africa. Young people are key to achieving the SDGs and we must find ways to encourage their active participation in shaping the solutions to current challenges. It's their future and we have to involve them in shaping it.” (18:04)

Jamaica - H.E. Ms. Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

“Jamaica is committed to the empowerment of women and girls, as well as young people. We have revitalized our National Youth Parliament and have created the National Youth Advisory Council to ensure that young people have a voice at policy-making levels in our country. We are strengthening our legislative and policy frameworks to address violence against women and girls and to foster economic opportunities. We will also protect our children from abuse by maintaining vigilance with respect to new and emerging threats, such as cyber-bullying and sexual exploitation online. Earlier this year, Jamaica became a party to The Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction and enacted legislation for its implementation. As we strengthen our national institutional framework to address trafficking in children, we also look forward to participating in next week's High-Level Meeting of the General Assembly on the Appraisal of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.” (14:10)

Malawi - H.E. Mr. Arthur Peter Mutharika, President

“In focusing on people, one more critical category is the Youth. Youth empowerment is a means to achieving inclusion. According to the 2015 African Economic Outlook, Africa has the fastest growing and most youthful population in the world. In giving the Youth the focus they deserve, the African Union agreed to make 2017 the Year of the Youth.” (05:34)

“Malawi is honored to be part of the mission for Youth empowerment. We have taken decisive measures that include providing technical and entrepreneurial education to the youth who have not had the opportunity to attend university. At the same time, we are also increasing access to tertiary education.” (06:07)

Norway - H.E. Mr. Tore Hattrem, Permanent Representative to the UN

“This is why investing in education, particularly for girls, is the most effective way of promoting sustainable development. And that is why we are working hard to promote education globally, and why Norway has doubled its aid to global education over the past four years (from 1.7 billion NOK in 2013 to 3.4 billion NOK in 2017).” (06:50)

“Education creates stability and hope for children and young people in conflict areas. Preventing children from having gaps in their education is also important for post-conflict reconstruction and development.” (7:10)

“Norway has helped initiate the Education Cannot Wait fund. The purpose is to facilitate global funding to keep children in school during conflicts and crises. Schools must be protected from attack. That is why Norway has endorsed the Safe Schools Declaration, and encourages others to do the same.” (07:41)

Namibia - H.E. Mr. Hage Geingob, President

“Another significant demographic component that we must not neglect is the youth. In Namibia, we value the empowerment of the youth. Many of the so-called older guard have been groomed and well-prepared in the structures of the ruling party and Government before they were assigned higher responsibilities. This practice continues with a number of deputy ministers that are youthful, while our Attorney General is one of the youngest on the continent. Very soon, the last crop of the "Tanganyika Group," including myself, will make way for the new breed.” (10:53)

Trinidad & Tobago - H.E. Mr. Dennis Moses, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tobago

“With regard to the advancement of girls, the Parliament of Trinidad and Tobago recently passed the Miscellaneous Provisions (Marriage) Bill. This Bill provides for outlawing child marriage in Trinidad and Tobago by raising the legal age of marriage to 18 years.” (11:45)

Tunisia - H.E. Mr. Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Tunisia since 2011 has made great strides on democratization ... adopting institutions that promote ... human rights, rights of women and the status of youth.” (02:10)

“Meeting needs and demands of young people with regards to employment.” (05:20)

United Republic of Tanzania- H.E. Mr. Augustine P. Mahiga, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“This growth can be achieved by, among other things, increasing employment in both rural and urban areas; providing financial support through soft loans to youth and women.” (07:20)

Uruguay- H.E. Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Inequality is the main cause of most of the difficulties and threats we face – with technology today, hunger and poverty are unacceptable.” (07:10)

“New type of terror during conflict that “disproportionately attacks the rights of women and girls. History has shown us that regardless of region or religion, there is a constant pattern in conflict ... women and girls are those who suffer the most...” (17:35)



Source: UN [SDG 13: Climate Action](#)

Albania	Liberia
Australia	Liechtenstein
Bangladesh	Malawi
Belgium	Mongolia
Bosnia and Herzegovina	Namibia
Bahrain	Nepal
Brazil	Norway
Canada	Pakistan
Chile	Peru
China	Republic of Korea
Congo	Spain
Colombia	Switzerland
Costa Rica	Tajikistan
Democratic Republic of Congo	Trinidad and Tobago
Djibouti	Tunisia
El Salvador	United Republic of Tanzania
Equatorial Guinea	Uruguay
Eritrea	
Estonia	
Fiji	
Ghana	
Guatemala	
Guyana	
Holy See	
India	
Jamaica	
Japan	
Kenya	

It is no surprise that climate change remained a central issue in this year's United Nations General Assembly as Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Maria and floods swept through Florida, Texas, the Caribbeans and some Southeast Asian countries like Nepal and Bangladesh. At the UNGA, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Bahamas, Darren Henfield said, "Climate change casts a long shadow over the development efforts of our country."³⁴ Indeed, climate change does hinder development efforts of many countries, including their efforts to promote gender equality and women's empowerment.

Climate change has a greater impact on women, especially those from poor developing countries. Since the majority of the world's poor are women, according to UNFCCC, women take a bigger hit from natural disasters and effects of climate change, like hurricanes, floods, etc.³⁵ Often these disasters cause displacements or migrations that expose women to many risks such as sexual violence and health issues.³⁶ Women's sexual and reproductive health rights (SRHR) are also at stake as the extreme weather, exacerbated by climate change, restricts women from following their daily safe hygiene and sanitary practices.³⁷ While an overwhelming number of member states delivered their concerns regarding climate change at the podium of the General Assembly Hall during UNGA week, many failed to make the connection between climate change and its devastating impacts on gender equality. However, these states have promised to nurture our environment through various initiatives, which inadvertently help to accomplish other SDGs, such as SDG Goal 5 – gender equality.

Countries like India, Chile and Indonesia have established National Action Plans on climate change, thereby outlining their existing and future policies to curb the root causes of climate change on the ground.^{38,39,40} Many states boasted about their open support for the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Declaration, the Addis Ababa Agenda Plan and other agreements on climate change. Some of the countries have collaborated and partnered together to fight climate change. For example, Jamaica is collaborating with Chile on a new initiative, the "Resilient 20".⁴¹ The initiative seeks to create an alliance to promote resilience in countries prone to natural disasters with a focus on middle-income countries.⁴² Other states have also agreed to highly ambitious goals: Mongolia adopted a State of Policy on Energy to produce 30 percent of its energy demand from renewable

³⁴ Sifferlin, Alexandra. "Climate Change Is Already Making People Sicker." *Time*, 20 Sept. 2017, time.com/4949720/climate-change-united-nations/.

³⁵ UNCC. "Introduction to Gender and Climate Change." *United Nations Climate Change*, unfccc.int/topics/gender/the-big-picture/introduction-to-gender-and-climate-change.

³⁶ Parish, Anja. "Gender-Based Violence against Women: Both Cause for Migration and Risk along the Journey." *Migration Policy Institute*, 7 Sept. 2017, www.migrationpolicy.org/article/gender-based-violence-against-women-both-cause-migration-and-risk-along-journey.

³⁷ IPPF. "Gender, Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights, and Climate Change: What Are the Links?" *International Planned Parenthood Federation*, 27 June 2016, www.ippf.org/blogs/gender-sexual-and-reproductive-health-and-rights-and-climate-change-what-are-links.

³⁸ Government of India. *National Action Plan on Climate Change. National Action Plan on Climate Change*, www.moef.nic.in/downloads/home/Pg01-52.pdf.

³⁹ "Chile Launches New National Action Plan on Climate Change." *Climate Policy Observer*, 3 Aug. 2017, climateobserver.org/chile-launches-new-national-action-plan-climate-change/.

⁴⁰ Republic of Indonesia. *National Action Plan Addressing Climate Change*. State Ministry of Environment, 2007, *National Action Plan Addressing Climate Change*, thereddesk.org/sites/default/files/indonesia_national_action_plan_addressing_climate_change.pdf.

⁴¹ Smith, Kamina Johnson. "Statement by Senator the Honourable Kamina Johnson Smith Minister of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of Jamaica on at the General Debate of the 72nd Session of the United Nations General Assembly." 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly. 72nd session of the United Nations General Assembly, 23 Sept. 2017, New York, United Nation, gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/72/jm_en.pdf.

⁴² Ibid.

resources by 2030.⁴³ Additionally, Brazil has had large success in reducing deforestation in the Amazon.⁴⁴ Most of the member states opened up their arms to welcome collaborative and joint efforts against climate change.

In 2002, the UN Commission on the Status of Women considered the emerging issue of climate change in its 52nd session. Climate change is not a gender-neutral phenomenon as it directly affects women's everyday domestic lives. Although climate change is further sabotaging the work of feminist organizations and women leaders, on the bright side, more countries have understood the urgency to act and have taken action to heal our earth.

Climate change requires joint and collaborative action, which means that all countries must be committed to tackle climate change and its deadly effects. Since gender inequality and climate change are intricately related, states and civil society organizations must work towards ensuring the implementation of climate alleviation agendas, gender principles and inclusive policies that help to alleviate climate change and gender inequality.

Women's economic empowerment can also be the answer to various economic malfunctions that have increased climate change and gender inequality. For example, a country must be committed to increasing women's income so that the economic inequality that leads to climate disruption can be solved. Addressing the underlying unequal effects of climate change remains key.

⁴³ Government of Mongolia. *Investment Plan for Scaling-up Renewable Energy in Mongolia*. 2015, *Investment Plan for Scaling-up Renewable Energy in Mongolia*, www.climateinvestmentfunds.org/sites/cif_enc/files/srep_ip_mongolia_final_14_dec_2015-latest.pdf.

⁴⁴ Boucher, Doug, et al. *Brazil's Success in Reducing Deforestation*. Union of Concerned Scientists, 2011, *Brazil's Success in Reducing Deforestation*, www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/legacy/assets/documents/global_warming/Brazil-s-Success-in-Reducing-Deforestation.pdf.

Australia - H.E. Ms. Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“With the 2030 agenda, the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the Sendai Framework on Disaster Risk Reduction and the World Humanitarian Summit's Grand Bargain, there is a blueprint for global action on those problems which can only be addressed by working together on challenges that don't respect national borders. These include climate change, diseases including malaria, managing our precious water resources and modern slavery.” (07:35)

Bahrain - H.E. Mr. Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Bahrain - H.E. Mr. Shaikh Khalid Bin Ahmed Bin Mohamed Al Khalifa, Minister for Foreign Affairs, supports the fight against climate change and has ratified the Paris Agreement.” (07:00)

Belgium- H.E. Mr. Charles Michel, Prime Minister

“Stressed that protecting the environment for future generations would require collective action by the international community.” (04:25)

Bosnia and Herzegovina - H.E. Mr. Dragan Cović, Chairman of the Presidency and Herzegovina

“We have fully understood and accepted the strong interconnectedness of the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. We ratified the Paris Climate Agreement and chose to follow its guidelines. It is a debt to our children and to the Planet that has to be unconditionally fulfilled.” (09:18).

Brazil - H.E. Mr. Michel Temer, President

“My country - and I say it proudly - is leading the way towards a low-carbon economy. Clean and renewable energy sources correspond to more than 40% of the Brazilian energy matrix, three times more than the global average. We are leaders in hydroelectricity and Bioenergy.” (06:11)

Canada - H.E. Mr. Justin Trudeau, Prime Minister

“Canada will continue to fight for the global plan that has a realistic chance of countering climate change.” (23:40)

Chile - H.E. Mrs. Michelle Bachelet Jeria, President

“Support for climate change, Paris Agreement. Chile has established a national plan for climate change, a green tax of 6.3 to 7.2% of renewable energy and is active on ocean initiatives. Part of the UNAPS clean initiative is prohibiting the use of plastic bags in the cities. Montreal Protocol and Chile announced the ratification of a law to support the climate.” (02:20)

China - H.E. Mr. Wang Yi, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Climate change bears on the sustainable development of mankind. It’s crucial that the UN continues to work on the follow-ups of the Paris Agreement and urges all parties to uphold the principles of “common but differentiated responsibilities,” equity and respective capabilities and reinforces international climate cooperation.” (09:41)

Congo - H.E. Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President

“Climate change is a global challenge and was the subject of promising discussions during the Paris Conference in 2015. It is a matter of urgency now that the commitments taken then must be made good. It falls to the collective consciousness of Humankind to express here and now our compassion and our solidarity with the populations that have fallen victims of the harmful consequences of the climatic change.” “Let us agree once again that the protection of the environment is a shared and unavoidable duty of us all. Mindful of that, my country has initiated the Blue Fund for the Congo Basin, on the sidelines of the 22nd Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP22). The Memorandum of Understanding signed in OYO in CONGO last March was the first step in the establishment of the fund to provide a better standard of living for our people. It aims to protect the forests of the Congo Basin, the second green lung of the world after the Amazon.” (12:05)

Colombia - H.E. Mr. Juan Manuel Santos Calderón, President

“It has the biggest biodiversity and is more prone to climate change. It has supported the Paris Agreement. Colombia wishes to preserve the earth.” (16:54)

Costa Rica - H.E. Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President

“We believe that all these efforts not only favour the attention and mitigation of climate change but also its impact on Human Rights and public policies that promote gender equality, non-discrimination and the enjoyment of the rights of indigenous peoples. That is why we also welcome the process of preparing the Global Compact for Regular, Safe and Orderly Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees.” (25:24)

Democratic Republic of Congo - H.E. Mr. Joseph Kabila Kabange, President

“In regards to climate change, it is of our greatest concern as it is a threat to mankind and fundamental rights. We are determined to contribute to limiting the impact of climate change. This is the responsibility of each and every state. My country, together with the other countries of the Congo Basin, which is home to the second forest reserve in the world, have through the Central African Commission for Forest undertaken efforts to contribute to the improvement of the quality of life on our planet. On our part, my country intends to uphold all of its commitments, beginning with the ratification in progress of the Paris Agreement.” (10:37)

Djibouti - H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“In addition, the Paris Agreement, the Sendai Declaration and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda is a panoply of instruments to strengthen Agenda 2030. They also commit countries to adopt policy frameworks to change the modes of production and consumption and strategies to cope with climate change and disaster risk.” (03:01)

El Salvador - H.E. Mr. Salvador Sánchez Cerén, President

“In another era, we must adopt urgent methods to fight the negative impact of climate change, which increasingly compromises economic development, natural resources and the well-being of countries such as El Salvador, which has very few greenhouse gas emissions. We are concerned at the possible movements against the fight to improve the matter of climate change.” (11:28)

Equatorial Guinea - H.E. Mr. Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo, President

“The increase in the number of people suffering from hunger in the world and the environment deteriorating causes major cataclysms, such as floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis and others causing the death of thousands of human beings and the destruction of the infrastructure.” (09:30)

Eritrea - H.E. Mr. Osman Saleh Mohammed, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Eritrea has also embarked on a massive water and soil conservation, as well as an afforestation program, as part of its comprehensive plan to enhance the environment and fight climate change” (09:20)

Estonia - H.E. Mrs. Kersti Kaljulaid, President

“If we want to tackle the root causes of migration, we must tackle climate change. It has become the defining issue of our time. Joint efforts to combat climate change on a global scale could never become possible without the coordinating role of the United Nations and the platform offered by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. We trust the Fijian Presidency to achieve concrete results during the 23rd COP this November, building on the Paris achievements from last year. Ladies and Gentlemen, as the society-led response to the threats of climate change shows, the big, universal problems can be tackled by inclusive societies. Inclusive societies are fundamental to empathic and inclusive development. However, in recent years we have witnessed the shrinking of the space for civil society. This trend must be reversed.” (08:49)

Fiji - H.E. Mr. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, Prime Minister

“There is no escaping the fact that climate change is as great a threat to global security as any source of conflict. Millions of people are already on the move because of drought and the changes to agriculture threatening their food security.

“Throughout history, we know that human beings will fight over access to water. And unless we tackle the underlying causes of climate change, we already know that some places will become unliveable and others will disappear altogether

“In my own region, three of our neighbours are at risk, which is why Fiji has offered to give refuge to the people of Kiribati and Tuvalu in a worse case in which their homes sink beneath the waves altogether.

“For the Fijian people, climate change is real. It affects our lives altogether whether it is the whole villages we are moving out of the way of the rising seas; the loss of our ancestral burial grounds; the salinity affecting our crops; or the constant threat of destruction to homes and infrastructure of the kind we experienced last year.

“The reason our hearts go out to the people of the Caribbean right now is not only because we can empathise with them but because we fear the same fate. And I say to the nations of the world: Imagine another third of your GDP destroyed within a year or so. Imagine another cyclone scoring a direct hit and wiping out decades of development.

“It is clear, Mr President, that global warming changes our very understanding of what our national interests are. It challenges us to understand that the only way for every nation to put itself first is to lock arms with all other nations and go forward together. Anything else is self-destructive for the world and for each nation. It may be tempting for political leaders to show that they are protecting some national industry or near-term economic goal, but at what cost? The wise leader must work hard to convince the people to embrace the path we know we must take.

“There is no choice to be made between prosperity and a healthy climate. For how prosperous can we be if we must devote our resources to relocating entire populations or reinforcing major cities? What does it cost to find new places to farm? And what about the consequences for global and regional security if nations begin to compete for safe land or have conflicts over the movements of climate refugees? It is obvious that we need to cooperate.

“We need to learn from each other and to use the world's considerable resources to do the most good for the most people. We need to continue to create prosperity and to ensure the well-being of the nations and ecosystems of the world. If we view this as some sort of negotiation in which each country tries to preserve its narrow national interests, we will all lose. We will be powerless to protect our own people from the consequences of climate change. Collective action is the only way forward. Wise men and women will understand that.” (05:01)

“Out of necessity, we have forged a bond with Germany that is an example to the world of how countries at opposite ends of the earth and of vastly different means and size can work effectively towards a common goal. We did it with Sweden with the Ocean Conference and we are equally proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with Germany to deliver what the Paris Agreement was meant to do.” (09:36)

“We are going to do things in Bonn differently. The formal proceedings will be led by our Chief Negotiator, Ambassador Nazhat Shameem Khan, and I will play a roving role. I will be on hand to resolve any difficulties in the formal negotiations. But to reflect the importance of our Grand Coalition, I will be travelling between the two zones in Bonn - the formal negotiations and the climate action zone - with my good friend, our Climate Champion, Inia Seruiratu, and my fellow Pacific leaders. I am counting on them to help me get the message across that only by working together can we move this process forward further and faster. In the Climate Action Zone - the Bonn Zone - Fiji and Germany are bringing together all those who have a part to play in making this Grand Coalition a great transformation. In the formal zone - the Bula Zone - we want the nations of the world to embrace what we call the talanoa Spirit in Fiji and certain other Pacific countries - a dialogue based on trust, empathy and the collective good. In our experience, it is the best way of getting things done, especially in difficult circumstances. Engagement that is respectful, honest and cooperative and acknowledges that no one, no matter how powerful, can solve the climate challenge on their own. For humanity to survive, flourish and prosper, we have no alternative but to cooperate.” (10:42)

Guatemala- H.E. Mr. Jimmy Morales, President

“Guatemala is committed to resolve its maritime dispute with Belize through the International Court of Justice. Guatemala has also signed and ratified the Paris Agreement. The Government is working hard on a national strategy on malnutrition and collaborating with international partners to end crime, corruption and drug trafficking.” (08:12)

Guyana - H.E. Mr. David Arthur Granger, President

“Guyana is a part of the 'Guiana Shield', one of the world's last remaining blocks of pristine rainforest.” (07:25)

“Guyana signed and celebrated the Paris Agreement on climate change last year in this Assembly. We renew our commitment to its goals this year. This is demonstrated most positively in Guyana's pioneering role in global environmental stewardship.” (07:25)

Holy See - H.E. Archbishop Paul Richard Gallagher, Secretary of relations with States

“With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, the international community committed itself to effective measures to eradicate the root causes of various evils and indignities that many people in the world today are facing. Moments before this Assembly adopted the Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development, Pope Francis defined the Agenda as an “important sign of hope.” (03:25)

India - H.E. Ms. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs

“India has already said that it is deeply committed to the Paris Accord. Our Prime Minister has, on his personal initiative, launched the International Solar Alliance as witness to our abiding commitment to a cause.” (16:55)

Jamaica - H.E. Ms. Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

“For us in the Caribbean, climate change is not a philosophical concept, or an academic debate. It is an existential issue. It is our reality! It requires urgent and effective action.” (01:44)

“In recognition of our vulnerabilities as a small island developing state and the attendant complexities of our status as a middle-income country, Jamaica is collaborating with Chile on a new initiative, the "Resilient 20". It seeks to create an alliance to promote resilience in countries prone to natural disasters with a focus on middle-income countries. We also support calls for the development of a climate change vulnerability index to provide a standardized method for characterizing vulnerability to the adverse effects of climate change. This would enable international financial institutions and bilateral donors to better channel financial and technical resources towards countries most susceptible to loss and damage from climate change.” (04:00)

“Jamaica ratified the Paris Agreement in April 2017 and regards this historic Agreement as critical to efforts to arrest the impact of climate change. Small island developing states were at the forefront of these negotiations and remain engaged in the COP process. It is an inescapable fact that we contribute the least to carbon emissions and yet we bear the brunt of the damage. We implore all Member States to abide by the commitments of the Agreement. Climate change also poses risks to tourism, which owes its competitiveness to the pristine nature of our environment. Sustainable and inclusive economic growth and job creation are priorities for Jamaica, and tourism plays a critical role in ensuring that they are achieved.” (04:52)

“The movement of peoples across borders is a natural phenomenon. Migrants are an asset to both their countries of destination and countries of origin. Jamaica highly values the contribution that our Diaspora makes to national development and to the development of their host countries. We are actively working on strategies to deepen our engagement. Consistent with a renewed focus to place people at the centre of sustainable development, we must not forget the plight of the refugees and persons displaced by conflict and natural disasters - occurrences not of their own making. Against this background, the ongoing deliberations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration take on even more significance as we move to the intergovernmental negotiations phase during this session of the General Assembly.” (15:13)

Japan - H.E. Mr. Shinzo Abe, Prime Minister

“The list of things I would have liked to raise here is long indeed: our contributions towards the rule of law; our determination to undertake the Paris Agreement in a steadfast manner; our policy of addressing global infrastructure demand through quality investments.” (01:20)

Kazakhstan - H.E. Mr. Kairat Abdrakhmanov, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“This enormous undertaking is a clear evidence of Kazakhstan's pledge to carry forward the Paris Agreement and Agenda 2030. One the best ways to promote green economy and green business is the use of the heritage of the EXPO infrastructure. With the support of five UN agencies we are establishing the International Centre for Green Technologies and Investment Projects "Future Energy". Its activities will be in full compliance with the Kazakhstan "Green Bridge" Partnership Programme reflected in the Rio+20 Outcome Document.” (17:33)

Kenya - H.E. Ms. Amina Chawahir Mohamed, Cabinet Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Trade

“Kenya has enacted legislation to implement the Paris Agreement. They are committed to 30% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 relative to the ‘Business as usual’ scenario.” (05:58)

Liberia - H.E. Ms. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President

“Infrastructure has been repaired and restored, and we continue to rehabilitate damaged roads and construct new ones. With increasing provisions of electricity, potable water and technology, cities and towns are bustling with new life. It is now possible to receive voice and data on your phones and mobile devices from virtually everywhere in the country at competitively low rates.” (09:40)

Liechtenstein - H.E. Ms. Aurelia Frick, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“The Paris Agreement does not end the threat of climate change. But it is our only realistic hope to address it, together.” (13:53)

Malawi - H.E. Mr. Arthur Peter Mutharika, President

“Malawi is committed to inclusive development. We, however, recognise that the majority of our citizens continue to depend on agriculture for their livelihood. But agriculture is a challenging sector given the current climate variability affecting many parts of the world. That being the case, Malawi is implementing social protection programmes in order to cushion the vulnerable segments of our population. Our measures include cash transfer programmes, food for work, school feeding programmes and a farm income subsidy programme.” (07:10)

“As we think of focusing on people, it is important to pay close attention to the issues that affect most vulnerable citizens. Climate change is one factor on top of the list. For an economy that depends on agriculture in a country like Malawi where 85% of the people are in agrarian communities, crop failure is always a tragedy. For two consecutive years, Malawi has suffered alternating heavy rains, floods and drought that led to crop failure and hunger. The suffering caused by climate change everywhere is real. The people who suffer the tragedies are not just in figures and statistics. These are real human souls like anyone here.” (08:00)

Mongolia - H.E. Mr. Tsend Munkh-Orgil, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Occurrence of natural disasters across the globe has become more frequent, and their consequences even more disastrous. By some calculations, the number of natural disasters have quadrupled worldwide since 1970. There is a growing need for better national and local readiness, and a stronger regional and international cooperation. As part of this effort, Mongolia is hosting an Asian Ministerial Conference in July 2018 to effectively implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.” (01:38)

“All of us, developed and developing nations alike, have committed to work together to address newly emerging issues induced by climate change. For its part, Mongolia has developed its Intended Nationally Determined Contribution and will work to implement its target of 14% reduction of greenhouse gas emissions by 2030.” (01:38)

“Mongolia's State of Policy on Energy, adopted in 2015, set an ambitious goal to produce 30 percent of its energy demand from renewable resources by 2030. Our solar and wind resources are estimated at 7000 TW (terawatt) and 5000 TW respectively. With these resources, Mongolia has unlimited potential to export clean energy to countries in our region.” (07:06)

Namibia - H.E. Mr. Hage Geingob, President

“When we adopted Agenda 2030, and acceded to the 2015 Paris Agreement, we also reaffirmed the reality of climate change. What happened in Sierra Leone, the Caribbean and some parts of the United States is a grim reminder that Climate Change is real. We witnessed the stripping away of human dignity, security and hope. We must, therefore, increase our resolve to address the challenges of climate change.” (11:58)

Nepal - H.E. Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Prime Minister

“Aligned with economic, social and environmental pillars of the SDGs, Nepal's development priorities will be framed around the imperative of generating, sharing and sustaining broad-based prosperity.” (14:40)

Norway - H.E. Mr. Tore Hattrem, Permanent Representative to the UN

“We only have one planet - every nation's and every citizen's security and welfare depend on our ability to protect our natural environment and climate. We cannot allow inaction and unsustainable practices to prevail.” (03:00)

Pakistan - H.E. Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Prime Minister

“Climate change poses a new and existential threat to mankind's future.... As one of the most vulnerable states to climate change, we believe that it is in our collective interest to pursue and realize the goals of the Paris Agreement and build a new and greener model for growth and development.” (17:30)

Peru - H.E. Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative to the UN

“Commitment to Paris Agreement - is vulnerable to adverse effects of climate change... impact on available water.” (03:00)

“This is why we support the initiative of President Emmanuel Macron of France to establish a global pact for the environment.” (03:40)

Spain - H.E. Mr. Alfonso Dastis Quecedo, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“The future habitability of large areas of the world is inextricably linked to compliance with the Paris Climate Agreement. We must act accordingly.” (02:40)

Switzerland - H.E. Mrs. Doris Leuthard, President

“It has to be conducted on a large basis and include all relevant parties. Political dialogue, for example, between states is not sufficient when it comes to fighting climate change. Extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, clearly show that the Paris Climate Agreement must be quickly implemented. Scientists believe if nothing is done, phenomena of nature will become the new reality to which we shall have to adapt.” (10:20)

Tajikistan - H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, President

“Two years ago we adopted the Paris Climate Agreement, whose comprehensive goals and targets identify obligations and efforts of the international community at adaptation to the climate change and transition to a “green” economy. Regrettably, as a result of climate change the number of natural disasters is on the rise in dozens of countries around the world, and not all of them have the capacity to ensure relevant protective measures. In this regard, we suggest to enhance the mechanisms for providing comprehensive assistance to the countries affected by natural disasters, and to this end, establish international and regional funds.” (05:20)

“Tajikistan is strongly committed to continue its contribution to the implementation of the UN water agenda. It is with great delight I note that in December 2016, the UN General Assembly adopted by consensus the Resolution entitled “International Decade of Action - Water for Sustainable Development, 2018-2028.” (07:45)

Trinidad & Tobago - H.E. Mr. Dennis Moses, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Tobago

“Rebuilding will require resources, as well as the cooperation and collaboration of the international community, because we simply cannot do it alone.... CDEMA will need additional resources and funding to enable the organization to do even more to facilitate its immediate responses to natural disaster. In the face of the recent natural catastrophes, how can one deny the scientific findings that climate change is real, that it is here, and it is upon us?” (03:35)

Tunisia - H.E. Mr. Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Agenda 2030 - addressing environmental challenges, mitigating climate change by developing goals ... have mainstreamed SDGs into national development plans.” (06:43)

United Republic of Tanzania- H.E. Mr. Augustine P. Mahiga, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“For all of us, this should be a wakeup call and a reminder that climate change has no boundaries and can potentially wipe out economic and development achievements in a blink of an eye. Therefore, the sooner we act the better chance we have to protect the planet earth for the present and future generations.” (09:30)

Uruguay- H.E. Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Unprecedented violence, arms proliferation and the increase in terrorism, cyber attacks, hunger and climate change require a strong commitment from the international community.” (04:00)

REFUGEES/MIGRANT WOMEN/WOMEN IN CONFLICT



Source: UN [SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions](#)

Bosnia and Herzegovina
Brazil
China
Congo
Costa Rica
Djibouti
Egypt
El Salvador
Estonia
Fiji
Ghana
Israel
Jamaica
Kuwait
Liechtenstein
Mongolia
Nepal
Niger
Nigeria
Norway
Pakistan
Peru
Republic of Korea
Russia
Spain
Trinidad & Tobago
Tunisia
United Kingdom
United Republic of Tanzania
United States of America
Uruguay

With persistent conflict and natural disasters around the world, human migration has been a contentious and pervasive point of concern for the past several years.⁴⁵ While the global political community has seldom held consensus on the migration issue, the need to assist vulnerable migrants and affected communities remains a core concern in working towards sustainable development goals.

Speaking at the General Assembly, many state leaders concentrated heavily on recent conflicts. Few, however, spoke directly about the plight of human beings displaced by conflict. Fewer still addressed gender in the context of migration and conflict.

While some states from the MENA region addressed the refugee crisis in Syria and Myanmar, other states such as Brazil, El-Salvador and Estonia chose to speak holistically about human rights, international law and empathy. States such as Pakistan and Nepal highlighted their own contributions in hosting refugees and in international peacekeeping, while others such as China, Mongolia and Spain, spoke of the importance of institutional structures like the United Nations. The Congo and Costa Rica moved further ahead and addressed climate change in the context of migration.

The United Kingdom and the United States, however, proceeded with more caution, choosing to focus on the economics and management of migrants rather than the urgency of humanitarian needs. The stance of two Western superpowers was an indication about their respective commitments to protecting displaced groups.

With respect to general trends observed during the General Assembly, the global community finds itself facing uncertainty. In times of this uncertainty, it would be best to move beyond reliance on specific allies and states, and instead work towards developing institutional and structural mechanisms that can serve the needs of marginalized groups. To address the specific challenges of migrants and women in conflict, all states need to reclaim their commitment and authority over human rights and work together to form effective, accountable and inclusive systems at the national and international level. Global governance is key.

⁴⁵ Ferris, Elizabeth. "Displacement, Natural Disasters, and Human Rights." *Brookings*, Brookings, 17 Oct. 2008, www.brookings.edu/on-the-record/displacement-natural-disasters-and-human-rights/.

Bosnia and Herzegovina - H.E. Mr. Dragan Cović, Chairman of the Presidency and Herzegovina

“We still witness, with unquestioning concern, the continued suffering of the Syrian people. Bosnia and Herzegovina strongly condemns every form of violence against the civilian population. Violence must stop. Each Syrian child, woman and man, and each Syrian refugee, must have its dignity of a human being restored, as well as the belief in the possibility of recovery and new life opportunities.” (02:35)

Brazil - H.E. Mr. Michel Temer, President

“Modern refugee laws in Brazil with immigration laws are guided by the principle of humanitarian reception. They have granted humanitarian visas to Haitian and Syrian citizens. They openly welcomed refugees and migrants from Venezuela.” (15:45)

China - H.E. Mr. Wang Yi, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“The issue of refugees has its origin in regional instability and uneven development. The UN must respond to crises promptly by easing the humanitarian plight. Efforts must be made to address the root causes by helping countries and regions to achieve development.” (10:00)

Congo - H.E. Mr. Denis Sassou Nguesso, President

“It is in this specific context that Africa has been impacted by the drama of immigration along the shores of the mediterranean. Likewise, forced displacement of populations towards more clement zones. Climate change is creating tremendous distress among men, women and children, the victims of such forced displacement.” (11:00)

Costa Rica - H.E. Mr. Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, President

“We believe that all these efforts not only favour the attention and mitigation of climate change but also its impact on Human Rights and public policies that promote gender equality, non-discrimination and the enjoyment of the rights of indigenous peoples. That is why we also welcome the process of preparing the Global Compact for Regular, Safe and Orderly Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees.” (25:24)

Djibouti - H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“In addition, Djibouti is saddened by the fate of the Muslim minority Rohingya from Myanmar's Rakhine Region and is gravely concerned by the military brutality of which the civilian population feels the target. Despite the commitments made, the crimes against this community have never weakened. We support the conclusions of the final report of the Commission led by the former Secretary General of the United Nations and let's call Myanmar fully and without more delay in implementing the recommendations contained therein.” (09:17)

Egypt - H.E. Mr. Abdel Fattah Al Sisi, President

“The humanitarian tragedy facing the Rohingya minority in Myanmar represents another reason to remind the international community of its moral obligations, let alone its legal responsibilities, as reflected in the UN Charter, to promptly work towards a lasting solution that ends the plight of civilians and addresses the root causes of the crisis which has become a threat to regional security and the stability of neighbouring countries.” (20:31)

El Salvador - H.E. Mr. Salvador Sánchez Cerén, President

“Another crucial issue for us is migration. In 2015, in adopting the 2030 agenda we acknowledged the positive contribution of migrants to an inclusive growth and to sustainable development. For this reason my country promoted the inclusion of the issue of migration and SDGs, and it was given priority in our sustainable development national agenda to achieve a global compact for safe, regulated and orderly migration. This is a true opportunity as well as a challenge to allow us to deal with this issue of migration from a standpoint of guaranteeing human development and human rights and a challenge to commit ourselves to do away with stereotypes that stigmatize migration as an act which is linked to criminality. Today we condemn most energetically xenophobia against refugees and migrants. It is fundamental to acknowledge the positive contribution and participations of migrants in their country of destination and to sustainable development. One example is our TPS population in the United States for whom we request a continuation of their status. We must facilitate conditions to regularize their immigration status to help in their integration in the culture and the labor market, health care and education and acknowledge the contributions they make to the economy.” (07:12)

“We also launched a national policy on the protection of Salvadoran migrants and family, a tool to strengthen the protection and promotion of development of Salvadorans from abroad and their family from the country of origin and returning population in order to ensure a culture of peace.” (09:17)

Estonia - H.E. Mrs. Kersti Kaljulaid, President

“Ladies and gentlemen, all the above, already enhanced now, but unfortunately even more in the future, by the real effects of climate change, have led to the highest number of displaced people ever seen globally. As with all global challenges, the UN is the natural entity to work out and agree on a solution. Last year we agreed to the New York Declaration on migration and refugees. We must address the root causes and drivers for irregular migration to improve border management and fight trafficking in human beings. It includes facilitating the opportunities for legal migration. I would like to emphasize that the underlying basic values of our joint endeavours are humanism and solidarity. A bitter lesson from Estonia's own history, when we were dispersed around the world due to occupations and World War 11, is how important is the empathy towards the refugees fleeing the atrocities of war and destruction.” (07:33)

Fiji - H.E. Mr. Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, Prime Minister

“Fiji has offered to give refuge to the people of Kiribati and Tuvalu in a worse case in which their homes sink beneath the waves altogether.” (05:17)

Ghana - H.E. Mr. Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President

“Mr President, we are nowhere near where we want to be, but we are determined to realise our potential and make Ghana a prosperous nation. There will always be adventurers amongst us, Ghanaians who would want to seek challenges in different parts of the world, and we would wish them well, and expect that wherever they go, they would be welcome and treated with dignity. But we are working to grow our economy and open up opportunities for all our citizens. No longer should Ghanaians feel they have to subject themselves to the intolerable and inhumane conditions of crossing the Sahara and drowning in the Mediterranean, in the hope of making a living in Europe.” (07:21)

Israel - H.E. Mr. Benjamin Netanyahu, Prime Minister

“Israel has provided life-saving medical care to thousands of Syrian victims.” (07:32)

Jamaica - H.E. Ms. Kamina Johnson Smith, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

“The movement of peoples across borders is a natural phenomenon. Migrants are an asset to both their countries of destination and countries of origin. Jamaica highly values the contribution that our Diaspora makes to national development and to the development of their host countries. We are actively working on strategies to deepen our engagement. Consistent with a renewed focus to place people at the centre of sustainable development, we must not forget the plight of the refugees and persons displaced by conflict and natural disasters - occurrences not of their own making. Against this background, the ongoing deliberations on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration take on even more significance as we move to the intergovernmental negotiations phase during this session of the General Assembly.” (15:13)

Kuwait - H.H. Sheikh Jaber Al-Mubarak Al-Hamad Al Sabah, Prime Minister

“What is worrisome are the challenges and risks we are witnessing in different regions of the world, such as the spread of the phenomenon of violence, extremism and terrorism, as well as the risks of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and the threat of their use, in addition to the violations of human rights, as currently taking place in Myanmar, of the rights of the Rohingya Muslim minority which we call for the immediate cessation of all acts of prosecution practiced against them, and granting them their rights to citizenship and decent living.” (05:00)

Liechtenstein - H.E. Ms. Aurelia Frick, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“This year we have the opportunity to make a historic step forward. For the first time since the creation of the United Nations, we can give an international tribunal jurisdiction over the crime of aggression: The most serious forms of the illegal use of force will be punishable. The tribunal in charge will be the International Criminal Court, the centerpiece of our common fight for accountability.” (02:50)

“Globally, unprecedented numbers of people are on the move. History has seen various periods of mass migration. There is ample evidence that migration has been a positive and enriching factor for receiving societies. But mass movements of people and irregular migration in particular also tend to create anxiety and fear.” (06:58)

Mongolia - H.E. Mr. Tsend Munkh-Orgil, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Large movements of migrants require equally close attention. We look forward to the adoption of the Global Compact for Migration in 2018. It will provide a critical tool for the protection of the safety and human rights of all migrants, regardless of their migratory status and strengthen global governance on international migration.” (11:38)

Nepal - H.E. Mr. Sher Bahadur Deuba, Prime Minister

“Although not a party to the Refugee Convention and its Protocol, Nepal has earnestly upheld humanitarian principles by hosting thousands of refugees.” (11:38)

Niger - H.E. Mr. Ibrahim Yacoubou, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“Niger is facing exactly three hot spots. The first is related to the situation in Libya. Without a government having authority over the entire territory, with militias, terrorist groups and traffickers, the situation is not only a concern for Libyans but also for neighboring countries like Niger. Due to the uncontrolled circulation of weapons of all sizes, armed groups are becoming direct threats both to Libyan populations and to neighboring countries. If this country is not stabilized, we will have no guarantee that the Sahelo-Saharan space will not continue to face violent upheavals. Niger calls on the entire international community to make a genuine commitment to the restoration of a democratic order in Libya.” (05:31)

“Niger has only one agenda and only one in Libya: peace. That's why we consider that we must already support the process of revising the agreement policy and make every effort to:

- Inclusive reconciliation, excluding terrorist groups;
- The army is unified and national;
- The militias are disarmed and the terrorist groups neutralized;
- The referendum and electoral process commits itself on the basis of a new constitution and consensual electoral laws.” (06:25)

“Thanks to the Multinational Joint Force, we have achieved significant victories and the fear has changed sides. Today we have significantly reduced the offensive capabilities and nuisance of Boko Haram: it is no longer possible for this criminal organization to control and to administer, as it did so easily before, any locality of one of our countries. However and even if they are weakened and wandering in disorder, Boko Haram elements remain dangerous, by organizing suicide bombings by young girls forced to become human bombs, or sex slaves.” (07:42)

“I would like in this regard, have a thought for the 39 women and children abducted in July in Niger by the terrorist group Boko Haram. The government of Niger remains strongly engaged and mobilized until their release.” (08:27)

“The third, and by far the most worrying, threat is the situation in north Mali. We have to solve two questions: the first concerns the implementation of the peace and security agreements and the second, the fight against terrorist groups and traffickers. From our point of view, of these two questions, the most decisive is that of the fight against terrorist groups and traffickers.” (08:47)

“In all these crises (of conflict), the primary victims are the people, the most vulnerable being women and children. That is why the theme of this session Focusing on People: Striving for Peace and Decent Life for All on a Sustainable Planet' is most apposite.” (10:32)

Nigeria - H.E. Mr. Muhammadu Buhari, President

“I must also commend the UN's role in helping to settle thousands of innocent civilians caught in the conflicts in Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. In particular, we must collectively thank the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany under the commendable leadership of Chancellor Angela Merkel and the Governments of Italy, Greece and Turkey for assisting hundreds of thousands of refugees.” (02:39)

“In Nigeria, we are providing relief and humanitarian assistance to millions in IDP camps and those afflicted by terrorism, drought, floods and other natural disasters.” (04:02)

Norway - H.E. Mr. Tore Hattrem, Permanent Representative to the UN

“Ensuring inclusivity in conflict resolution is both the right and the smart thing to do. Experience shows that women's participation in peace processes tends to increase the chances of sustainable peace.” (05:25)

“Education creates stability and hope for children and young people in conflict areas. Preventing children from having gaps in their education is also important for post-conflict reconstruction and development.” (07:10)

“Norway has helped initiate the Education Cannot Wait fund. The purpose is to facilitate global funding to keep children in school during conflicts and crises.” (07:41)

“We underline the obligation of all parties to a conflict to protect civilians and ensure safe, unimpeded humanitarian access to all people in need. Norway is working actively to strengthen respect for international humanitarian law among parties to armed conflicts.” (11:30)

Pakistan - H.E. Mr. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, Prime Minister

“Pakistan has consistently been one of the world's top troop contributors to UN peacekeeping. We will remain on the frontlines of peacekeeping and continue to offer professional and well-trained personnel to the United Nations, despite our own security challenge.” (06:00)

Peru - H.E. Mr. Gustavo Meza-Cuadra, Permanent Representative to the UN

“Concerned for human rights of Venezuelans, but solution must be peaceful and involve Venezuelan people.” (06:30)

Republic of Korea - H.E. Mr. Moon Jae-in, President

“Over the past five years, the Republic of Korea has increased financial assistance for refugees by 15 times, and last year, it joined the UNHCR's "20-million-plus dollar donors' club.” (11:40)

Russia - H.E. Mr. Sergey V. Lavrov, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“The solving of humanitarian tasks and reconciliation of conflicting parties are also relevant for other crises in the region, including the situation in Libya, Yemen and Iraq. In all these situations, just like in any other conflicts, Russia pursues a balanced policy and works with all parties without exception.” (10:35)

Spain - H.E. Mr. Alfonso Dastis Quecedo, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Spain deems it crucial to protect the promise of an Afghan society free from extremism and terrorism, respectful of human rights, including the rights of women and children.” (10:40)

Trinidad & Tobago - H.E. Mr. Dennis Moses, Minister for Foreign Affairs Tobago

“Further, the Government of Trinidad and Tobago considers it important to develop ways to effectively manage migration and to take the necessary steps to enable the process of mainstreaming migration into development planning. We have therefore sought to make necessary policy changes, as well as participate in projects and training in order to develop the necessary tools to mainstream migration into development planning.” (12:20)

Tunisia - H.E. Mr. Khemaies Jhinaoui, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Terrorism is also linked to all the types of organised crime and influx of refugees and migrants, human trafficking and the consequent large-scale violations of universal human rights. Combatting terrorism and uprooting it requires more than ever promoting international cooperation and devising a comprehensive and inclusive partnership.” (05:53)

United Kingdom- H.E. Ms. Theresa May, Prime Minister

“So, I welcome the Secretary-General’s new circle of leadership on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse in UN operations and I’m pleased to be part of this initiative.” (07:30)

“And I think of the vast challenges that come from the mass displacement of people. Many are refugees fleeing conflict and persecution. Others, economic migrants, are prepared to risk everything on perilous sea crossings in the desperate search for a better life for themselves and their children. Through this migration we also see the challenges of economic inequality between countries and within them.” (01:40)

“We agreed to develop global compacts to address the causes and the consequences of the mass movements of people we see today. This was an important step to elevate significantly our global response and enable us collectively to tackle this challenge of our times.” (08:50)

“We must do more to identify, protect and support refugees and those hosting them near conflicts. And on migration our starting point must be that it can benefit both countries and migrants themselves but only when it is safe, orderly, well-managed and legal. If we do not manage this effectively, we will fail both our own citizens and those taking these dangerous journeys. And we will push more people into the curse of modern slavery and the hands of the human traffickers and organised criminal groups that drive this inhuman industry.” (09:24)

United Republic of Tanzania - H.E. Mr. Augustine P. Mahiga, Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

“They claim thousands of lives and lead to massive displacements and flights of people to safer places. We need to invest more on conflict prevention, resolution and mediation efforts by addressing the root causes, precipitating and triggering factors to conflicts.” (11:00)

“The peace talks are still on track albeit their slow and halting pace. It is encouraging to note that in some parts of Burundi, the security situation has significantly improved to permit the voluntary return of some 12,000 refugees out of almost 250,000 refugees who have been in Tanzania since 2015. We appreciate the partnership we have with the UNHCR in protecting and assisting the refugees in our country.” (14:40)

United States - H.E. Mr. Donald J. Trump, President

“For decades, the United States has dealt with migration challenges here in the Western Hemisphere. We have learned that, over the long term, uncontrolled migration is deeply unfair to both the sending and the receiving countries. For the sending countries, it reduces domestic pressure to pursue needed political and economic reform, and drains them of the human capital necessary to motivate and implement those reforms. For the receiving countries, the substantial costs of uncontrolled migration are borne overwhelmingly by low-income citizens whose concerns are often ignored by both media and government.” (26:34)

Uruguay- H.E. Mr. Rodolfo Nin Novoa, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“He expressed hope that an instrument would be negotiated to end attacks on civilians and humanitarian workers, reaffirming Uruguay’s support for the United Nations zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse by peacekeepers.” (16:00)

“New type of terror during conflict that disproportionately attacks the rights of women and girls. History has shown us that regardless of region or religion, there is a constant pattern in conflict... women and girls are those who suffer the most... war invades their lives, and the feeling of security is deeply threatened. In this framework ... Uruguay gives great importance to fighting sexual exploitation and abuse in armed conflicts ... we are deeply committed to the zero tolerance policy.” (17:35)

“Networks of trafficking of persons arise in these contexts, taking advantage of human despair and vulnerability....” (06:23)

“He urged all countries to increase efforts to combat human trafficking, and ensure development and social growth, citing inequality and the persistence of international forces as drivers of those threats.” (06:40)

NEXT STEPS

The NGO CSW/NY interns have compiled this report in order to help civil society:

- Understand the public position of UN Member States' on gender equality and related issues
- Gain a holistic and comparative analysis between Member States
- Hold UN Member States accountable for their commitments and goals
- Demonstrate the relevance of addressing gender equality across intersectional human rights and development issues
- Make suggestions for best practices, improvement and needs for policy changes and innovative programs
- Track the progression of the UN Member States' stances from year to year
- Learn which countries are allies for specific causes and build partnerships accordingly
- Add to the collection of established language that can be used to prove precedent and shared interest when lobbying for gender equality in the UN sphere

Next Steps:

- Utilize this data and analysis to sensitize your task force and strategize for your meetings with member states at the [CSW62](#) and the [NGO CSW62 Forum](#), and into the HLPF in July and the UNGA 2018 in September
- Attend an Advocacy Training at the NGO CSW62 Forum and read our [Advocacy Guide](#) for strategies to achieve your advocacy goals
- Follow the NGO CSW/NY Zero Draft Subcommittee to continue influencing the outcome of CSW62. Email zerodraft@ngocsw.org
- Share this report with your networks

For more information, please contact: info@ngocsw.org
Thank you

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