



UNGA Gender Mapping Report 2018



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WELCOME REMARKS, Susan O'Malley, Chair, NGO

Welcome to the Second UNGA Gender Mapping Report, a record through a gender lens of what Presidents and Ministers from UN Member States said on seven of the SDGs during the 2018 General Assembly.

This is an invaluable advocacy tool for Civil Society to be used when making visits to member states, both at the UN and nationally, to discuss strategies and plans to implement the SDGs during CSW63 and the HLPF in July 2019. It will also be useful in preparing for Agenda 2020, the fifth year assessment of the SDGs as well as Beijing + 25.

The Gender Mapping Report of the 2018 UNGA was researched, organized and written by the seven interns of NGO CSW/NY from Turkey, Ecuador, United States and Rwanda. 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 wrote an introduction to their SDG, organized the comments of the dignitaries on their SDG, wrote a conclusion and edited the entire document.

I urge you to read and use the Report in your advocacy. It is both important and fascinating. The most important takeaway is that despite H.E. Ms. Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garces, President of the 73rd Session of the General Assembly, stating, “The first priority of this Assembly will be gender equality and the empowerment of women”, there is little mention of women and girls in the statements of the dignitaries. The exceptions are SDG 5 on the Empowerment of Women and SDG 4 on Equality Education in which girls are discussed. In other words, there has been little movement in thinking outside of silos, necessary to implement the SDGs successfully. Women and girls need to be included in discussions of the SDGs to move them forward.

Dr. Susan O'Malley
Chair, NGO CSW/NY

INTRODUCTION

The theme of the 73rd United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) was ‘Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies’. Representatives from all 193 UN member states came together during the General Debate to discuss how their countries have approached this theme and what else can be done. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, this year’s UNGA President, outlined seven priority themes during her opening statement: promote gender equality; promote and implement new global compacts on migration and refugees; highlight innovative thinking around the future of work; work to protect the environment, particularly plastics pollution; raise awareness about persons with disabilities; implement the reform of the UN system; and promote peace.

The objective of this report is to provide an analysis of the positions of a wide range of UN Member States from all of the regions of the globe. It is divided into sections based on select Sustainable Development Goals and their respective issues. The SDGs highlighted are SDG 4: Quality Education; SDG 5: Gender Equality; SDG 8: Good Jobs and Economic Growth; SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities; SDG 13: Climate Action; SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions; SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals. We chose these SDGs in correlation with those that will be reviewed during the 2019 High Level Political Forum (HLPF). The theme of the 2019 HLPF is ‘empowering people and ensuring inclusivity and equality’. The Thematic Reviews during the Forum provide updates on member states’ progress and implementation of the selected SDGs. This report highlights member states’ promises, plans and goals in regards to the SDGs and can be utilized for a comparison of the UNGA addresses and the Thematic Reviews at the HLPF.

The report includes direct quotes from the member state addresses to the General Debate, as well as the time stamps corresponding to their speeches. These speeches can be streamed in their entirety on UNTV.

QUALITY EDUCATION

Sabrine Muhoza



Estonia
Denmark
Georgia
Liberia
Mongolia
Qatar
Serbia
South Africa
San Marino
Norway

Obtaining a quality education is the foundation to creating sustainable development.

- United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4¹

After the establishment of the Millennium Development Goals, the World was committed to achieving the goals that were set, including target number two, Universal Primary Education. The aim was to ensure that by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, would be enabled to complete a full course of primary schooling.

Post 2015, there is the adoption and now implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030. Goal number 4, Quality Education, is expected to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.

According to the United Nations website, inclusive education can help equip communities with the necessary tools to develop innovative solutions to regional problems and improve the quality of life.

The targets for Goal 4, Quality Education, set out a plan to ensure that all girls and boys complete free primary and secondary school education and ensure equal access to eliminate gender disparities, access to quality early childhood development and pre-primary education, quality technical and vocational education, information and communications technology and technical, engineering and scientific programs.

Targets include ensuring that students acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable lifestyles and development such as human rights, global citizenship and cultural diversity, and building educational facilities that are disability sensitive to promote effective learning.

¹ For more information on United Nations SDG 4, please visit: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

General Assembly Opening - H.E. Ms. María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President

“The first priority of this Assembly will be gender equality and the empowerment of women, which is an ongoing debt owed to over half of the world’s population that is holding back global development. Achieving women’s economic and productive inclusion could increase world gross domestic product by 11 per cent by 2025. Regrettably, violence against women continues to be found in every region. Girls and adolescents still lack sufficient access to good-quality information and education, which help to reduce inequalities” (p.2).

“Accessibility, inclusive and good-quality education and decent jobs are all challenges faced by the largest minority” (p.3).

“We must maintain our vision and commitment regarding implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as this is the only way to ensure that everyone can live in dignity and in peace” (p.4).

“I would like to inaugurate the seventy-third session of the General Assembly with an effusive call to world leaders to meet the needs of our peoples and not to lose heart in their efforts to build a more peaceful, more secure and more human world order, where everyone can find their place with dignity. Let us therefore build a United Nations that is more relevant to all” (p.4).

Remarks

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

“ICT can revolutionize entrepreneurship, education, employment in general, even healthcare. Digital online services provide economic growth, bring down unnecessary barriers between citizen and state, between businesses and sectors, and exceed geographical limits” (p.4).

“Estonia has shared its knowledge with many nations of the world and will continue to do so, in cooperation with the UNDP, African Union and all those interested and willing” (p.4).

“New technologies should always be seen as enablers because they create equal opportunities, when supported by proper policies” (p.4).

Denmark - H.E. Ms. Ulla Tørnæs, Minister for Development Cooperation

“Education is the foundation for knowledge and harnessing the technologies and opportunities of tomorrow. And when it comes to education we can and must do better. Much better” (p.6).

“Globally, 130 million girls do not go to school. In crisis situations, girls are 2.5 times more likely to be out-of-school than boys. And girls are at much greater risk of being victims of sexual abuse and exploitation, of early child marriage and childbirth. Just think, in parts of the world, girls as low as nine years old are being forced to marry adult men. This is just not acceptable. We must let girls be girls, not brides” (p.6).

“Education is a beacon of hope for these girls. That is why Denmark is now the biggest contributor to Education Cannot Wait. That is why Denmark will spend almost 70 million US dollars next year on education in developing countries. Because Denmark will leave no girl behind” (p.6).

Georgia - H.E. Mr. Mamuka Bakhtadze, Prime Minister

“We call this initiative A Step to a Better Future, which seeks precisely to provide the populations in the occupied territories with access to healthcare and education services, to create for them opportunities for commercial activities as a means for feeding their families and ensuring their physical survival” (p.3).

“The ambitious educational reform, the modernization of the system of education will prove to be yet another breakthrough on the path to overcoming the challenges that face my country today. Only educated, motivated, confident youth can bring about progress, eliminate poverty and place Georgia among developed and innovative economies” (p.4).

Liberia - H.E. Mr. George Manneh Weah, President

“As we focus on action plans to implement our development agenda, we are acutely aware of the vulnerability of our youthful population, who are clearly disadvantaged as a result of high unemployment and a lack of access to quality education opportunities” (p.3).

“Our plan is to reverse their unfortunate situation and make them productive citizens through the provision of adequate educational facilities at the high school and college levels, for those who still have interest in pursuing academic programs” (p.3).

“For those youths left behind due to the disastrous civil crisis and who have outgrown their school years, my government is investing in Technical Vocational Education and Training programs to build their entrepreneurial and marketable skill sets” (pp.3-4).

Mongolia - H.E. Mr. Khurelsukh Ukhnaa, Prime Minister

“Citizens of Mongolia are highly educated and the fact that the second biggest package of the state budget in 2018 was allocated to the education sector, demonstrates the government’s firm commitment to prioritize human resource development” (p.6).

“However, school availability and quality of education do not always match up with the demographic growth, urbanization pace and modern education standards. While the pupil-classroom ratio in schools and kindergartens has decreased together with the population density in rural areas, the case is opposite in the urban centers” (p.6).

“The Government of Mongolia is planning and implementing policies and programmes that aim, by 2030, to address effectively the challenges faced by the capital city, including shortage of kindergartens, about 30 schools in suburbs functioning in three shifts” (p.6).

Norway - H.E. Ms. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister

“Progress on one SDG will stimulate progress on others. For example, child mortality rates fall when mothers have an education. However, there are still more boys than girls who get an education. We have to put girls at the centre of our education efforts. But just going to school is not enough. This is why Norway has focused on teaching quality and learning outcomes” (p.6).

“Ensuring quality education requires continued international financing. It is, therefore, important to mobilise domestic resources and private funding along side official development assistance. Norway is doing its part. So far this year, we have allocated approximately 440 million dollars to global education. And we will now increase our support to education efforts targeting girls to nearly 40 million dollars for the period 2018 to 2019” (p.6).

Qatar - H.E. Mr. Tamim bin Hamad Al-Thani, Amir

“In this context, the State of Qatar believes that educating the youth and their comprehensive participation represents the first line of defense for the collective security system and an important factor in fighting terrorism and building peace and stability” (p.5).

“Thus, we have committed ourselves to educating ten million children and providing economic empowerment to half a million young people in our region, and in collaboration with the United Nations we carried out projects to promote employment opportunities for young people through capacity-building and the launching of programs to prevent violent extremism” (pp.5-6).

San Marino - H.E. Mr. Nicola Renzi, Minister of Foreign Affairs with Functions of the Prime Minister

“At the same time, we need to promote, through education, respect for and protection of human rights, the rule of law and access to justice” (p.5).

“Moreover, this year San Marino has added its name to the list of countries supporting the Safe Schools Declaration, an important tool for the protection of educational facilities from military use during conflicts” (p.7).

“The objective of gender equality and emancipation of women and girls is that full realization of their human rights must be achieved. Gender equality must also be translated into equality in educational opportunities, with particular regard to scientific subjects, because technology, science and innovation in general play a vital role in meeting global challenges and in the promotion of sustainable development” (p 8).

“At the same time - and the Republic of San Marino is particularly convinced of this - the perception of sustainable development through new technologies, science and innovation must be transmitted through means of communication that do not distort the truth, so as not to undermine the very concept of freedom” (p 8).

Serbia - H.E. Ms. Ana Brnabic, Prime Minister

“The key priorities of my Government are youth and education. We need to start teaching our youth how to think, and not what to think. Not just Serbia, but all of us, need to start investing more than ever before in education which will create more innovative, braver, more free-thinking individuals who will then, in turn, create the world which is freer, fairer, and which is also, if I am to be honest, more fun” (p.5-6).

“Serbia is very fortunate because we have a lot of people, especially young people, who are amongst the best in the world in creative thinking, video gaming, genome research, digital agriculture, animation, physics, machine engineering, blockchain, artificial intelligence, big data analytics, math, biology, software development and programming” (p.6).

“Our absolute key priority is to support them and to make sure we create a system, institutions, so that more of them can realize their full potential. Not only that this will be the basis for the future growth of Serbia, but perhaps more importantly, we hope to be able to empower them so that they will, together with others from all over, build a better world for all of us. Without any doubt, our future is digital, and as General Secretary Guterres said at the opening of the general debate, technology is on our side” (p.6).

“Although small, I believe Serbia can and will play an important role in digital developments in the future which will help us deal with climate change, by far the biggest challenge ahead of us; alleviate hunger by increasing efficiency and making agriculture smarter; help with poverty reduction by ensuring easy access to finance even to the poorest, most disadvantaged ones, those which we cannot leave behind. This is how Serbia sees its path to more peaceful, equitable and sustainable societies. This is us, Serbia, doing our bit for the better world” (p.6).

South Africa - H.E. Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, President

“One of the greatest challenges to the achievement of global prosperity and development is the continued exclusion of millions of women and young people from meaningful economic participation. It is, therefore, vital that we deploy every means at our disposal to address youth unemployment and ensure universal access to educational opportunities that are appropriate to the changing world of work” (p. 2).

“With effective investment in education, improved health care, good governance and greater economic integration, Africa has the potential to develop its productive capacity on a scale and at a rate that will lift tens of millions out of poverty” (p. 4).

Conclusion:

At this year's 73rd United Nations General Assembly, Education was not brought up by many country officials. Fortunately, next year's High Level Political Forum has prioritized education as a topic of review.

Education, as both a means and an end, is vital in the development process as nations move towards equality and economic democracy. Bridging educational gaps increases productivity and entrepreneurship that can decrease unemployment. Education as a form of human capital development should be available to more people to help solve other challenges in other areas such as health. The education system should be designed and built to take into account individual contexts such as women's education, people with disabilities, changes in pedagogy and simplified curriculums, people in rural areas and to rely less on formal educational schooling by vocational schools for workforce development.

GOOD JOBS & ECONOMIC GROWTH

Erika Hernandez Burke



Brazil
Jamaica
Lithuania
Malawi
Mexico
Nauru
New Zealand
Seychelles
South Africa
United Kingdom

Sustainable economic growth will require societies to create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment.
-United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 8

SDG 8, Sustainable Economic Growth and Decent Work for All, is concerned with matters on the most macro of levels regarding the global economic system and the most micro of levels regarding individuals' interactions with their employer and the state.

In this Report heads of states recognize some of the intersections in which economic growth and job security play a vital role in sustainable development, such as migration and climate change, and yet, gender goes unidentified as a main focus of effort in economic growth. In the face of the feminization of poverty and women's overrepresentation in the informal economy, state leaders must take these realities into account if they hope to develop effective strategies for sustainable growth.

With the advancing threat of climate change many countries, especially island nation states, are integrating climate research into their economic analysis and policy. Take for example Seychelles, a small country off the coast of Eastern African in the Indian Ocean. It has invested in the Blue Economy Strategic Policy Framework and Roadmap which seeks to harness and protect the ocean's wealth of resources.²

Speaking at the General Debate, several state leaders addressed the limitations of the present global economic system. Some argued that the present global system is not adequately diverse in its models of economic prosperity or that the global economic system is too powerful and too volatile, leaving them vulnerable to economic instability.

In the face of a global political trend toward isolationism and protectionism, many state leaders used the General Debate as a platform to denounce officially and challenge this global trend. Several argued that economic isolation and protectionism is not the solution to global economic issues; rather fair and equitable trade agreements can bring economic growth and stability to all parties.

² For more information about Seychelle's Policy see:
Seychelles' Blue Economy Strategic Policy Framework and Roadmap: Charting the Future (2018-2030),
<https://seymsp.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/CommonwealthSecretariat-12pp-RoadMap-Brochure.pdf>

Remarks

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

“Brazil has welcomed all migrants who have arrived in our territory, we are talking about tens of thousands of Venezuelan nationalists to whom we have sought to provide all assistance. In collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioners office for refugees ... we have also issued a formal document that enables them to actually work in Brazil ...” (10:45)

Jamaica- H.E. Mr. Andrew Holness, Prime Minister

“This year marks ten years since the global economic and financial crisis manifested itself in 2008. We are greatly encouraged by reports from international development partners that global growth has improved, and unemployment has declined to its lowest since the crisis. We are, however, mindful that among developing economies, including small island developing states such as mine, growth prospects are becoming more uneven. We remain vulnerable to a gamut of social, economic, environmental, financial and trade-related hazards, from within and beyond our borders. In that context, Jamaica’s quest to achieve inclusive and sustainable economic growth and meaningful job creation has encountered challenges. Ten years on, we still face the vagaries of an uncertain and at times volatile global economic environment. Together with persistent challenges linked to climate change and more frequent intense weather events, these all impact the pace of our development” (p.2).

Lithuania- H.E. Mrs. Dalia Grybauskaitė, President

“As the tide begins to turn for the global economy, the World Trade Organisation is facing paralysis. Rising global trade tensions could wipe away our achievements in sustainable development and poverty reduction” (p.1).

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

“We believe that inclusive and resilient economic growth is key to overcoming hunger and reducing poverty. In this regard, we have in the past four years relentlessly pursued macro-economic measures that are now improving Malawi’s economy. We have stabilized the economy within four years in spite of the natural disasters of floods, drought and hunger that hit Malawi for two consecutive years” (p.7).

Mexico - H.E. Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President

“We have worked to improve the working conditions of the most vulnerable groups, reducing the levels of poverty in the building of an inclusive Mexico. We have transformed the Mexican educational system to offer Mexico's children a quality education which prepares them for a successful happy life. We have removed obstacles which for decades have impeded full economic development encouraging the development of a prosperous Mexico.” (3:25)

Nauru - H.E. Mr. Baron Divavesi Waqa, President

“No less important are the challenges imposed on us by the global economic system, which was not designed with our countries in mind. Our small populations and production base do not yield the economies of scale sought by private investors. Volatility in commodity markets has outsized impacts on our fiscal planning. And the negative externalities of the consumption-based economic growth have destroyed the health of our oceans and the safety of our climate” (p.2).

New Zealand - H.E. Mrs. Jacinda Ardern, Prime Minister

“The transitions our economies have made have often been jarring, and the consequences harsh. And so amongst unprecedented global economic growth, we have still seen a growing sense of isolation, dislocation and a sense of insecurity and the erosion of hope” (p.4).

“International trade, for instance, has helped bring millions of people out of poverty around the world. But some have felt their standard of living slide. In New Zealand we ourselves have seen the hesitancy around trade agreements amongst our own population. The correct response to this is not to repeat mistakes of the past and be seduced by the false promises of protectionism. Rather, we must all work to ensure that the benefits of trade are distributed fairly across our societies” (p.7).

Seychelles - H.E. Mr. Danny Faure, President

“At the beginning of this year, Seychelles pioneered a Blue Economy Strategic Policy Framework and Roadmap to multiply the economic potential of our territorial waters whilst also protecting it for generations to come. For us, the Blue Economy is the next frontier of development. It is about ocean-based sustainable development focusing on economic diversification, shared prosperity, food security and healthy and productive oceans” (p.4).

“We are trying to leverage the wealth of the ocean that surrounds us and engage in exciting new partnerships” (p. 5).

South Africa - H.E. Mr. Cyril Ramaphosa, President

“It is within our hands, as the leaders assembled here today, to forge a more representative, equal and fair United Nations that is empowered and equipped to lead the struggle to end poverty, unemployment and inequality in the world. We are a youthful world, where more than half the global population is under the age of 30 years. One of the greatest challenges to the achievement of global prosperity and development is the continued exclusion of millions of women and young people from meaningful economic participation. It is, therefore, vital that we deploy every means at our disposal to address youth unemployment and ensure universal access to educational opportunities that are appropriate to the changing world of work” (p. 3).

“As the continent with the youngest population in the world, Africa has the potential to be the next great frontier for global growth. With effective investment in education, improved health care, good governance and greater economic integration, Africa has the potential to develop its productive capacity on a scale and at a rate that will lift tens of millions out of poverty” (p. 5).

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland - H.E. Ms. Theresa May, Prime Minister

“The belief in free markets has been challenged by the financial crisis of 2008, by the concerns of those feeling left behind by globalisation, by the anxieties about the pace and scale of technological change and what that will mean for jobs, and by the unprecedented mass movements of people across borders with all the pressures that can bring” (p.2).

“Only global cooperation based on a set of agreed rules can ensure competition is fair and does not succumb to protectionism, with its certain path to lost jobs and international confrontation” (p. 3).

“In the UK we are driving investment in industries of the future to create new jobs – from low carbon technologies to Artificial Intelligence” (p.5).

Conclusion:

Heads of state from both developed and underdeveloped nations acknowledged the connections between educational opportunities, stable employment, climate change and economic growth but failed to integrate gender into their analysis. Poverty continues to cripple communities in all countries across the globe. It demands an interdisciplinary analysis of the social, medical, environmental and governmental structures that allow poverty to persist as the most pressing economic issue in our world.

GENDER EQUALITY

Irem Kilic



Bangladesh
Bosnia and Herzegovina
Canada
Egypt
Finland
France
Lithuania
Malawi
Republic of Korea
Rwanda

Empowering women requires addressing structural issues such as unfair social norms and attitudes as well as developing progressive legal frameworks that promote equality between women and men.

-United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5

After World War II as a result of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s, the development industry emerged. From the turn of the 21st century to 2015, the United Nations ratified the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) that consist of eight goals including gender equality. The MDGs were once called as “an ostensible neoliberal success, but a feminist failure.”³

In contrast to the MDGs’ lack of comprehensiveness and non-measurability of progress/success,⁴ in September 2015 the United Nations General Assembly with much input from different groups from Civil Society adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, known as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), as “an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership”⁵ with the aim of improving human lives and protecting the planet.

Among these 17 sustainable development goals, SDG 5 focuses on achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls by setting nine targets: (i) ending all forms of discrimination, (ii) eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls, (iii) eliminating all harmful practices, (iv) recognizing unpaid care and domestic work, (v) ensuring women’s full participation and equal opportunities for leadership, (vi) ensuring universal access to sexual and reproductive health rights, (vii) undertaking reforms to give women equal right to economic resources, (viii) enhancing the use of enabling technology, and lastly (ix) adopting and strengthening sound policies and enforceable legislations to promote gender equality.

In this Report state representatives who made remarks on the issue of gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment during the 73rd Session of the UN General Assembly (UNGA 73) are highlighted.

³ Fourie, P., & Colleen O’Manique. (2016). ‘It sells, but it does not fly’: An early assessment of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development. *Development*, 59(3-4), 274-279.

doi:<http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.gc.cuny.edu/10.1057/s41301-017-0100-2>

⁴ Many discussed that the MDGs’ neoliberal economic frame conceptualized development as growth-centric, rather than focusing on human rights with a view to creating a more equitable and enabling policy environment in the service of real sustainable development. It has been widely criticized that the MDGs were inadequate to address political issues such as social reproduction, sexual and reproductive health and rights and many other gendered violences perpetrated by neoliberal patriarchy.

⁵ For more information see <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>, accessed 10.12.2018.

Remarks

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

“Currently, more than 7,000 peacekeepers, including 144 women, are deployed in ten different missions. Our peacekeepers have been acclaimed for their professionalism, courage and success” (p.5).

“Women’s empowerment and participation have been a major factor in Bangladesh’s outstanding development. We have promoted women’s empowerment through enhancing their education opportunities and facilitating their political and economic emancipation. We have created opportunities for girls to pursue their education free of cost until twelfth grade in public educational institutions. At secondary level, the ratio of girls and boys is 53:47. In early 2009, it was 35:65.

Bangladesh is perhaps the world’s only country where the Speaker, the Leader of the House, the Deputy Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition in the National Parliament are all women. In the present Parliament, there are 72 elected female members. 33% seats are earmarked for women in local government bodies in order to promote women’s political empowerment at the grassroots.

Around 20 million women are employed in the agriculture, service and industrial sectors. Women constitute 80% of 4.5 million workers engaged in the garment sector, our largest export. Women entrepreneurs are offered collateral free bank loans with 5% service charge; 10% of the Small Entrepreneurs’ Fund; and 10% of industrial plots are earmarked for women entrepreneurs” (p.8).

“In the last nine and a half years, Bangladesh has achieved remarkable success in different socio-economic sectors. That Bangladesh the world knew as the land plagued by disasters, floods, droughts and hunger has done wonders in maintaining international peace, managing disasters, empowering women and consolidating development gains. Bangladesh has now surpassed its neighbours in South Asia on a number of indicators” (11).

Bosnia and Herzegovina- H.E. Mr. Bakir Izetbegović, Chairman of the Presidency

“I congratulate Maria Fernanda Espinosa Garcés on her election. The fact that she is only the fourth woman to hold this position since 1946 is a reminder that gender equality and empowerment of women must remain our top priority. She can count on Bosnia and Herzegovina's full support in getting the work of the General Assembly to be productive and impactful” (p.1).

“Concerted efforts and the alliance of all the nations are necessary to contain the risks of nuclear confrontation and successfully address global issues such as gender equality, climate change and prosecution of war criminals on the international level” (p.3).

Canada- H.E. Mr. Marc-André Blanchard, Chair of the Delegation

“We partnered with the World Bank and others to raise close to \$3.8 billion to reduce the barriers that women and girls face in accessing education in conflict and fragile states. Their inclusion will lead to exceptional benefits for their communities and, by extension, for the world” (p. 5).

“As a direct result of the work we do here at the UN, just a few days ago at the high-level meeting on financing the SDGs, Prime Minister Trudeau announced the establishment of a Toronto affiliate of the Global Infrastructure Hub to do precisely that: leverage Canadian expertise in infrastructure to help connect capital to projects. These projects fuel long-term economic growth and support the transition to a low-carbon economy while making progress towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and improving the representation of women and marginalized groups in sustainable infrastructure.”

“Canada is spearheading the Elsie Initiative – a practical plan to act on our shared promise to double the number of women in peacekeeping operations. We set that as a goal, first and foremost, because of our shared belief in the fundamental equal rights of women.

“If elected, we will work with others to tackle climate change and violent extremism, and to promote economic security and the empowerment of women and girls” (p.9).

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

“Egypt has a solid constitutional foundation for the protection of human rights. Major strides have been achieved in the field of women and youth empowerment. Women hold 25% of the ministerial posts and more than 15% of seats in parliament. International youth conferences, which are held annually in Egypt in November, have also become a regular forum for the youth to communicate and raise their concerns. We are determined to continue to accord high priority to the issues of women’s economic empowerment, and the causes of youth, science, technology

and innovation during Egypt's presidency of the Group of 77, as a practical example of our commitment to the promotion of human rights in a comprehensive manner” (pp. 5-6).

Finland - H.E. Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President

“Finland appeals to all Member States and the Secretary-General to consistently keep human rights, non-discrimination and gender equality on top of the agenda of the UN” (p.1).

“Peace and security, human rights and development are not sustainable without the participation of women and youth. Female voices and young voices must be heard - and acted upon. The needs of women, children and youth are still all too often marginalized in peace talks. Finland promotes the role of women's effective participation in peace processes through the Nordic network of women mediators. This and other similar networks provide useful platforms for advocacy and self-education. As a HeForShe Impact Champion, I highly value these efforts” (p. 5).

France - H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President

“We owe an answer to the 200 million women who don't have access to contraception, to the billion-plus who are not protected by the law if they suffer violence in their home. To all the women whose pay gap with men averages 23% worldwide and up to 40% in rural areas. We owe an answer to the 783 million people who live below the poverty line, who suffer from hunger or chronic malnutrition, to those who don't have access to basic care.

We must also fight passionately against gender-linked inequalities. I have made gender parity in France the great cause of my five-year term, and I issue an appeal here to make this a great global cause with you. Women and girls are the first to be affected by poverty, conflict, the consequences of global warming; they are the first victims of sexist and sexual violence, which too often prevents them from moving around freely, working or choosing what happens to their bodies.

Our responsibility in the 21st century is to end these kinds of violence, from harassment on the street to femicide. It's time our world stopped making women victims and at last gave them their rightful place – the one where they are leaders too! We must guarantee them access everywhere to education, healthcare, jobs and to making economic and political decisions, and fight every kind of violence they are subjected to.

So France will propose to governments wishing to move forward with us the creation of a coalition for adopting new laws for gender equality. Fifty percent of our development aid will be devoted to projects to reduce gender inequalities” (pp. 6-7).

Lithuania- H.E. Mrs. Dalia Grybauskaitė, President

“We cannot let the voices of nationalism and division win over dialogue and cooperation. On all major challenges - terrorism, climate change and achieving women empowerment - there is simply no alternative to working together” (p. 2).

We also know that having women in the ranks – and in charge – makes peacekeeping more effective and its results more durable. We look forward to working with our new partners, Ghana and Zambia, to better recruit, train, retain and promote women across all of our police and military forces” (p. 6).

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

“We cannot be a proud humanity when out there innocent children, voiceless men and vulnerable women are suffering and being killed. Every life is precious” (p.3).

We are improving these macro-economic indicators because a bad economy is an injustice to its citizens. At the same time, we continue focusing on the justice of specific sectors of our society. We are fighting against violence against women and girls. I believe no human society can meaningfully develop while marginalizing its women. Development must always be inclusive.

With support from the United Nations and other development partners, particularly the European Union (EU), Malawi will from 2019 implement the Spotlight Initiative in a bid to eliminate violence against women and girls” (p.8).

Rwanda- H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame, President

“In the years ahead, we look forward to deepening this important partnership between Africa and the United Nations to advance our shared agenda of peace and security, gender equality and women’s empowerment, environmental protection and shared prosperity” (p. 4).

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

“The Republic of Korea is also increasing its assistance to people who are suffering from human rights violations and discrimination, particularly the most vulnerable groups, including children, youths, women and those with disabilities” (p.5).

“This year marks the 70th anniversary of the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Anyone who has confronted the abuse of power to advance human rights carries in his or her heart the first clause of the Declaration, “All human beings are born free and equal.” In particular, I am working to realize gender equality in a tangible way as an important part of our administrative agendas. All forms of discrimination and violence against women are being dealt with even more sternly.

Korea has had a first-hand experience of “comfort women”, who were victims of suffering inflicted by the Japanese military. We will actively participate in discussions among the international community over women, peace and security. We will also work together with the international community on the efforts to eradicate sexual violence in conflict” (p.6).

Conclusion:

As the UN Gender Equality Index and the Gender Development Index confirm, gender inequality has been a long-standing problem of most societies around the world. Women and girls are still confined within the traditional norms that are built upon subordination and oppression of women and girls. To end this problem, it is crucial to understand that from the adoption of MDG 3 to SDG 5, these goals call on *each* society to promote gender equality and empowerment of women and girls.

During the 73rd UN General Assembly, all 193 UN member states and three observers delivered statements; out of 196 speakers only 27 were women.⁶ Throughout the six day-long debates, only a few member states discussed the issue of SDG 5 in depth. Some *touched upon* the subject for seconds as a part of the list of states’ achievements in human rights while the vast majority completely disregarded the issue of gender equality and women’s and girls’ empowerment.

There are still good reasons to be optimistic, but we cannot be content with what has been achieved so far.

⁶ <https://gadebate.un.org/en>

REDUCED INEQUALITIES

Marco Francois



Australia
Bolivia
Dominican Republic
Ethiopia
Fiji
Papua New Guinea
SanMarino
South Africa
Viet Nam
Uruguay

Efforts have been made in some countries to reduce income inequality, increase zero-tariff access for exports from LDCs and developing countries, and provide additional assistance to LDCs and small island developing States (SIDS). However, progress will need to accelerate to reduce growing disparities within and among countries.
- UN Sustainable Development Goal 10

UN Sustainable Development Goal 10 on reduced inequalities encompasses various SDGs. All countries have been fighting against inequalities in the social, economic, religious and migration fields. What has been accomplished will be discussed during the High Level Political Forum that will be held between 9 July and 18 Jul 2019 at the UN Headquarters in New York ⁷

In Bolivia, President Evo Morales has been working hard to reduce the social and economic inequality gaps between the wealthy minority and the always forgotten, poor majority. In his speech, he mentions the absurd dilemma that humanity has confronted throughout time, and that is greed. It can't be possible that one percent of the world's population possesses 82% of the world's riches. Why not promote a fair and worthy redistribution of the capital to underdeveloped countries instead of allowing rich States to add more and more riches to their vaults? As President Evo Morales mentioned, we should be ashamed for not doing more regarding economic and social inequality in the world.

Furthermore SDG10 advocates for official development assistance and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to States where the need is greatest, in particular least developed countries, African countries, small island developing States and landlocked developing countries, in accordance with their national plans and programmes ⁸. Small Island States, such as San Marino, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, need international cooperation to attract foreign investments that will help develop their countries with fair deals for both investors and the governments, but always respecting the sovereignty of each State and its natural resources.

These are some of topics that will be discussed in the quotes I have chosen to be read by the public. I hope they can awake an awareness of the importance of SDG 10.

⁷ For more information about the upcoming 2019 High Level Political Forum(HLPF), see <http://sdg.iisd.org/events/high-level-political-forum-on-sustainable-development-hlpf-2019/>

⁸ For more information on SDG10, see <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

Remarks

Australia - H.E. Ms. Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs

“Our aid program is an important mechanism through which we support the aspirations of our neighbors. It is predominantly and unashamedly focused on the Indo Pacific region and geared to expand opportunities for people, for business and communities to promote economic growth and to further reduce regional poverty. We work in sectors that drive economic growth and human development including aid for trade, infrastructure, education and health and empowering women and girls”. (11:00)

Bolivia - H.E. Mr. Evo Morales, President

“Brothers and sisters, the third major threat (for mankind) is inequality. Every year wealth is being concentrated in fewer and fewer hands. In 2017, 82% of the increase in world wealth went to the one percent of the richest people. Half of the human race saw no increase whatsoever in their income. According to Credit Suisse, 42 individuals hold today the same amount of wealth as 3,700 million people. These figures are simply shameful and we should all be ashamed. This is not a model for distributing wealth; rather it is a model for accumulating wealth and distributing poverty”. (14:49)

Dominican Republic - H.E. Mr. Danilo Medina Sánchez, President

“In combating the effects of drug trafficking and climate change, we will be solving some of the structural causes that lead countries to deepen poverty and social inequality. If the United Nations and the developed countries want to help fight poverty more comprehensively and frankly, these two fronts are a smart, humane and cost-effective way to do so”. (17:14)

“Climate change, drug trafficking, poverty, social inequality and mass migration are all interrelated problems that we must deal with urgently. As we have pointed out today, the best and perhaps the only way to do so is to act upon all levels of response to the problem to ensure that the agreements signed in a space like the UN have a real impact on the life of the people”. (17:58)

Cambodia - H.E. Mr. Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo HUN SEN, Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia

“Sustainable Development Goals” of the United Nations play a pivotal role in guiding toward prosperity for people. Cambodia views the SDGs as an important opportunity to mobilize efforts in achieving poverty reduction, as well as sustainable and inclusive development. The Royal Government of Cambodia (RGC) soon will approve “Cambodia Sustainable Development Goals (CSDGs)” which has been fully localized, and we will use those goals to shape our medium and long-term policies and plans for Cambodia”. (12:55)

Ethiopia - H.E. Mr. Workineh Gebeyehu Negewo, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia

“It is equally important to extend the process to promote a framework for regional economic integration to fight poverty. Equal regional economic cooperation will make a real contribution to get rid of violence and war as well as promote deeper regional and continental integration in line with Agenda 2063”. (10:12)

Fiji - H.E. Mr. Josaia Voreque Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji

“So while we provide free medicines and subsidised electricity, we also award grants to micro businesses as a way of lifting people out of poverty and rewarding and encouraging self-reliance and entrepreneurship”. (04:28)

“We also see small and medium-sized enterprises as important ways of promoting growth and lifting people out of poverty. I am proud to say that my government has given grants worth 32.4 million dollars to small and micro enterprises, and we have been rewarded with explosive growth and extraordinary innovation in that sector”. (10:30)

Papua New Guinea - H.E. Mr. Rimbink Pato, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade of the Independent State of Papua, New Guinea

“International trade is an important engine for inclusive economic growth and poverty eradication as well as a critical source to finance development and achieving sustainable development”. (06:05)

“Through APEC we have opportunities to attract trade and direct foreign investment. It will continue to provide us with access to the knowledge and experience of leading economies and to have dialogue with APEC economic leaders in attendance. This capacity building support in our country will lead directly to business growth and the creation of more jobs for our people. However, given our small and open economy which is subject to external forces, we join in the calls for the respect for and strengthened rules-based, multilateral trading system”. (07:41)

San Marino - H.E. Mr. Nicola Renzi, Minister for Foreign and Political Affairs and Justice of the Republic of San Marino

“The most difficult and important challenge to the achievement of the objective of sustainable development is the eradication of poverty in all its forms and dimensions, in particular extreme poverty. Although the level of extreme poverty has fallen significantly in the last ten years, as shown by the data contained in the Secretary General's report on SDGs, poverty, nevertheless, remains the main cause of hunger; the number of undernourished people reached 815 million in 2016. The Agenda emphasizes universal respect for human rights and human dignity: peace, justice, equality and non-discrimination are fundamental rights whose implementation becomes essential for the construction of inclusive societies”. (12:24)

South Africa - H.E. Mr. Matamela Cyril Ramaphosa, President of the Republic of South Africa

“We continue to vigorously implement our commitments contained in the African Union Agenda 2063, which is our collective plan to rid our continent of underdevelopment, poverty and conflict and improve democratic governance, the rule of law and the promotion of human rights. We have reached agreement on the establishment of an African Continental Free Trade Area, which will fundamentally transform African economies, giving rise to a new industrial age on the continent”. (15:00)

Uruguay - H.E. Mr. Tavaré Vázquez, President

“In the report published in January 2018 by the World Economic Forum on inclusive development, Uruguay, my country, was placed as one of the ten most inclusive emerging countries of the world. And it ranked second in Latin America in efficient public policies that make it possible to translate economic growth into a reduction of inequality, promotion of social inclusion and intergenerational equity”. (2:46)

Viet Nam - H.E. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Phuc, Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam

“Once a poor, underdeveloped, food-deficit country, Viet Nam has recorded average annual GDP growth of over 6% over the last 20 years to become among the world's largest food exporters. Since 2010, we have become a middle-income developing country and the living standards of nearly 100 million of our citizens have improved dramatically. By actively engaging in international integration, Viet Nam enjoys free trading relations with nearly 60 major countries and partners in the world as a result of its membership of 16 Free Trade Agreements (FTAs), some of which are in the final stage of negotiations” (04:20)

Conclusion:

Many States have mentioned that fighting poverty and reducing economic inequalities are in their plans for future policy making, yet there is a lack of sensitivity towards Gender Equality in which we strongly believe.

Women and young women deserve equal representation not only in the international arena but also in hearing their voices at the local level in their countries, cities and towns. That's where the gender equality battle must be won.

In small Island States, such as Fiji and Papua New Guinea, it is imperative to keep on building the economy to reduce social and economic inequalities, but one of the correct paths that these States can take in developing their countries is through the promotion of Gender Equality rights. Both men and women working together with the same goal in mind and with the right tools can make their lands flourish. Yes, it might take time to achieve that dream but how can they start? One simple suggestion is to believe that women are capable of taking responsibility for high-level positions at the government level or in the private sector. Why not entrust them with small loans and very low interest rates, transforming them into pioneers by opening up their own businesses? They deserve to be their own bosses.

These are suggestions that I hope every country will adopt so that gender, economic and social inequalities are treated with seriousness and eradicated. We just have to join forces and hope for a better future for all.

CLIMATE ACTION

Devan Zingler



Canada
Chile
Dominica
India
Niger
Malawi
Mexico
Republic of Korea
Sweden
Thailand

The world continues to experience rising sea levels, extreme weather conditions and increasing concentrations of greenhouse gases. This calls for urgent and accelerated action by countries as they implement their commitments to the Paris Agreement on Climate Change.

-UN Sustainable Development Goal 13

Climate change and the protection of the environment, highlighted in SDG 13, is currently a prominent global issue and was, therefore, a significant topic during the General Assembly. Since the enactment of the Paris Agreement on Climate Change in 2015, climate action has been an especially important project for the United Nations.⁹ Civil society is encouraged to make environmentally-friendly changes to their everyday life, and member states are required to implement climate action and environmental policies.

While many countries highlighted the issue of climate change in their addresses to the General Assembly, some only briefly touched upon the topic and others did not even mention it, such as the United States. Climate action was discussed the most by island countries such as Dominica, Fiji and Samoa where global warming and climate change have greatly affected the people who, as the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Dominica explains, are among the poorest and most vulnerable, including women and girls.

On 8 October, the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C was approved by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). This report was written by 91 scientists and was based on over six thousand scientific studies. It states that limiting global warming to 1.5°C by 2100 is possible, but it would require extreme and unprecedented changes in our greenhouse gas emissions and our dependence on fossil fuels. The report indicates that the major transformations that must take place are removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, reducing coal usage by at least 17 percent, and the increase of renewable energy by 67 percent.¹⁰ However, most of the member states that discussed climate action in their addresses failed to discuss these important transformations. Many indicated that their countries were limiting the use of plastics or protecting biodiversity, but only Chile mentioned decarbonization. The Republic of Korea talked about renewable energy.

Hopefully, the new IPCC Report will encourage and inspire more member states to implement climate action policies and regulations to decarbonize the atmosphere, eliminate the dependence on coal and increase renewable energy within their countries and globally.

⁹ For more about the Paris Agreement, see:

<https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/the-paris-agreement>

¹⁰ For summaries of the IPCC Report, see these articles:

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2018/10/how-to-understand-the-uns-dire-new-climate-report/572356/>.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/10/07/climate/ipcc-climate-report-2040.html?module=inline>

Remarks

Canada - H.E. Mr. Marc-André Blanchard, Chair of the Delegation of Canada

“We also felt very strongly that the G7 needed to tackle the issue of climate resilience and disaster recovery. While Canada has its own extensive coastlines and borders on three oceans, we invited small island, coastal African and Southeast Asian states to this critical conversation. Building on the UN Oceans Conference, this discussion produced a charter seeking to ban the use of plastics in our ocean and is paving the way to the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference in Nairobi in November that Canada is so proud to be hosting with Kenya”. (8:20)

Chile - H.E. Mr. Sebastián Piñera-Echeñique, President

“Today our planet faces major threats and challenges such as the deterioration of the environment; global warming; increasing desertification; destruction of the ozone layer; depletion of natural resources; the loss of biodiversity; pollution of air, water and soil; destruction of forests and much more”. (11:25)

“And we know that the environment is changing and the climate is warming faster than our understanding or ability to understand, protect it and stop it. And even though the alarms have been sounded and continue to be sounded, our citizens continue to march forward, and we cannot not listen to them. We have a duty to respond today to the screams of nature that are asking us to protect it, so that nature, in turn, can protect us. And there’s no more time. We have no time to lose, no time to vacillate, because nature has gone from being an ally to becoming an enemy. Ladies and Gentlemen, our generation’s response to this great challenge will clearly and undoubtedly be judged by our children and by our grandchildren and by history. Because the threat of climate change will define the shape of this century and centuries to come, and it requires deep-seated multilateral efforts”. (12:46)

“As president of Chile, I am committed to development that is sustainable. In other words, respectful of nature and the environment. The threat which once was very distant is now upon us, and we can see, we can bear witness to, the lethal impact that these changes may have on the present and future generations. In this area, there is no time to waste. The time has come to react and take the bull by the horns to change history and ensure the future”. (16:20)

“What have we done in Chile? First, we are committed to the creation of protected areas which we believe are crucial to biodiversity conservation. Chile has been a regional and world leader in the formation of protected areas ever since the last century with the Malleco National Reserve

which was created in 1907. There are today 180 protected areas in Chile, 40 marine areas and 140 land areas covering some 10 million hectares. Second, we are firmly committed to the conservation of the oceans, their biodiversity and the sustainable use of their resources. We have already protected more than 13 percent of our exclusive economic zone and shall soon cover 40 percent. Moreover, we are on a path to achieving 40 percent. Chile has the largest marine-protected area in Latin America.... Third, we have an energy route designed to achieve a clean, safe and a more cost-effective and diversified matrix that strongly promotes decarbonization. In addition, we are pursuing an electromobility policy to increase the number of electric vehicles on the roads of Chile. Fourth, we realize the seriousness of the threat posed by plastic for our planet and understand how important it is for us all to be aware of this and for governments to act in time to avert the current path we are on, in which by 2050 there will be almost 12,000 million tons of plastic waste in nature and more plastic bags than there are fish in the oceans. I am proud that the first legislation to be adopted during this term in office has banned the use of plastic bags in shops. Chile is the first country in Latin America and the Caribbean to restrict the free distribution of any kind of single-use plastic bag in shops, and this ban has taken effect almost immediately”. (16:59)

“We want to abandon the throwaway culture and embrace the recyclable culture”. (20:42)

Dominica - Hon. Mrs. Francine Baron, Minister of Foreign and CARICOM Affairs of the Commonwealth of Dominica

“Poverty, inequality and violence are shared responsibilities too, but their modern-day manifestations are wrapped up in climate change”. (6:36)

“Much violence stems directly from climate change induced scarcity of things, like water or productive lands. Climate change is the main symptom of our world’s broken economy, society and humanity”. (7:18)

“Those who gain most from the activities that create climate change remain the most removed from its dire consequences”. (8:28)

“Today, I wish to propose that the United Nations oversee a ‘Climate Loss and Damage Insurance Fund,’ where premiums are paid by those who have contributed most and continue to contribute to climate change and that payouts go quickly to those who suffer the direct consequences of climate disasters, once independently declared to be such”. (12:52)

“Dominica instituted a plan to make it the first climate resilient nation in the world. We have drafted legislation to establish the Climate Resilience Executing Agency of Dominica (CREAD),

which will deliver the projects that will achieve this goal. We have recruited its leadership and identified a billion dollars worth of critical projects to complement this plan. We have rolled up our sleeves and started work”. (14:04)

India - Smt. Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, Minister of External Affairs

“Under-developed and developing nations are the worst victims of climate change. They have neither the capacity nor the resources to meet this crisis. Those who have exploited nature for their immediate needs cannot abdicate their responsibilities. If we have to save the world from the adverse effects of climate change, then developed nations must lift the deprived with financial and technical resources. The principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities was reiterated in the 2015 Paris Agreement”. (8:25)

“India has risen to meet the challenge of climate change. Prime Minister Modi in partnership with France launched the International Solar Alliance. The United Nations has recognized their contributions and conferred on Prime Minister Modi and President Macron the honor of UN Champions of the Earth. I am happy to inform you that 68 nations are now members of ISA. In March this year India and France chaired the Founding Conference of ISA in which 120 countries participated. Our Prime Minister has described his vision of sustainable and available energy in a typically apt phrase: One Sun, One Grid. This breakthrough concept can become the solution we seek to the problems”. (9:14)

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

“Malawi is both a victim and a fighter of climate change. The consequences of climate change are real, devastating and often tragic in large scale proportions. For this reason, I would like to urge all governments, business leaders, investors and civil society to fight for the bending of the curve of carbon dioxide emissions by 2020 and meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement”. (9:14)

“Malawi is doing its part by implementing various disaster risk reduction and resilience building initiatives. But we cannot do it alone. We need adequate, predictable and sustainable sources of climate financing such as the Green Climate Fund in order to support our actions”. (9:53)

“Let me also report that my government is endeavoring to eliminate hunger and malnutrition by 2030. Given the hostile consequences of climate change, food insecurity and malnutrition are serious threats in a country that still relies on subsistence rain-fed agriculture”. (10:14)

México - H.E. Mr. Enrique Peña Nieto, President

“The implementation of the Paris Agreement on climate change is a priority for my country. As an international community, we have the moral obligation to put into practice its precepts and comply with even more ambitious goals for mitigation, adaptation and financing”. (4:55)

Niger - H.E. Mr. Kalla Ankourao, Minister of Foreign Affairs

“The impact of climate change has had a significant effect on the economy of [Niger’s] people and they can barely tolerate this. The 2015 Paris Agreement is a unique opportunity to save our planet. Niger considers it an honor to implement the activities contained in the roadmap stemming from this agreement. To this end, it will host in November, under the auspices of the President, a roundtable on technical and financial partnerships. This will define conditions for implementing the climate investment plan in the Sahara region. I would, therefore, like to invite the international community as well as our different partners to participate in this roundtable. Financing of this plan will enable the Sahara region countries to better deal with the impact of climate change on our populations and our ecosystems”. (9:38)

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

“Responding to climate change and transitioning to a low-carbon economy are challenges and tasks facing our generation. The Government of the Republic of Korea will raise its share of renewable energy in the nation's total power generation to 20 percent by 2030. We will faithfully implement the goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 in compliance with the Paris Agreement and assist developing countries' pursuit of sustainable development by supporting them with climate change responses”. (13:39)

Sweden - H.E. Mr. Olof Skoog, Chair of the Delegation of Sweden

“Sweden has adopted a climate policy framework which establishes that Sweden will have zero emissions in 2045. We’ve also taken a leading role in climate finance, and we remain committed to our share of mobilizing the 100 billion dollars annually by 2020”. (8:45)

Thailand - H.E. Mr. Virasakdi Futrakul, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs

“We are also working on raising public awareness on climate change. We are also cooperating with other countries in the region to mitigate the risks of natural disasters”. (6:29)

Conclusion:

The member states that discussed climate change and climate action the most were developing countries that are most affected by climate change and are least able to effectively fight against it. Within these areas, women and girls are even more vulnerable to the effects of global warming and climate change. The impoverished are impacted the greatest from climate change and the majority of the world's poor are women. Not only do they feel the effects more heavily but they also have less access to policy- and decision-making processes, which evidently limits their ability to participate in climate-related politics and to enact change surrounding this issue that deeply influences them.¹¹

Although an abundance of countries discussed climate change in their addresses to the General Assembly, most failed to consider how this issue directly relates to women's and girls' equality and empowerment. While organizations and UN bodies such as the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change have highlighted the importance of gender mainstreaming and inclusion within the topic of climate change, individual countries are not stressing this importance enough.¹² In order to fully and effectively implement policies on climate action and gender equality, the international community must better recognize the intimate relationship between the two issues and include women and girls in more climate policy decisions.

¹¹ UFCCC, "Introduction to Gender and Climate Change,"

<https://unfccc.int/topics/gender/the-big-picture/introduction-to-gender-and-climate-change>

¹² For more detailed information and next steps regarding Gender and Climate Change, see WEDO's "Pocket Guide to Gender Equality under the UNFCCC,"

<https://wedo.org/pocket-guide-gender-equality-unfccc/>

PEACE, JUSTICE & STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Uma Natarajan



Brazil
Ecuador
France
India
Israel
Palestine
Republic of Korea
Rwanda
Turkey
United States

*Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels*¹³.

- Sustainable Development Goal 16

During the UNGA 73, several states asked that multilateralism and reforming institutions be fair, effective and more inclusive. States emphasized that the absence of strong institutions causes instability and injustice to spread, as well as discrimination and polarization.

According to the UN Women Report, *Turning Promises into Action: Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, “Where governance institutions fail to play their role, corruption, organized crime, inequalities and social unrest tend to increase detrimental consequences for women and girls,” specifically in the form of gender-based violence.¹⁴

In times of conflict, women are disproportionately subjected to sexual violence, abduction and torture and are forced to leave their homes.¹⁵ In addition, women are used as weapons of war and are raped and killed.¹⁶ Without strong institutions, police and/or military personnel are more likely to commit sexual violence against women and girls. Thus, strong institutions are crucial for women and girls since they rely on these institutions for access to justice and essential services.

Women must be included in all aspects of the peace process and be able to benefit from their government systems. They should be given the right to lead and participate in intergovernmental affairs. There is a need for “programs to assist with gender-responsive reforms of justice and security institutions, the introduction and implementation of laws against violence against women, and the provision of public services that fully meet women’s needs”¹⁷.

Countries must hold other countries accountable for human rights’ violations targeting women and girls, especially during times of conflict. Countries must work together to ensure that women are given an opportunity to not only participate in their own governmental systems but also an opportunity to participate in global governance as well.

¹³ "SDG 16: Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels." SDG Compass. Accessed October 29, 2018. <https://sdgcompass.org/sdgs/sdg-16/>

¹⁴ "Monitoring Gender Equality in the 2030 Agenda." *Turning Promises Into Action*, 2018, 70-130. doi:10.18356/8a6d67.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ "Sustainable Development Goal 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions." UN Women. Accessed November 07, 2018. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-16-peace-justice-strong-institutions>.

Remarks

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

“In Latin America, Brazil has worked to preserve democracy and human rights. Working together with so many other countries, we will continue to stand side by side with our brotherly peoples who have suffered so much”. (9:37)

“It is through dialogue and solidarity that we will overcome intolerance and build peace.... We have responded to that challenge [unilateralism] by means of more diplomacy, more multilateralism, and we have done so with the strong conviction that collective problems require collectively coordinated responses ... we must strengthen this organization [United Nations], we must make it increasingly legitimate and effective. And that is why we need important reforms to be carried out, including that of the Security Council, which as it is today in its current configuration, reflects a world that no longer exists”. (15:12)

Ecuador - H.E. Mr. Lenin Moreno Garcés, President

“We have to become aware that inclusion has no borders, that the right of every individual to life and happiness does not end where mine begins. Both rights are fundamental rights of the human being. They’re interdependent and they enrich each other in their interconnectedness our Latin America has a huge challenge of consolidating democracy, given that various countries have authoritarian, corrupt, and populist governments Rights can only be guaranteed in the framework of solid institutions with broad freedom of expression and with a transition of power. These are fundamental elements of strong democracies, and our nations should be committed to building these democracies, to caring for them. My government has maintained its democratic commitment in each one of its actions and decisions. It has maintained its commitment with the original ideals of our United Nations”. (21:23)

France - H.E. Mr. Emmanuel Macron, President

“We will support the enlargement of the Security Council in its members’ two categories so that its composition reflects contemporary balances and it is strengthened as a place of consultation and not obstruction. We will ensure that by the end of the year at this General Assembly, two-thirds of its members can support the suspension of the right of veto in the event of mass atrocities. We will defend international humanitarian law by supporting staff who take every risk to help civilians on the ground, by negotiating, one by one, humanitarian access in every theatre”. (40:22)

India - Hon. Mrs. Sushma Swaraj, Minister for External Affairs

“The United Nations must accept that it needs fundamental reform. Reform cannot be cosmetic. We need to change the institution's head and heart to make both compatible to contemporary reality. Reform must begin today; tomorrow could be too late. If the UN is ineffective, the whole concept of multilateralism will collapse”. (18:11)

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

“The nation state of Israel is the only place where the Jewish people proudly exercise our collective right of self-determination. That right was recognized nearly a century ago by the League of Nations and over 70 years ago by the United Nations, when it voted to support the establishment of a Jewish state. That’s what it said, that resolution—a Jewish state. At the same time, Israel is a vibrant democracy, where all its citizens—Jews and non-Jews alike—enjoy equal individual rights, and these rights are guaranteed by law”. (36:13)

Palestine - H.E. Mr. Mahmoud Abbas, President

“Peace in our region cannot be realized without an independent Palestinian State, with East Jerusalem as its capital, and not some place in East Jerusalem as its capital, and with all of its holy sites. There is no peace otherwise. There is no peace with a state of temporary borders. There is no peace with an alleged state in Gaza. The path to peace is enshrined in your resolutions, including resolution 67/19 of 29 November 2012, which was adopted by an overwhelming majority and refers to the State of Palestine on the basis of the 1967 borders. I thus call upon all the countries of the world that have not yet recognized the State of Palestine to accelerate this long overdue recognition”. (20:04)

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

“The Republic of Korea, together with the United Nations, has weathered the storms of modern history. The United Nations and the Republic of Korea share common values and philosophies. This month, the Government of the Republic of Korea announced its vision of an “inclusive nation” based on a people-centered governing philosophy. We are moving towards a fair and just nation as well as a society in which no one is discriminated against and everyone lives in harmony. “Inclusiveness” is also a philosophy embedded in international development cooperation. The Government of the Republic of Korea will steadily expand its contribution to development cooperation to create a global community that leaves no one behind” (p.5).

Rwanda - H.E. Mr. Paul Kagame, President

“The trend on our continent is towards closer and a more productive cooperation both through the African Union and our regional economic communities. We need to focus Africa’s attention

on the urgent need to get our house in order and fundamentally change how we do business. This year also provided examples of regional security affairs and key political transitions being handled in a peaceful and forward-looking manner”. (3:34)

Turkey - H.E. Mr. Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, President

“There is a high state of dissatisfaction in terms of the whole work undertaken by this huge organization. We don’t wish to see such an important structure turning into an organization with a constant reputation for failure and complaints. Therefore, on every occasion, we underline that there needs to be a comprehensive reform in the structure and functioning of the United Nations, particularly at the Security Council”. (4:57)

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

“America is governed by Americans. We reject the ideology of globalism and we embrace the doctrine of patriotism. Around the world, responsible nations must defend against threats to sovereignty, not just from global governance, but also from new forms of coercion and domination”. (21:10)

Conclusion:

This year the UNGA focused heavily on multilateralism and inclusion in intergovernmental affairs. Antonio Guterres, United Nations Secretary-General, stated in his opening address, “Together as guardians of the common good, we also have the duty to promote and support a reformed, reinvigorated, strengthened multilateral system. We need commitment to a rules-based order, with the United Nations at its center, and with different institutions and treaties that bring the charter to life”. (5:09)

Several countries stated the challenges facing our current global system with regards to polarization and division. Throughout the UNGA, countries stressed the need for our global order to be unified in order to combat hatred and enforce positive, peaceful change.

María Fernanda Espinosa Garcés, President of the UN General Assembly, stated, “Multilateralism stands alone as the only viable response to the global problems that we are faced with. To undermine multilateralism or to cast doubt upon its merits will only lead to instability and division, to mistrust, and polarization”. (1:42)

There was also an emphasis on rebuilding the system of the United Nations and making it a more cohesive and inclusive environment. Several countries stated the importance of reforming the United Nations in a way that reflected current times. There were specifically a few remarks on reforming the Security Council that currently seems to benefit only a few large countries.

A lot of remarks were in response to the actions of the United States, which made it clear in its remarks that the President is in favor of unilateralism and will focus his attention on making sure the United States is prioritized first before deciding to extend affairs outward.

The actions of the United States set the tone for the UNGA, which warned the world that its mentality can be damaging to the overall structure of a unified global system. Nevertheless, many countries made it clear in their statements that they stood by the mission and goals of the United Nations, that they would strive to improve the system and that they would fight for a unified and peaceful world.

Through the lense of a gendered perspective, although there was emphasis on inclusion in institutions, each country that focused on SDG 16 failed to mention the importance of including women as leaders and participants in intergovernmental affairs. There was an emphasis on multilateralism and holding countries and institutions accountable. However, the gendered effects of this was not mentioned once.

Regarding the impact of violence against women in relation to SDG 16, there was little to no mention, which was especially surprising given the rise of sexual assault awareness movements throughout the world. Each country focused more on the general picture and failed to mention crucial populations of society that are currently affected by weak institutions and failed to mention the importance of women in this process. Several side events discussed the importance of ending violence against women. During the UNGA remarks, there was discussion in more general terms, such as preventing violations against “human rights.”

The countries’ responses to the theme, “Making the United Nations Relevant to All People: Global Leadership and Shared Responsibilities for Peaceful, Equitable and Sustainable Societies,” were interesting. We must, however, make note that women were not discussed specifically, and we must ask why this is the case. A possible explanation could be that women’s issues were discussed during UNGA side events of the UNGA. This is problematic. Women’s issues are not separate from any of the SDGs discussed at the General Assembly and should be included. There is a lot more work to be done, and all countries should in the future make sure that women are included in their remarks.

PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS



Brazil
Canada
Dominican Republic
Finland
Niger
Norway
Papua New Guinea
Republic of Estonia
Republic of Korea

A successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These inclusive partnerships built upon principles and values, a shared vision and shared goals that place people and the planet at the centre are needed at the global, regional, national and local level.
-Sustainable Development Goal 17

According to the United Nations website, Goal 17 seeks to strengthen global partnerships to support and achieve the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda, bringing together national governments, the international community, civil society, the private sector and other actors.

These efforts of global partnerships manifest themselves as fair and equitable international trade agreements, participation in climate change initiatives and an embrace in international institutions. In the current political climate unilateralism is on the rise. The United Nations, however, has the particular role of engaging and maintaining multilateral efforts that support peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.

International partnership is key to solving issues that cannot be tackled by nations independently due to their global nature. Issues such as human trafficking, the illegal arms trade, climate change and economic stability take place on a global scale which involve multiple actors transnationally.

In relation to gender, according to UN Women, “finance, fair and equitable trade, technology, capacities, partnerships and data are among the primary tools for achieving gender equality and all other dimensions of sustainable development. They define, for instance, whether or not services are provided to reduce women’s burden of unpaid care and improve their access to decent work.” Presently, the only source of finance that can be tracked by gender is official development assistance. Only 1/3 of this sum had a gender focus, with emphasis on government and civil society and little emphasis on women’s role in the economy.¹⁸

It is important to adopt gender-responsive budgeting and make sure gender issues are central to cooperation among countries. We must also make sure we have data collection to make women’s issues visible and influential.¹⁹ Thus, it is important to make sure women have access to technology, which will increase women’s empowerment and environmental sustainability.

¹⁸ "Sustainable Development Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals." UN Women. Accessed November 08, 2018. <http://www.unwomen.org/en/news/in-focus/women-and-the-sdgs/sdg-17-partnerships-for-the-goals>.

¹⁹ *Ibid*

Remarks

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

“We have been pushing for strengthened ties with the countries forming the Pacific Alliance, seeking an even more united Latin America as determined by our Constitution. We have also revitalized or initiated trade negotiations with partners in all regions: – the European Union, the European Free Trade Association, Canada, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, Lebanon, Morocco and Tunisia. Through these and other initiatives, we continue to strengthen our relationships with the Americas as a whole, with Europe, with Asia and with Africa. (7:11)

Canada - H.E. Mr. Marc-André Blanchard, Chair of the Delegation of Canada

“Building on the UN Oceans Conference, this discussion produced a charter seeking to ban the use of plastics in our ocean and is paving the way to the Sustainable Blue Economy Conference in Nairobi in November that Canada is so proud to be hosting with Kenya”. (8:20)

Dominican Republic- H.E. Mr. Danilo Medina Sanchez, President

“What can we then do to build a more incrementally stable world? What measures to take so that widespread safety is not a privilege of a few nations, but extends throughout the world reaching every region and village? Obviously I'm not the only one who asks these questions. All present here ask them. Nor will I give definitive answers because we can only find them working together” (p. 4).

Finland- H.E. Mr. Sauli Niinistö, President

“My country has always been a strong advocate of multilateral cooperation. For Finland, a rules-based international order is of fundamental importance. At home, being able to rely on commonly agreed rules is a cornerstone of our own national security and welfare. On the global level, common solutions and rules are needed to address the most pressing challenges of our time.” (p.2)

“The international system we have built together is visibly under pressure. Its capability and credibility are questioned. We can no longer take the rules-based order for granted. It is our common responsibility to actively defend and develop it. Finland sees the United Nations as the

core of the multilateral system. Therefore, the defense of multilateralism must begin here. The UN and its members need to show their will to act together, not past each other” (p.2).

“The three pillars of the UN - peace and security, human rights and development - have stood the test of time. But we have also discovered that many of the present global challenges do not respect the boundaries between them. The pillars are increasingly interlinked, as are the challenges themselves. The most important achievements of the UN system in recent years are testimony to this. I am thinking of the Agenda 2030, the Paris Agreement and the Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees. Issues like sustainability, climate change and migration are not only about development and human rights. They are also essential questions of peace and security” (p.3).

Niger - H.E. Mr. Kalla Ankourao, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Niger “will host in November, under the auspices of the President, a roundtable on technical and financial partnerships. This will define conditions for implementing the climate investment plan in the Sahara region. I would, therefore, like to invite the international community as well as our different partners to participate in this roundtable”. (9:38)

Norway - H.E. Mrs. Erna Solberg, Prime Minister

H.E. Solberg calls on the world leaders to recognize that, “The 17 Sustainable Development Goals recognize that global challenges are national challenges, and that they are closely interlinked” (p.1). “We must deal with the challenges of globalization while at the same time maximizing the benefits for our citizens. Our job is to deliver security, jobs, education and healthcare” (p.2).

Together, countries have achieved incredible results because international cooperation works. These include poverty reduction, longer lives, low child mortality rates and higher girl school attendance. Global political participation, trade and international law have been crucial to this progress (p.2).

However globalization has not been equally beneficial to all and this poses a real challenge. “Exclusion can spur radicalization. It can undermine confidence in international institutions and cooperation. Eventually it could weaken respect for international law, human rights and even our security architecture” (p.2). “To counter this, we must secure the future welfare of a rapidly growing population. This requires both protection and reform of fundamental trade norms. We cannot afford to let protectionism, discrimination and economic rivalry define our future” (p.2).

All nations must unite in commitment to peace and security. “Norway is standing up against violent extremism and terrorism as a long term foreign policy commitment” (p.4).

“Working together has enabled all of us to do far more than we could have done alone” (p.2).

Papua New Guinea - H.E. Mr. Rimbink Pato, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade

“Let me take this opportunity to share with this Assembly the current status of the refugees and migrants on our Manus Island. The processing centre was officially closed by my Government on 31 October 2017 following the decision of our Supreme Court in April 2016. We are, therefore, working closely with Australia in resettling qualified asylum seekers, including in the US. Other migrants still remain in Papua New Guinea. Each will be addressed case-by-case. That is our contribution to the extent possible, in partnership with Australia, to address human trafficking, people smuggling and international crimes”. (21:13)

Republic of Estonia - H.E. Ms. Kersti Kaljulaid, President

“And very often it's not the state or international organizations that get things done. But grass-root activism and NGOs who have a vision and a sense of responsibility. Principled voluntary approach can shift mountains of inefficiency, bad governance, neglect and lack of ideas. It can guide and catalyze policymaking, but not replace it” (p.3).

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

“On August 15, I proposed the creation of an East Asian Railroad Community, which would involve six Northeast Asian countries and the United States. The European Coal and Steel Community, which gave birth to the creation of the European Union, is a living example of what this kind of initiative could achieve. I believe that the East Asian Railroad Community will be able to serve as a starting point for the creation of an energy and economic community in East Asia, and going a step further, lead to a multilateral peace and security architecture in Northeast Asia”. (10:05)

Conclusion:

In sum, it has become apparent to state leaders and civil society that the current state of the world hinges on global issues that demand international engagement and partnership. The general debate served as a platform for many state leaders to stand up for the usefulness and legitimacy of international institutions and to denounce unilateralism and protectionism.

There was specifically mention of multilateralism in regards to human rights issues such as migration as well as transnational cooperation in economic affairs. However, with regards to gender, there was no mention of how including women in partnership can be beneficial to society and women's empowerment.

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 track 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 languages that can be used to prove precedent and shared interest when lobbying for gender equality in the UN sphere

Actions you can take now:

- Utilize this data and analysis to sensitize your task force and strategize for your meetings with member states at the [CSW63](#) and the [NGO CSW63 Forum](#)
- Attend an Advocacy Training at the NGO CSW63 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 CSW63. Email zerodraft@ngocsw.org
- Share this report with your networks. The more information we have the more successful our outcomes will be. We need to be prepared for BEIJING+25 commemoration at the Global Women's Forum which will take place in June 2020. More information to follow.