

October 28, 2017

H.E. Mr. António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
Executive Office of the Secretary-General
United Nations Secretariat Building
405 E. 42nd St., New York, NY 10017

Dear Mr. Secretary-General:

We write to you as allied civil society organizations and individuals concerned about financing for gender equality. We have been actively engaging with the United Nations around this issue and met with your Senior Gender Advisor, Nahla Valji, as well as key representatives from UN Women, including Zohra Khan and Aparna Mehrotra, during the UN General Assembly this September.

We are delighted to learn that the High-Level Task Force on Financing for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment will be publicly announced in December 2017 and that it will tackle gender equality within the UN system and through the implementation of the UN-SWAP. However, we are concerned that the mandate of this Task Force is too narrow and will not focus on pressing issues about financing for gender equality in support of the 2030 Agenda.

The Task Force can play a pivotal role in achieving the SDGs by drawing on experts from within and outside the UN system to explore financing more broadly. This is of particular concern, since funding commitments to development and gender equality are being reduced and expenditures on official development assistance diverted. Moreover, policy emphasizing reduced fiscal space and applying austerity measures continue to threaten development programming and gender equality investments worldwide. It makes little sense for development and aid programming to focus on expanding women's rights and opportunities when macroeconomic and fiscal policy is working against these achievements, closing down investments in gender equality, restricting job growth and undermining institutions and laws that uphold rights.

The Task Force should also focus on domestic resource mobilization and budgeting, since they play an increasingly critical role in development expenditures and support is desperately needed by those inside government and in civil society to tap into those resources.

We believe that civil society, particularly women's and girls' organizations, must play a key role in this Task Force, through adequate input and representation. This is particularly important in a context where other allies and actors, including the private sector, are increasingly being drawn into UN processes and commitments.

We celebrate Your Excellency's demonstrated commitments to gender equality, and hope that you will consider expanding the mandate of the Task Force and mechanisms for civil society consultation. For further information, please contact Spogmay Ahmed at sahmed@icrw.org.

Sincerely,

Organizational Signatories

1. ActionAid International
2. Advocates for Youth
3. African Women's Development and Communication Network- FEMNET, Nairobi, Kenya
4. African Women's Rights Collective

5. Afrihealth Optonet Association [CSOs Network], Nigeria
6. Alliance contre la Pauvreté au Mali “AP/Mali”
7. Amnesty International
8. ARTS Foundation, Pakistan
9. Association for Dalit Women Advancement of Nepal (ADWAN)
10. Association for Women’s Rights in Development (AWID)
11. Association Malienne pour la Sauvegarde du Bien être Familial (AMASBIF)
12. Association pour le Développement Culturel (ADEC)
13. ATHENA Network
14. Bretton Woods Project
15. CARE International
16. Center for Egyptian Women’s Legal Assistance (CEWLA), Egypt
17. Center for Women’s Global Leadership
18. Centre for Social Justice, Lahore, Pakistan
19. Children and Young People Living for Peace, Nigeria
20. CHOICE for Youth & Sexuality, Netherlands
21. Christian Aid
22. CIVICUS: World Alliance for Citizen Participation
23. Community Initiatives for Development in Pakistan (CIDP)
24. Community Science Centre, Gujarat, India
25. Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd (Global)
26. Congregations of St. Joseph
27. Coordinadora de la Mujer, Bolivia
28. CREA
29. Destiny Makers Organization (DEMAO), Tanzania
30. Digital Rights Foundation, Pakistan
31. Dr Uzo Adirieje Foundation (DUZAFFOUND), Nigeria
32. Echoes of Women in Africa (ECOWA), Nigeria
33. Educating Girls and Young Women for Development, Zambia
34. Eniyan Development Initiative for Gender Justice
35. Equality Rights Alliance
36. Equidad de Género, Ciudadanía, Trabajo y Familia, México
37. European Network of Migrant Women (ENOMW), Europe
38. Feminist UN Campaign
39. FOKUS - Forum for Women and Development, Norway
40. Franciscans International
41. FRIDA The Young Feminist Fund
42. Fundación Arcoiris, México
43. Fundación para Estudio e Investigación de la Mujer (FEIM)
44. Gender & Development Network, United Kingdom
45. Gender at Work
46. Gender Equality Initiative in International Affairs, Elliott School of International Affairs at GWU
47. GESTOS- HIV, Communication and Gender
48. Global Citizen
49. Global Justice Center
50. Health, Entrepreneurship, Technology, Agriculture and Vocational Academic Development Initiative & Networks (HETAVAD SKILLS), Nigeria
51. Helen Keller International
52. International Center for Research on Women (ICRW)
53. International Federation of Business and Professional Women
54. International Presentation Association

55. International Women's Development Agency (IWDA)
56. International-Curricula Educators Association
57. Italian Association for Women in Development (AIDOS), Italy
58. JAGO NARI (Fighting For Women Empowerment), Bangladesh
59. Just Associates
60. Lagos Women 2030, Nigeria
61. LGBT Centre, Mongolia
62. MADRE
63. Make Mothers Matter (MMM)
64. Mama Cash
65. MenEngage Alliance
66. Nalwanga Resty SRHR programs, Uganda
67. NERDS RULE INC., San Diego CA
68. Network of Rural Women Producers, Trinidad and Tobago (NRWPTT)
69. National Federation of Women's Communities of Kyrgyzstan (NFFCK)
70. NGO- Kadesh International
71. NGO-Coordination post Beijing Switzerland
72. Niger Delta Women's movement for Peace and Development, Nigeria
73. Okogun Odigie Safewomb International Foundation (OOSAIIF), Nigeria
74. Oxfam International
75. PacwinAustralia, Australia
76. "Pacwin" Pacific Women's Indigenous Networks, Pacific
77. Pan African Network in Defence of Migrant Rights
78. Pan African Positive Women's Coalition
79. Pan African Positive Women's Coalition, Zimbabwe
80. Pari o Dispare, Italy
81. Poverty Elimination and Community Education (PEACE) Foundation
82. Regional Centre for International Development Cooperation (RCIDC)
83. RFSL, the Swedish Federation for LGBTQ Rights
84. Rutgers
85. Saferworld
86. Salamander Trust
87. Save the Children
88. Shirkat Gah - Women's Resource Centre, Pakistan
89. Sisters of Charity Federation - International
90. Social Welfare, Empowerment and Economic Target (SWEET), Barisal City, Bangladesh
91. Society for Conservation and Sustainability of Energy and Environment in Nigeria (SOCSEEN)
92. Society for Feminist Analyses AnA, Romania
93. Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries (Global)
94. Solidarity Center
95. Soroptimist International
96. South African Women in Dialogue
97. The Hunger Project
98. Trade Collective
99. Uganda Network of Young People Living with HIV & AIDS
100. UNESCO Etxea - UNESCO Basque Country Centre
101. Urgent Action Fund Africa
102. Vagahau Niue Trust, New Zealand
103. Vital Voices Global Partnership
104. WO=MEN Dutch Gender Platform
105. Womankind Worldwide, UK

106. Women Deliver
107. Women for Peace and Gender Equality Initiative (WOPEGEE), Nigeria
108. Women for Water Partnership
109. Women for Women International
110. Women of Reform Judaism
111. Women Thrive Alliance, USA
112. Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)
113. Women's Global Network for Reproductive Rights
114. World Union for Progressive Judaism
115. YWCA Netherlands

Individual Signatories

1. Jane Alver, Australia
2. Günseli Berik, Professor of Economics, University of Utah, USA
3. Beatriz Ramírez David, Colombia
4. Yasmine Ergas, Director, Gender and Public Policy Specialization, SIPA, Columbia University
5. Anne Marie Goetz, Clinical Professor Global Affairs, Center for Global Affairs, New York University
6. Usama Malik, Advocate High Court, Lahore, Pakistan
7. Nirja Mattoo, Mumbai, India
8. Sonya Michel, Professor Emerita of History, American Studies and Women's Studies
9. Mumtaz Mughal, Aurat Publication and Information Service Foundation (Aurat Foundation) Pakistan
10. Pam Rajput, MDS/WOMEN 2030
11. Kanti Risal, Nepal
12. Stephanie Seguino, Professor of Economics, University of Vermont
13. Sarah Suhail, Visiting Faculty National College of Arts
14. Hema Wihongi, Nga Kaiawhina o Wai 262 Aotearoa/New Zealand
15. Lesha Witmer, Steering Committee member (advocacy), Women for Water Partnership