HIGH LEVEL POLITICAL FORUM

THEMATIC REVIEW ERADICATING POVERTY AND PROMOTING PROSPERITY IN A CHANGING WORLD: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PERSPECTIVES

11 JULY 2017, United Nations, New York, USA

Statement Delivered by Şehnaz Kıymaz Bahçeci, Women for Women's Human Rights - New Ways

Dear colleagues,

As surprising it may be to some people that ONLY 8 people hold as much wealth as the poorest half of the world's population, it is not as surprising to hear that ALL of those 8 people are men. Unequal distribution of wealth, income, resources, inheritance and labor market opportunities discriminating against women are so entrenched in our society that we are not that suprised at the absence of women.

This is a reflection of patriarchy and of the systematic barriers that we as the Women's Major Group believe should be eliminated in order to ensure that SDG5, and all SDGs, are achieved by 2030.

This "obscene concentration of wealth" and its structural and systematic drivers is causing exactly the poverty we are trying to eradicate with Agenda 2030, and with women and girls disproportionately affected. Other systemic barriers include militarism and conflict, fundamentalisms, economic barriers to name a few. These barriers, like the Agenda itself, are universal and should be tackled in order to go beyond business as usual. While governments sometimes struggle to address the issues holistically, it is promising to know that there are civil society organizations that have been working for decades to overcome these barriers on local, national, regional and international levels - among our Women's Major Groups members as well as beyond:

In my country, Turkey, it was the women and feminist organizations that initiated and followed through the reform processes for both the Civil Code and the Penal Code in the early 2000s, ensuring legislation more in line with women's human rights and gender equality. Another WMG member, is driving awareness raising on SDGs in Africa, with a focus on Goal 5. Our colleagues in the Pacific are tackling effects of climate change and its interlinkages with gender equality. Other CSOs support women and girls so they can have a say in their sexual and reproductive health and rights. We have colleagues among us who are working relentlessly to prevent conflict and protect and empower women and girls affected by conflict, just to give a **very very** few examples.

We also work in alliance with other women's groups such as the Women Constituencies in related UN processes at global and regional level, enhancing our collective work. So, as you see, we are diverse, we are experienced, we are connected and we are strong.

However, we face challenges. We need the space and resources to continue our work, share our stories and successes and establish new partnerships at all levels. Agenda 2030 provides the framework for the actions and should open the space for cross-cutting and progressive work, as well as opportunities for collaboration. We are the connection of Agenda 2030 to everyone everywhere, the active agents and connections that can ensure that truly "No One is Left Behind."–Resources that directly reach women's and feminist organizations are crucial in this regard.

In order to ensure this connection and partnership, the voices of the women and feminist movements should be heard, amplified and for that we need structured and resourced mechanisms within Agenda 2030, and within the global and regional review mechanisms. As civic action, especially rights based civic action, and civic space is shrinking worldwide and are even criminalized in a growing number of countries, these voices are those who need the regional and international arenas to convey their messages, struggles and the solutions, as well as to remain vocal and impactful in their local and national contexts. Women's human rights defenders need an environment free from harassment, intimidation and violence so they can be the linkages of Agenda 2030 to the people and the planet it was developed for, for all of us, everywhere.

I thank you for your attention,