

Press Release on Leaders' Special Event on Women's Empowerment
OSAKA, June 29, 2019

Today, Leaders of Japan, Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Egypt, European Commission, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Spain, Thailand, United Kingdom, United States and Vietnam gathered in Osaka, for the Leaders' Special Event on the margins of the G20 Osaka Summit, with the presence of invited guests, H.M. Queen Máxima, United Nations Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development, and Ms. Ivanka Trump, Advisor to the President of the United States, together with the UN, OECD, IMF, ILO, ADB, WTO, WHO, WBG, UN Women, WPL and W20 to share our wisdom and experiences in paving the way towards our common goal of realizing gender equality and women's empowerment.

Gender equality and women's empowerment are essential for achieving inclusive and sustainable society and economic growth, and it is crucial that we continue our dialogue, follow-up on our commitments, and build momentum towards our endeavors.

Over the years, the G20 has recognized the importance of addressing this issue and the need for further action. Building on past discussions and commitments, three priority areas were highlighted under Japan's G20 Presidency, 1. Women's Labour Participation, 2. Enhancing Support for Girls' and Women's Education including STEM and 3. Engaging with Women Business Leaders and Women Entrepreneurs, with high-hopes of further advancing our efforts.

The following messages reflect the Leaders' respective national efforts and commitments towards realizing a world where 'women are able to shine.'

JAPAN

"The landscape of Japan will change dramatically with women's perspectives and active participation of women. They are a major engine that drives the future growth of Japan that faces declining population. We will create an enabling working environment for women by such measures as eradicating sexual and power harassment and reducing long working hours. Japan will provide quality education and training for at least 400 million women in developing countries over the three years by 2020 and will pursue international cooperation for women's empowerment."

- Prime Minister Shinzo Abe

ARGENTINA

"Fair and sustainable development can only be achieved by boosting women's and girls' empowerment. Argentina is fully committed to the elimination of gender disparities in employment, science, technology and education, and the protection from all forms of gender-based violence. Last

year in Buenos Aires we, the Leaders, adopted a gender perspective across the whole G20 agenda. Today is another stepping stone towards full inclusion of girls and women. Equality is closer. There is no turning back.”

- President Mauricio Macri

AUSTRALIA

“Women’s security and economic participation is essential for global economic prosperity.

We are securing Australian women’s economic opportunities by investing in STEM, economics and enterprise education, supporting women raising children and returning to the workforce, and providing assistance for financially vulnerable women. Australia’s female workforce participation is at record levels. We are on track to meet our commitment to the Brisbane 25x25 Goal, well ahead of time. Our record investments in women’s safety will help enable the full participation of women in Australian society. Gender equality and empowering women and girls is one of Australia’s six aid program priorities.”

- Prime Minister Scott Morrison

BRAZIL

“The Brazilian government is working daily to protect women’s rights. We are deeply committed to fighting all forms of violence against women and girls. Brazil is also determined to provide the means to increase female participation in the economy. We believe that strengthening the role of women in society is key to building a great and prosperous nation.”

- President Jair Messias Bolsonaro

CANADA

“When women have equal opportunities to succeed in the business world, they grow our economy and make our societies stronger. EMPOWER is about supporting women business leaders and entrepreneurs, creating economic growth, and staying competitive on the world stage.”

- Prime Minister Justin Trudeau

CHILE

“We urgently need more women as leaders because their devotion, passion and dedication is an inspiration for our society. Gender equality is essential to thrive, prosper and fully develop our potential. By empowering women and integrating them into the labor force, we will boost our capacities, productivity and opportunities. Chile is strongly advocating for these issues within APEC, because we believe in a society where men and women, maintaining our natural differences, have full equality of dignity, rights, duties and opportunities.”

- President Sebastián Piñera

EGYPT

“Empowering women is a top priority. Egypt’s recently launched 2030 Strategy for Women Empowerment sets several goals, notably economic empowerment. Promoting financial inclusion and participation in the labour force, including through SMEs are our main targets.

My government is also focusing on closing the gender gap in education, notably in STEM fields, to level the playing field for women. We are also spearheading programmes with fellow African countries to foster entrepreneurship among women, enabling African women to realize their full potential.”

- President Abdel-Fattah El-Sisi

EUROPEAN COMMISSION

“Empowering women is a priority for the European Union. Today there are more women at work in the EU than ever before. The European Commission has been at the forefront of action to reduce the gender pay gap, support female entrepreneurs and improve access to childcare. But we have more work to do as women still earn 16% less than men on average across the economy and are underrepresented in politics and on the boards of major EU businesses. We have to move up a gear. Empowering women means breaking down every single barrier to equality. Only then will we be able to reach our full potential and the economic benefits of an equal society.”

- President Jean-Claude Juncker

FRANCE

“Promoting gender equality is a global cause all of us must fight for and we thanks Japan for its leadership within the G20. France takes its part and wants to promote internationally girls' access to education and womens' empowerment. But we must also adress the issue of violence against women, especially in conflict areas and in the digital context. Besides, gender equality has proven to be one of the most powerful development factor and engine of growth. France has promoted gender equality as a top priority of its G7 presidency.”

- President Emmanuel Macron

GERMANY

“Countries can only succeed if women have equal opportunities and equal rights both in life and in the economy. Without equal participation of women and girls, we will not reach the SDGs. During the German G20 Presidency in 2017, we established the Women Entrepreneurs Finance Initiative (We-Fi) which is an important step forward towards closing gaps for women entrepreneurs in developing countries with respect to their access to finance, knowledge and networks. I encourage other countries which are not yet involved to join this important initiative.”

- Chancellor Angela Merkel

INDIA

"The Indian view to regard woman as inalienable half of Divinity reflects the age-old emphasis on equality of women and their centrality to our well-being. Today, their primacy in national development effort is reflected in Government's flagship schemes for proper sanitation coverage, smoke free kitchens, maternal health, entrepreneurial loans, universal health and housing and 'Save and Educate the Girl Child', as also in examples such as women propelling India's Mars Mission. They will continue to shape India's singular contribution to women-led empowerment."

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi

INDONESIA

"Empowerment of women is in the mainstream of Indonesia's foreign policy. As one of the Global Impact Champions for HeForShe campaign, I have a high commitment to strengthen women empowerment issues in all policies including in the economic and political fields. In the foreign policy for example, Indonesia is very active in campaigning the issue of women, peace and security with the aim to empower women as an agent for peace and tolerance. Only by having empowered women that we will see a better, more prosperous and peaceful world for all."

- President H.E. JOKO WIDODO

ITALY

"Gender equality is not only morally right, but also economically desirable for the sustainable development and the wellbeing of our societies. Women are an invaluable resource: safeguarding their rights, enhancing their access to education and their labour participation at the highest level will enable them to shine and benefit us all. As the Leaders of the G20, we have the responsibility to urgently scale up our long-term efforts to take the reins of change. Italy is ready to do its part toward this goal."

- Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte

MEXICO

"Realizing gender equality and the empowerment of women are priorities of the Government of Mexico, and indispensable elements of social inclusion and sustainable development. A recent constitutional reform mandates gender parity as an explicit goal across all levels and branches of government. Policies have been introduced to ensure access to health and social services for domestic workers, where women are an overwhelming majority. Effective partnerships and incentives to the private sector remain important to achieve further progress."

- Secretary Marcelo Luis Ebrard Casaubón

NETHERLANDS

"We are very pleased that Prime Minister Abe welcomes the 'W20 Acceleration Platform' for women's

empowerment. I fully support this platform, and thank the UNSGSA, Queen Máxima, for her continued constructive engagement with both the G20 and W20 on financial inclusion, especially inclusive economic development for women. The Netherlands has been at the forefront of the fight for equal rights for women for decades. Economic empowerment is the best way out of poverty, strengthening equality and inclusive economic growth.”

- Prime Minister Mark Rutte

SPAIN

“Gender equality is not just a matter of social justice but also a powerful engine for economic growth. We need to bridge gender gaps, promote women's access to decent jobs, and fight stereotypes, discrimination and harassment in the workplace. That is why Spain is introducing equal and non-transferable parental leaves and expanding quality public care services. We are also addressing the gender wage gap through greater wage transparency and the creation of a State Office focusing on the fight against discrimination.”

- Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez

THAILAND

“To achieve sustainable and inclusive development, we must also aim for gender equality through gender-balanced policies which actively support the multiple roles of women in society, including their professional choices, while eliminating discriminatory practices. We must ensure that all women are given equal opportunities with regard to education and the professions. Thailand will continue to promote women’s empowerment through strengthening relevant legislation, implementing gender-responsive budgeting and by supporting women’s participation in decision-making at all levels of society. “

- Prime Minister Prayut Chan-o-cha

TURKEY

“Women’s empowerment is a key in achieving Sustainable Development Goals. Thus, Turkey had initiated Women20 during her G20 Presidency. We believe access to vocational training, lifelong learning, STEAM education be enhanced and entrepreneurship policies should be envisioned for women on equal footing with men. Via “Strategy Paper and Action Plan for the Empowerment of Women”, we uphold women empowerment in the fields of education, health, economy, participation in decision-making mechanisms and media. Our target is to further increase women’s participation in the labour force.”

- President Recep Tayyip ERDOGAN

UNITED KINGDOM

“None of the world’s problems can be tackled effectively without empowering women. Today’s event

was an opportunity to discuss how the international community can protect and empower half our citizens. In the UK we have taken a number of steps to improve equality, including introducing gender pay gap reporting to ensure companies are held to account for wage disparities. It is only by unlocking women's potential that we will build a safer, more peaceful and more prosperous world."

- Prime Minister Theresa May

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