

# **Annual Session UN-Women Executive Board**

**Statement by  
Mr. Anjani Kumar  
Counsellor**

**18 June 2019**

Madam President,

My delegation would like to thank Executive Director Ms. Phumzile Mlambo-Nguka for her able leadership of the organization and her informative statement regarding the progress achieved in the implementation of Strategic Plan 2018-2021.

We congratulate Ms. Anita Bhatia on her appointment as the new Deputy Executive Director and Assistant Secretary-General for Resource Management, Sustainability and Partnerships and Ms. Hanna Kristjansdottir as Senior Advisor on Women's Leadership and wish them success in their new roles.

We are happy to note that during 2018, UN-Women was able to achieve its highest level of programme delivery. This is reflective of UN-Women's growing operational capacity and its ability to deliver growth despite the challenges in achieving gender equality and women's rights.

Madam President,

India has moved from women-focused development to women-led development. The import of this approach can only be understood in the context of the fact that India's women population is more than 640 million, and more than 400 million of them live in rural areas, this is nearly 62% of the total women population in India.

Following the landmark 73rd Amendment to the Indian Constitution in 1992, reserving 33% of the seats for women in all grassroots level – village, block and district level institutions, today India has 1.4 million elected women representatives. Women constitute around 44% of the total grassroots elected representatives. 43% of the elected heads of villages in India are women.

The Government of India is implementing a series of flagship programmes that focus on significantly expanding financial inclusion, healthcare, safety and security, education, employment, rural livelihood, entrepreneurship of women. To celebrate the girl child and enable her education, the Government of India launched the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' (Save daughter, Educate daughter) Scheme in 2015.

While the discourse on women's empowerment is progressing from viewing women as recipients of welfare benefits to mainstreaming their concerns and creating space for them to assume leadership roles, challenges remain. However, as one of the fastest growing economies of the world today, India is uniquely placed to deliver on its commitments to inclusive and sustainable development.

Madam President

India has been at the forefront of multilateral action in the implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. India is one of the foremost signatories to the Convention on Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Rights of the Child.

Combating all forms of discrimination and violence against women are integral to our national pursuit of forging inclusive society and development. The amendments to the Indian criminal law in 2013 and Sexual Harassment of Women at Work Place Act 2013 provides enabling environment for women to participate in economic activities. The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005 comprehensively addresses the issue of violence against women in the domestic sphere.

We believe that modern technologies can play an important role in our quest for promoting gender equality and women's empowerment. Enhanced use of ICTs for women in relevant areas would lead to bridging the gender digital divide and also ensure empowerment of women in all spheres.

Madam President

In India, UN Women has been working closely with the Government of India, civil society and other stakeholders for promoting gender equality. It has been working for greater participation of women in politics and decision-making. It is also working with the National Institution for Transforming India – the government think-tank, for ensuring that policies and budgets reflect the needs of women. It is also focusing on ending violence against women in all its forms, from domestic violence to trafficking to violence in public places.

We recognize that UN-Women needs funding that is stable, sustainable and predictable to enable it to focus and further strengthen its areas of comparative advantage. India has contributed more than US\$ 6 million to UN Women since its creation in 2010.

Madam President

We acknowledge the progress UN-Women has made so far and we encourage it to continue to strive for enhancing efficiency, transparency and accountability in its work towards achieving the goal of gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls.

I thank you.

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