

(Draft Closing Remarks)

Introduction

- Thank you for the invitation to offer some reflection at the close of today's event.

Gender equality, health and the 2030 Agenda

- Gender equality and women's rights are inextricably intertwined as critical elements for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals as they relate to the wellbeing of women, children and adolescents.
- The three objectives of the Secretary-General's Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health —Survive (end preventable deaths), Thrive (ensure health and well-being) and Transform (expand enabling environments)— establish a roadmap to bring about the change needed to create a more sustainable future.
- Today we have heard an array of impressive evidence building the case that realizing rights will allow us to ensure that women, children and adolescents everywhere not only survive, but thrive and fulfill their potential to transform the world by 2030.
- This includes progress on the two areas that are priority themes for this year's Commission of the Status of Women, women's empowerment and the elimination of violence against women and girls.

Event summary

- The panel discussion that just took place was beautifully steered by two inspiring youth advocates from different parts of the globe, whose work in women's economic empowerment and reproductive health activism embodies the values of the SDGs.

- We have heard about the leadership of the United Arab Emirates in supporting work to ensure that implementation of the Global Strategy reaches even the most challenging settings.
- We also heard of the tremendous accomplishments of Malawi in pushing the marriageable age to 18 years old, which will have profound impact on ending early marriage.
- We have heard of Australia's achievements in implementing policies to fight violence against women and to support women's economic empowerment, which in turn improves access to sexual reproductive health and rights.
- We heard how the SDG Advocates are mobilizing integrated action on Agenda 2030 from the highest levels, including specifically how education can result in better health outcomes.
- And we have been presented with a marvelous example of community mobilization in Brazil to overcome barriers to access to women's health services and hold governments accountable for promoting women's rights, which is especially meaningful in light of the unfolding Zika epidemic.
- All of these puzzle pieces - child marriage, education, economic empowerment, accountability, for example - together represent the "Transform" pillar of the Global Strategy.

Final remarks

- To conclude: Realizing women's rights and upending discrimination that affects the health of women, children and adolescents are essential to the success of the SDGs.
- I echo the Secretary-General's thanks to UN Women for co-organizing this event and recognize the important leadership the UN Agencies have provided through the H6 in support of the Every Woman Every Child movement.

- Today, the Secretary-General called on all partners to join the Every Woman Every Child movement to set the foundation for healthier, equal and more prosperous lives for generations to come.
- We encourage you to make commitments in support of the updated Global Strategy for Women's, Children's and Adolescents' Health and announce them at the 4th Global Women Deliver Conference in Copenhagen, the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul and the 68th World Health Assembly in May.
- I thank you for the opportunity of sharing these thoughts with you today, and hoping they result in tangible efforts to “Transform” our world over the next 15 years.