



## Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon UN Headquarters

15 March 2016

### Remarks at Every Women Every Child High-Level event co-organized with UN Women

Thank you very much for joining me at this important side event at the Commission on the Status of Women.

This is our busiest week for gender and women's issues at the United Nations.

For me, as Secretary-General, every week is a chance to stand for women's rights. Not even every week, every day!

During all my very extensive travels, I speak out for equality. And I make it a point to meet with the women, children and adolescents that we serve.

Ten days ago, I visited hospitals in Burkina Faso and Mauritania. I had the chance to see infants and speak with their mothers.

In Ouagadougou, I went to a pediatric HIV unit where I met a teenaged girl named Deborah.

She said they were suffering a great deal. And she spoke about how assistance and good will make the HIV-positive patients feel like others in society, without any distinctions.

She is only fourteen, but Deborah is already showing very impressive advocacy and leadership.

She is another powerful reminder of how this work has real meaning in people's lives.

As Secretary-General, I have strongly committed to improving the health and well-being of women, children and adolescents through the Every Woman Every Child movement.

The path to success is the path of human rights.

When we boost equality in schools, businesses and governments, we improve health and well-being.

For example, cutting child marriage by ten percent could reduce maternal mortality rates by more than two thirds.

Discrimination in society leads to discrimination in health.

Violence against women is another abomination – and a major public health threat. Up to one in three women suffers some form of violence in her lifetime. More than one in three women murder victims died at the hands of an intimate partner.

There are many other links between equality and well-being.

That is why the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development is integrated, indivisible and universal.

The Sustainable Development Goals are fully consistent with our Every Woman Every Child Global Strategy for Women's Children's and Adolescents' Health.

This updated Global Strategy will speed up momentum over the next 15 years. It has an initial five-year Operational Framework to support success.

This Strategy aims for a world where every woman, child, and adolescent not only survives but thrives. A world they transform with their immense potential.

Strong political leadership will be critical for success. Earlier this year, I formed a High-Level Advisory Group of world leaders to help guide progress in this area.

We need funding for results. For this we have the Global Financing Facility in support of Every Woman Every Child, launched in Addis Ababa in July last year.

The United Nations is focused on accountability. I have appointed nine experts to an Independent Accountability Panel to report on women's, children's and adolescents' health.

Every Woman, Every Child has already saved millions of lives. More than 40 countries and 120 stakeholders have committed to more than \$25 billion over the next five years to carry out the Global Strategy.

I call on all to join this major push for greater health, equality and prosperity in our world.

I urge everyone to make a new commitment to Every Woman Every Child – or renew an existing one. We have three opportunities this May: at the Fourth Global Women Deliver Conference in Copenhagen; at the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul; and at the World Health Assembly in Geneva.

I hope we have great promises of support – and even stronger action to keep those promises.

When we carry out the Global Strategy and realize the Sustainable Development Goals, we will transform our world for generations to come.

Thank you for your strong leadership and your commitment.