

CALL TO ACTION FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Gender Equality and Equal Rights for Women

Women's equal rights and empowerment are fundamental to achieving both human rights for all and sustainable development as laid out in the Sustainable Development Goals. We can only win the fight for a more just, equitable and sustainable future if we bring the abilities and potentials of everyone into play. Research shows that when women participate in peace negotiations, they tend to be more durable; when women serve in cabinets and parliaments, they pass laws and policies that are better for the environment and social cohesion; and when they sit on corporate boards, those companies not only generate just as much profit, but benefit people and the planet too.

Yet, women have historically been excluded from the table, through a maze of structural, attitudinal, and multi-layered obstacles. As the most pervasive and universal of inequalities, discrimination of women is deeply embedded in political, social, and economic barriers. Among most transformative and impactful actions to advance gender equality are to dismantle discriminatory laws and take bold action for equal representation and participation of women at all levels of society, in both public and private sphere.

In seeking to tackle these issues head on, the Call to Action:

- 1. Advocates for the elimination of discriminatory laws** – including through building alliances at national and regional levels – and shares good practices to inspire others to follow suit. A notable deliverable of the Task Team is a checklist that supports United Nations Country Teams to readily identify obstacles and entry points in a country's legal framework and enables a coherent UN approach to eliminating discriminatory laws;
- 2. Promotes the use of temporary special measures** to accelerate the inclusion of women across all sectors as a means to correct past and current effects of discrimination. A particular achievement of the Task Team is the development of Key Messages on Women's Equal Participation, which concretely details the positive measures the United Nations can take to support Member States, the private sector and others to achieve the goal of equal participation.

These objectives are reiterated in the Secretary-General's 'Our Common Agenda' report, which sets out a vision for the future of multilateral governance and calls for an interconnected response in tackling.

