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Statement by Ambassador Melanne Verveer, U.S. Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues and Representative of the United States to the UN Commission on the Status of Women, at the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, at U.N. Headquarters

Melanne Verveer

Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues New York, NY February 28, 2011

### AS PREPARED

Thank you. It is a pleasure for me to be here at the UN Commission on the Status of Women, especially as we usher in a new era for women's progress with the formal launch of UN Women. It was just a year ago in this forum that the CSW went on record to indicate its support for a new organization for the world's women. Today UN Women is a reality, with a dynamic, experienced, and distinguished leader, President Michelle Bachelet, as the new Under-Secretary-General. When he appointed her, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed that UN Women had been a "top priority" and "will promote the interests of women and girls around the globe." We thank the Secretary-General for his leadership, and I know we are all committed to working with and supporting UN Women so that it can achieve its full potential as a powerful institution for women's equality and empowerment.

I also want to recognize another groundbreaking appointment at the UN this past year

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However, despite the progress that has been made in increasing access to primary education, considerable gaps remain, particularly for girls. According to the Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 72 million children are out of school, and 54% of the unschooled are girls. In addition, although gender parity in primary education has increased over the past decade, a parity gap of 6 million still remains.	

The use of efficient cookstoves can dramatically reduce fuel consumption and exposure to harmful smoke. More efficient stoves also reduce the time people (usually women and girls) have to spend collecting fuel, which, particularly in areas of conflict, could also reduce the likelihood of their exposure to gender-based violence. Since stoves last for several years, the accumulated savings in time and cost can be invested back into families, communities, and economies.	

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