

SWEDEN



STATEMENT

by

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Excellence. Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sweden fully associates itself with the statement made by Denmark on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Today, Sweden reaffirms its strong commitment to gender equality and the rights and empowerment of girls and women. We do not believe that the challenges remain, it is increasingly clear that we must work together to ensure the commitment to moving us forward together. The right to eradicate poverty by ensuring property rights and the institutions of free markets, as well as ending gender inequality discrimination by vigorously defending and promoting gender equality.

Of the more than one billion women who live in extreme poverty in the world, 100 million can be found in rural areas, and of the 61 million people who are chronically hungry, 60 per cent are women. We face persisting and unacceptable gender disparities and gaps. The theme for this year's commission is "Women's Empowerment for Sustainable Development".

We know the challenges that face us, the path we need to take and the goals we need to overcome.

We know that not women face a world where they own only 1 per cent of the world's property.

We know that women have less access to credit and other financial services, particularly in rural areas.

We know that women suffer more than men from natural disasters, especially when it comes to sexual and reproductive health. One thousand women die or as a result of child marriage, complications at the end of the world, a risk that is twice as high in rural compared with urban areas.

Across regions, women in rural areas have one thing in common: they have a very little access to property, productive resources and opportunities, and they face major constraints in exercising their rights. This is particularly true for young women, minority women, women with disabilities, or women who face discrimination and marginalisation due to their sexual orientation or gender identity. Closing the gender gap in the fulfilment of human rights for everyone in rural areas would produce significant gains for society.

Sweden is firmly committed to this endeavour, as a member of the Commission, as a partner to UN Women, and by taking very seriously the task to mainstream gender equality, to work for the empowerment of women and girls – and to defend and realise their human rights. We believe that the UN Human Rights Council is

...to this end, which is yet to be fully explored. Sweden has presented its
...valid candidature to the Council for the term 2015-2019. I believe, women would be the
...these objectives relentlessly.

Chair,

I would like to thank the Secretary General for his report on the empowerment of
...women and their role in development and current challenges. Based on this
...can be a basis for a digital empowerment rural girls and women is an
...essential part of the solution to the global challenges of our time, and an
...essential part of the quest for a free and fair society. There is potential for
...reform in all countries in the world, including my own.

The main challenge for rural women today is not hunger or extreme
...poverty. But less than a century ago, Sweden was an underdeveloped rural country
...marked by poverty, poor health care, and limited economic opportunities for
...women. We have come a long way, but barriers to women's full and equal economic
...opportunities in rural areas still exist. Promoting entrepreneurship, creativity and non-
...stereotypical ways of living is necessary to encourage modern women and men to stay
...in rural areas.

All over the world, rural development is not as rapid as it could be due to the inability
...of women and girls to fully enjoy their human rights, including the right to health and
...education, and to act as economic agents and drivers of development.

Protecting and promoting the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women and
...girls remains a challenge in many countries. In developing countries, nearly half of all
...girls under the age of 18 have entered into an early marriage or early
...pregnancy. This limits their education, their opportunities and choices, and far too
...often, their ability to contribute productively to growth and sustainable development
...in their societies.

When women have equal access to productive resources and services, rural women
...can contribute more to economic growth. It is enough to lift 150 million people out of
...hunger. Women's contribution to total production also leads to improved nutrition and
...health for children.

Chair,

We need to continue to increase agricultural yields and rural development –
...and to invest in women farmers:

First, women's opportunities to own and control land and other property must be
...improved, as well as their access to credit, education and training.

Second, increased support must be given to education for women and girls and to
...their sexual and reproductive health and rights. It is fundamental both for their life
...choices and to their equal participation as economic agents.

Third, efforts must increase to fight stereotypical gender roles and gender-based
...discrimination and violence, including, but not limited to, violence against girls and boys.

The rural women of the world are a powerful force for change and development. The Secretary-General's report shows what we ought to do and which pathways will lead to gender equality and women's empowerment. Let us together send a clear message - gender equality is a human right that has not yet been fulfilled. It is an objective in its own right, and at the same time a condition for the empowerment of rural women.

Thank you.

