





It is still the case that every year, 287,000 women die from childbirth-related causes, 99 percent of them in developing countries.

From a human rights perspective, indeed from any basic moral standpoint, it is unacceptable that because of these disparities, women continue to die of preventable causes.

even though we know how important these extra years of schooling are for equal opportunities and participation in society.

In an attempt to achieve gender parity, enrolment rates in education were often given priority over quality in education.

There was little focus on the causes of high drop-out rates among adolescent girls, or the risk of sexual violence and other human rights violations that keep girls from attending and finishing school, and thus need to be addressed.

Despite some progress on halting the spread of HIV and AIDS, every year, nearly 600,000 young women are newly infected with HIV.

Over half the people in the world living with AIDS are women, and young women aged 15 to 24 continue to have HIV infection rates twice as high as young men.

And when it comes to the priority theme of this session, ending violence against women, this is the missing MDG that must be included in any new development framework.

As many of you know, UN Women recently hosted an expert group meeting on gender perspectives on the post-2015 development agenda, which brought together more than 60 diverse experts from all over the world.

And their voices were clear: any new framework must be *even stronger* on achieving gender equality.

We need a stand-alone goal on gender equality with gender mainstreamed across all other goals.

So, in these final years before 2015, let us not forget the commitments we made at the turn of the new millennium.

empowerment and gender equality a priority now, and in the post-2015 global development framework.

We are making progress and UN Women stands beside you as we move forward on empowerment and gender equality.

I thank you and look forward to our discussions.