Madame President, we are at a cross road for women’s rights and gender equality.

Looking ahead, 2020 is full of anniversaries. It marks:

- 25 years since the adoption of the Beijing Platform of Action
- 10 years since the establishment of UN Women
- 20 years since the adoption of UNSCR 1325
- 10 years to go to agenda 2030, and the implementation of SDG 5

Let us make good use of this momentum. To reinforce the focus on women’s rights and gender equality.

Women’s rights, including sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) are under pressure. It is sad to say, but I am not sure we would have agreed on the Beijing Platform of Action today.

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That we could not agree on a reference to SRHR in the paragraph on victims of sexual and gender based violence in the outcome document of this years’ CSW, is for us very illustrating -and truly disappointing.

Human rights defenders (HRDs) are under pressure, not the least, the ones standing up for women’s rights. The last report of the special rapporteur on HRDs focus in particular on the difficult situation and challenges of women human rights defenders.

There are, however, some positive developments as well. Norway together with the governments of Iraq, Somalia and the United Arab Emirates, as well as OCHA, UNFPA and the ICRC recently hosted an international conference addressing Sexual and Gender-Based Violence in Humanitarian Crises in Oslo.

The conference brought together SGBV survivors and specialists, members of 167 national and 76 international civil society organizations, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, representatives from 100 nations, global leaders and regional and international organizations. The participants outlined political, policy and best practice commitments to end SGBV and committed to provide a total of more than 363 million US dollars to SGBV prevention and response. On behalf of my government, let me thank UN Women and all participating member states for their valuable contributions to this successful venture.

Madame President,

we find ourselves in the middle of the implementation of the UNDS reform, and UN Women finds itself in the middle of many internal reforms, including the development of a new country typology and the headquarter review. We need to make sure to keep up the speed of these processes while also getting it right. We ask UN Women to keep the board updated on a regular basis.

We congratulate UN Women on its first annual report on the new strategic plan. It shows that UN Women is progressing, and is indeed making a difference on the ground. Thank you!

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