General Assembly
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Second Committee
Agenda Item 23 b) Women in development

H.E. Ms. Tine Mørch Smith
Ambassador
Deputy Permanent Representative

Chair,

We must ensure that all women and men are given the opportunity to reach their full potential. This is an essential basis for a prosperous world and for achieving sustainable development. We cannot achieve any of our goals if we leave half the population behind. There is ample evidence that countries where women play an equal and active part in political and economic life perform better on most indicators, including economic growth and sustainable development.

The Millennium Development Goals do not effectively address the underlying structural causes of gender equality. For the future, we need a stand-alone transformative goal relating to gender equality in the post-2015 development agenda. We should also ensure that gender equality is integrated into all development goals using targets and indicators. We support the conclusions and recommendations on this issue from the Secretary-General in his report on women in development.

The new development framework must be based on human rights. Every woman should be able to enjoy their rights, irrespective of age, social class, disability, sexual orientation or ethnic background.

The sexual and reproductive health and rights of all human beings must be reflected. Every girl and woman should have the freedom make her own decision on matters related to sexuality and fertility, without coercion, discrimination or violence. Every girl and woman should have the right to decide whether and when to have a child.

Access to birth control must be seen as part of the wider effort for better health and gender equality. This includes ending child marriages and forced marriages, preventing early

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pregnancies, increasing access to safe abortions, ending female genital mutilation and gender-based violence, improving maternal health, reducing HIV transmission, and offering comprehensive sex education to all boys and girls.

Chair,

The development needs of the least developed countries are a priority for Norway in our multilateral as well as our bilateral development cooperation. In this regard, I would like to highlight the recent High Level Meeting in New York on Sustainable Energy for All, initiated by Benin on behalf of the LDCs, and co-chaired by the President of Liberia and the Prime Ministers of Ethiopia and Norway. South-south cooperation is an important mechanism for achieving progress. Norway engages in south-south and triangular cooperation in many countries, either through multilateral channels or on a bilateral basis.

Thank you.