Statement UN Women board June 2016

Thank you, Mr. President,

Please allow me to comment on the annual report and some of the Netherlands priorities for maximizing effectiveness and efficiency in the UN system.

*General comments*

Mr. President,

The Netherlands thanks the Executive Director for her in-depth reports and her statement this morning. We appreciate UN Women’s role in advancing Agenda2030.

The Netherlands would like to compliment UN Women on the great progress achieved on the Strategic Plan outcomes as reported in the Mid Term Review. It is good to see that most impact indicators are shown to be either on track or achieved.

The Netherlands is worried to see that on Women’s economic empowerment impact indicators are off track. Women’s economic empowerment is one of the three priorities of the Gender policy of our Minister Ploumen and crucial to our Policy to move from Traditional Aid to Sustainable Trade. We promote Women’s economic empowerment through stand-alone projects to empower women and their organizations and through integrating women’s economic empowerment into our priority areas of Food security, Water, SRHR and Security and Rule of Law.

Important strategies for the Netherlands are:
- Supporting female entrepreneurship (SME level);
- Supporting more and decent jobs for women;
- Supporting private sector to invest more in WEE;
- Increasing access to resources like land, renewable energy, water etc.;
- Increasing access to SRHR.

We increasingly seek a holistic approach that takes account of the various building blocks that need to be in place to empower women (jobs, education and training,
SRHR, mobility, social protection and care facilities, access to resources and capital, protection against violence etc.). The Netherlands stands ready to work together with UN Women to achieve this common goal.

The Netherlands therefore repeatedly calls for a joint effort to prioritize SDG 10 for inclusive growth and development and focus on the most marginalized, especially women and girls as mentioned in SDG 5. After all, we have committed ourselves to leave no one behind.

Maximizing effectiveness for the UN system:

Mr. President,

The UN plays a central role in global governance. To remain relevant in a complex, fragmented world the UN must continue to invest in effectiveness and efficiency. Agenda2030 offers a perfect opportunity to agree on reforms. The UN needs a new way of thinking and acting: integrated, coherent and involving all possible actors.

The integrated nature of Agenda 2030 requires UN organizations to strengthen interagency cooperation and to deliver integrated and coordinated policy support. We recommend working in joint policy teams, with joint programming and joint implementation, and making use of standard operating procedures.

Agenda 2030 is too complex and too extensive to be the exclusive domain of the UN. Multi-stakeholder partnerships, including non-state actors to leverage expertise, capacities, technologies and resources are the only way to succeed. UN-agencies should play a key role but not “claim” specific roles for themselves.

Mr. President,

Inequality and poverty are major causes of conflict. The dividing line between humanitarian and development efforts is arbitrary. As one of the proud initiators of The Grand Bargain we call on the UN system to remove barriers and to improve cooperation and coordination amongst agencies and actors, support the capacity of local actors and integrate development and humanitarian needs assessment,
planning and implementation. Our part of the deal is to provide multi-year contributions, reduced earmarking and harmonized and simplified reporting requirements.

We cannot commend UN Women enough for their work for peace initiatives for Syrian women. As you have witnessed yourself madame Executive Director in May in Beirut, our joint project to foster political participation of Syrian women in the proximity talks in Geneva bears fruit. The involvement of Syrian women in the Geneva process is truly historic and unprecedented and we would encourage other donors to follow suit and support the Women’s Advisory Board politically and financially.

Mr. President,

To conclude we would like to reconfirm our commitment to UN Women as evidenced by our significant increase in core-contribution from 4 million euros last year to 7 million euros this year plus our continued contribution of 2 million euros per year to the Trust Fund to End Violence against Women.

Thank you.