



**PERMANENT MISSION
OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK**

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CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

THIRD COMMITTEE

ITEM 27: ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN

STATEMENT BY KATHRIN NESCHER, SECOND SECRETARY

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE PRINCIPALITY OF LIECHTENSTEIN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Madam Chair,

This agenda item is a challenging one – for its complexity alone. One would hope that, because it is 2016, we would no longer need to advocate for equal participation of women in the social, economic and political life of a country, women’s access to justice, girl’s access to education, or the right of women to know and decide for themselves what happens to and with their bodies. Yet, here we are.

In 2015, the Inter-Parliamentary Union found that only 17.7% of all government ministers in the world were women. Their most common portfolios include social affairs, education, family affairs and women’s affairs. The numbers for women ministers of defense, environment and foreign affairs has grown slightly but the numbers of women ministers for finance and budget has declined¹. We have growing evidence that women’s political participation improves decision making processes². The participation of women in parliaments has proven to broaden parliaments’ agendas and it has resulted in for example better childcare policies or the

¹ <http://www.ipu.org/press-e/pressrelease201503101.htm>

² <http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/leadership-and-political-participation/facts-and-figures#notes>

successful implementation of drinking water projects³.

Not only would women contribute to the diversification of political agendas, we also know that economies grow with an increase in women's access to higher education and higher female labor force participation⁴. The successful implementation of the 2030 Agenda goes hand in hand with the achievement of gender equality and women's empowerment, in the economic, the political and the social spheres.

Madam Chair,

Liechtenstein remains a strong advocate for the Women, Peace and Security agenda, which makes participation one of its three priorities. In conflict and post-conflict countries, gender equality and women's empowerment starts with women's full and effective participation in peace processes. Women are still often primarily seen as victims of conflict – and it is true that structural gender inequalities are aggravated in times of conflict, potentially exposing them to even more violence. But that does not define them. Women are powerful agents of change to ensure sustainable peace in the aftermath. We have data that proves that women's participation increases the probability of a peace agreement lasting at least two years by 20 percent, and by 35 percent of it lasting 15 years⁵. We call on everyone involved in current peace processes, and in particular in Syria, to make gender equality and women's empowerment, a priority. To put it in the words of a member of the Syrian Women Advisory Board: women may well be the backbone of the Syrian peace process. It was through this Board that the most diverse and representative group of Syrians was brought together in May this year to discuss inclusive and lasting peace in Syria.

UN Women recently organized a side event with some members of the Syrian Women Advisory

³ <http://www.ipu.org/pdf/publications/equality08-e.pdf> and <http://www.unwomen.org/~media/headquarters/attachments/sections/library/publications/2013/12/un%20womenlgthembriefuswebrev2%20pdf.ashx>

⁴ <http://www.oecd.org/employment/50423364.pdf>

⁵ <http://wps.unwomen.org/~media/files/un%20women/wps/highlights/unw-global-study-1325-2015.pdf>

Board – a group that was created to support the UN Special Envoy to Syria. The group does not participate directly in the negotiations; still it is considered a big step forward. Approximately 85% of the event audience consisted of women (myself included), yet the panelists talked not about their specific issues based on a small difference in their chromosomes but about the hardship of their daily lives in Syria and their efforts to bring peace to their country. Gender equality starts with the understanding that women are equal partners in every aspect of life. But even here at the UN, a trailblazer for gender equality and home of the very successful HeForShe campaign, we see a clear division of work when it comes to these issues.

Madam Chair,

The UN has played a crucial role in promoting gender equality and we thank in particular UN Women for their guidance and leadership. The resolutions in this committee have led to concrete progress in the advancement of women's rights on the ground. The Secretary-General designate Antonio Guterres won't have to break a glass ceiling himself but we call on him to support women all over the world in doing so and to continue the good work of this Organization. We also look forward to his strong leadership to further advance the representation of women in senior positions at the United Nations.

I thank you.