

**Norges innlegg i debatten om å fremme kvinners stiling FNs generalforsamling 10. oktober 2011**

Chair,

First of all let me congratulate the winners of this year's Nobel Peace Prize, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee and Tawakkul Karman.

The Norwegian Prime Minister, Mr. Stoltenberg, stated that "the three laureates have each made a distinctive contribution to the empowerment of women in their countries and helped to give women a voice. This gives hope and inspiration to all those who are fighting to promote equality and equal opportunities all over the world".

Needless to say, this year's award serves as a great inspiration for all of us.

Chair,

Lack of equality between women and men is not only one of the greatest challenges of our time – it is also the key to prosperity and development.

Today I would like to draw your attention to the World Bank Development Report. One of many reports emphasizing the correlation between equality and development.

The main message in this report is that gender equality is decisive for development.

Not only is *gender equality smart economics*, but it also empowers women as economic, political, and social actors and leads to *more representative decision making*.

This leads to *improved outcomes for the next generations*.

Reports from several international organizations over the past years have given us evidence of the imbalance between women and men economically, socially and in decision making in all parts of the world.

They also show the importance of equality as a prerequisite for development.

We know that the pace of future economical and social development for all depends on whether and to which extent women and girls are included in society in the same way as boys and men.

The World Bank report puts gender equality on the top of the global agenda. Norway applauds this.

Gender equality can not be treated merely as a side-event, a side-activity or an extra program – neither in a UN context, nor in the member-states.

Gender Equality must be mainstreamed, regardless of gender, physical abilities or sexual orientation, into all processes which concern our future development.

Chair,

UN Women will play an important role in this respect.

Norway is a strong supporter of UN Women and we have high expectations to what the organisation can achieve in partnership with member states.

We want to play a constructive, and if necessary, critical role as a partner for the new organization. This week Madame Bachelet is visiting Norway and will meet with our prime minister and 4 other cabinet ministers discussing equality issues. We look forward to discuss with her how UN Woman's priority areas of participation and end of violence can be implemented,

Chair,

Gender equality is also a cornerstone for an *environmental sustainable* development.

Norway would like to see gender equality as an integrated and mainstreamed issue not only in COP-17 in Durban later this year but also at Rio 2012 next year.

Global warming, climate changes and natural disasters constitute a threat to food security, to sustainable development and leads to migration.

These changes affect women and children differently from men.

Over the years the links between gender and environmental sustainable development issues are becoming more and more evident.

The report of the Secretary- General on improvement of the situation of women in rural areas (A/66/150) points out that there is a growing recognition that rural women are critical agents in poverty reduction, food security and environmental sustainability.

In many parts of the world women lack land rights, are not members of agricultural organisations and have no access to knowledge, technology and decision making in the agriculture sector.

Hardly any of the development funds are linked directly to gender.

Let me revert to the World Bank report which shows that over the past ten years only 0,001 per cent out of the World Banks total budget has been used on gender equality programmes.

However, the World Bank will from now on be mainstreaming gender equality into all their activities.

Chair,

Facts and figures does not only give us a picture of the imbalance between men and women in the world today – they also show us that the key to future development lies in mobilizing half

of the world's population made up by women and girls, by ensuring them the same rights and opportunities as boys and men.

Gender equality can only be achieved when men and women work together towards the same goals.

Thank you.