

# SWEDEN



## STATEMENT

on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden

by

H.E. Mr. Anders Lidén  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative  
of Sweden

at the Informal consultations of the plenary  
on United Nations System-Wide Coherence

**Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women**

United Nations  
New York

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- CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY -

Mr. Co-Chair,

First, let me say that I make this joint Nordic statement on behalf of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and my own country, Sweden.

Our Governments strongly support the recommendations in the High Level Panel report on System Wide Coherence for a new UN entity for gender equality and women's empowerment.

The need for strengthening the work of the UN in this area has long been highlighted by states, civil society as well as the UN itself. There is broad agreement that gender equality and the empowerment of women is key to the advancement of development, peace and security and human rights for all. The proposal by the High Level Panel is therefore both timely and urgent.

We commend the support the Secretary-General has given to create a single strong UN entity for gender equality and empowerment of women. We are also encouraged by the commitment expressed by many member states from all regions to advance this proposal. The President of the General Assembly has greatly inspired the momentum on this issue, including by providing an opportunity to debate gender equality issues in March of this year. We welcome the early steps taken by her to promote a broad based agreement among states on the establishment of the new entity.

The Nordic countries believe that time has come to take advantage of the momentum created over the last few months. We therefore encourage the two Co-Chairs to continue to show leadership and guide our consultations in the direction of a strong Gender Equality entity that can play a meaningful role in a UN system designed to meet the Millennium Development Goals as well as other challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

On some other issues the follow-up of the High Level Panel report on UN System-Wide Coherence is already under way, and existing processes and mechanisms should be used to the fullest extent possible, for example for environment issues, humanitarian issues and for issues related to the "Delivering as One" at country level.

We believe that there is broad support for moving the issue of gender equality and empowerment of women without further delay.

The High-Level Panel envisaged an entity which will bring together the policy and programming work on the one hand and the normative, analytical and monitoring work on the other.

The Panel saw a need for a stronger entity with the ability to fulfil the catalytic-programmatic role in the context of the work of the UN in the field for the purpose of extending support to countries in their national efforts. The new entity must also be able to fulfil policy and normative functions and support other entities within the UN system in their efforts to strengthen their work on gender equality and increase accountability at all levels. The latter is a prerequisite for the promotion of gender equality to remain the mandate of the UN system as a whole.

The Nordic countries support the Panel's proposals, including the proposal that the new entity should be headed by an Under-Secretary-General in order to have the stature it requires to perform its functions within the wider UN system.

The new entity will need significant and predictable funding in order to provide the change envisaged.

We are particularly satisfied with this morning's briefing by the Deputy Secretary-General. The orientation, given by the leader of the Interagency Task Force on gender equality, on the current status of this issue within the UN and the reminder of the rationale for reform, will prove helpful in moving the process forward.

Mr. Co-Chair,

Based on the High Level Panel report, the Deputy Secretary-General's briefing and today's consultations we would encourage the Co-Chairs to develop and table a draft resolution establishing the function, mandate and the full financial implications of the new entity. An early contribution by the Secretariat would help to advance our considerations, and we are encouraged by the readiness expressed by the Deputy Secretary-General this morning to provide such input.

We hope a draft resolution can be introduced without delay, and encourage all those who realize the indispensability of gender equality and women's empowerment for development and our common good to work for its early adoption.

We look forward to continuing our work with all of you in order to reach our goal, a strengthened UN system, which can assist Member states to advance gender equality in line with their national development priorities, by providing high quality technical support and capacity development.

Thank you