

Thousands converge on UN Headquarters to examine progress since historic women's conference; Secretary-General opens event for International Women's Day, 3 March

Ne York, 1 March 2010 UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon called for more action by world leaders to end violence against women and girls. In 1995, at the UN Conference on Women in Beijing, 189 countries adopted the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, committing to gender equality and women's empowerment over 15 years.

The Secretary-General said more than 50 countries have adopted national laws to combat violence against women. Some 54 countries have established national mechanisms to combat violence against women. In 2009, 12 countries had passed laws to combat violence against women.

“Today, we must continue to work together to end violence against women and girls,” he said. “We must continue to work together to end violence against women and girls, and to support the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.”

For the first time, the UN Secretary-General has issued a statement on the occasion of International Women's Day. He said, “The world must act now to end violence against women and girls. We must act now to end violence against women and girls, and to support the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.”

Many countries have made significant improvements in gender equality, from Germany to Malawi, from Mexico to Jordan. But much more needs to be done, and many countries still have a long way to go.

In commemoration of International Women's Day, the UN Secretary-General will host a special event on 8 March, **Equal Rights, Equal Opportunities: Progress for All.**

Dignitaries attending include Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, First Lady of Zambia, First Lady of Zambia, First Lady of Malawi, First Lady of Malawi, First Lady of Jordan, First Lady of Jordan, and First Lady of Costa Rica.

The UN Secretary-General will speak at the event, followed by a panel discussion. On the theme of Women's Day, the Secretary-General will speak about the importance of gender equality and the role of women in achieving sustainable development.

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