



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

between

the European Union

and

**the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality
and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women)**

Introduction

Considering that:

- (a) The United Nations made significant progress in advancing gender equality, including through landmark commitments such as the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). The UN General Assembly Resolution A/64/289 of 2 July 2010 establishes the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women).
- (b) Equality between women and men is a fundamental value of the European Union, enshrined in the EU Treaties, and one of its objectives and tasks, and mainstreaming the principle of gender equality in all its activities represents a general aim for the EU. Gender equality is also enshrined in Article 23 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. All EU actors, including the High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, have repeatedly affirmed their commitment to gender equality. The European Commission adopted the Women's Charter and the Strategy for equality between women and men (2010-2015) focusing on five priority areas
- (c) The European Commission has presented Communications to the Council and the European Parliament on "Building an effective partnership with the United Nations in the fields of Development and Humanitarian Affairs" (2001) and "The European Union and the United Nations: the choice of multilateralism" (2003).
- (d) The EU has defined its priorities with regard to gender equality, women's empowerment and the protection of the human rights of women including in its *Guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them* (2008), the *EU Plan of Action on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development, 2010-2015* (2010), the

Comprehensive Approach to the EU Implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 1325 and 1820 on Women, Peace and Security (2008) and complemented by the *Indicators for the Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security* (2010).

- (e) The long tradition of cooperation between the EU and the UN entities in charge of gender issues, particularly UNIFEM, by now merged into UN Women, paves the way for future work
- (f) The EU and UN Women hereby establish a strategic partnership in the field of gender equality and women's empowerment (hereinafter referred to as "the Partnership") with the aim of enhancing and increasing the effectiveness of both partners in their efforts to achieve their common goals and objectives in this field

Principles and objectives

- (1) Through this Memorandum of Understanding, the EU and the UN Women express their wish to mutually consolidate, develop and structure their cooperation in areas of common concern and decide to work together towards the shared goals of gender equality and women's empowerment. This Memorandum of Understanding forms the basis of the partnership.
- (2) The **principles** of the Partnership are:
 - respect for each other's mandate and enhanced complementarity
 - search for value added and best use of existing resources
 - result-orientation and mutual accountability towards gender equality and women's empowerment
 - a tailored approach to country-specific contexts
 - enhancing synergies among different initiatives promoted
 - inclusiveness, particularly with respect to civil society, including gender equality advocates and also taking in consideration the crucial role that men and boys play as actors and partners in promoting women's rights and gender equality.
- (3) The overall objectives of the Partnership are:
 - To make progress towards reaching the key international commitments in the area of gender equality and women's empowerment such as the MDGs, the Beijing Platform for Action, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) and the UN Security Council resolutions on women, peace and security;
 - To contribute to the transformation towards a world where societies are free of gender-based discrimination, where women and men have equal opportunities, where the comprehensive economic and social development of women and girls is ensured, where gender equality and women's

empowerment are achieved, and women's rights are upheld in all efforts to further development, human rights, peace and security

Building on the strong synergies between the two institutions, the **specific objectives** are in particular:

- To foster policy dialogue and close co-operation on policies and programmes pertaining to gender equality and women's empowerment
- To endeavour to support the implementation of policies on gender equality and women's empowerment in development
- To enhance regular and timely exchange of information, analysis and strategic assessments

(4) The objectives of the Partnership will be achieved through:

- Regular policy dialogue between the EU and UN Women
- Enhancing co-operation both at the level of headquarters and at country level
- Cooperation in the fields of policy, economic, political and human rights dialogues
- Conducting joint advocacy, including in joint meetings.
- Developing joint programmes in areas of common priorities, at global, regional and country levels
- Reciprocally invite each other to meetings and working groups relevant to their partnership
- Sharing of best practices and experiences.

Areas for cooperation and scope

The following areas of mutual concern - **in the context of EU internal and external policies on gender equality and in the context of the mandate and strategic plan of UN Women**- are set out as a starting point for the strategic partnership as well as the basis for elaborating a commonly agreed work programme. They do not exclude other areas as deemed useful by both parties.

Commission services and the EEAS will be closely involved in the implementation of this strategic partnership, in particular where it relates to cooperation with third countries and other relevant stakeholders.

(5) Gender justice, women's leadership and political participation

- To provide support aiming at increasing the representation and participation of women in political and economic decision-making.

- To provide support for gender responsive legislation and enhancing women's access to justice

(6) Women's access to economic empowerment and opportunities

- To enhance women's social and economic empowerment in the multiple dimensions of women's access to sustainable livelihoods, decent work and wealth creation
- To identify concrete actions to strengthen women's economic security and rights.

(7) Combatting sexual and gender based violence

To strengthen efforts to end all forms of gender-based violence, including violence against women and girls, including by strengthening prevention, providing support and protection to victims of violence and expanding access to services and to justice.

(8) Humanitarian aid

Support efforts for strengthening the gender dimension of humanitarian aid policies and programming and actions, including protection strategies against sexual and gender – based violence.

(9) Women, Peace and Security

To support the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolutions relevant to women, peace and security and the EU Comprehensive Approach to the implementation of such Resolutions

(10) Responsiveness of plans and budgets to gender equality

- To promote and support capacity development for the integration of a gender perspective into all policies and programmes to ensure that budgets and national plans are adequate for implementing gender equality commitments
- To support capacity development and exchange of good practices in gender mainstreaming in performance monitoring systems.
- To support the integration of gender in the aid effectiveness agenda at global and country level and strengthen coherence of supported technical assistance with gender equality and women's rights.

(11) Gender equality and women's empowerment in the context of global issues

Strive to support the inclusion of gender considerations in the policy and programming responses to current or emerging global challenges. Parties will endeavour to engage with a range of sectoral intergovernmental processes concerned with reflecting gender perspectives in global challenges.

- (12) The EU and UN Women will regularly at the appropriate level review progress of work in the priority areas of cooperation and to discuss policy, technical and operational issues related to furthering the objectives of the Partnership.
- (13) Possibilities of innovative cooperation mechanisms will be identified, including joint outreach via social media, joint communications, e-communications, staff exchanges and joint training. Possibilities for ensuring the involvement of various stakeholders, including civil society, will be identified
- (14) Funding aspects.

Financial assistance from the European Union in activities undertaken jointly with UN Women will be in accordance with the Financial and Administrative Framework Agreement between the European Commission and the United Nations, signed on 29 April 2003. The specific elements of financial cooperation will be discussed between the Commission and UN Women on a regular basis. The parties will consider possibilities of financial cooperation in areas agreed under the Partnership.

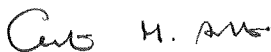
- (15) Duration:

The duration of the MOU is indefinite. However, the content of the partnership is to be reviewed every three years.

Done in 2 originals in the English language, in Brussels, on 16 April 2012.

For THE EUROPEAN UNION

For UN WOMEN



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MICHELLE BACHELET
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Annex

EU reference documents:

- The European Consensus on Development (2005) (2006/C 46/01)
- EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them (2005) CL10-048EN
- Commission Communication on Thematic Programme for the promotion of democracy and human rights worldwide under the future Financial Perspectives (2007-2013) (January 2006)
- European Parliament Resolution on the situation of women in armed conflicts and their role in the reconstruction and democratic process in post-conflict countries (June 2006) 2005/2215(INI)
- Commission Communication on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in development cooperation of (8 of March 2007) COM(2007) 100
- Commission Communication on promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in development cooperation of (8 of March 2007), SEC(2007) 332
- Council Conclusions on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Cooperation (2007) 9561/07
- The European Consensus on Humanitarian Aid (2007) (referring to gender integration, special attention to and participation of women, and protection strategies against sexual and gender-based violence) 2008/C 25/01
- The EU Comprehensive Approach to the EU implementation of the UNSCR 1325 (and 1820 on women, peace and security (December 2008) 15671/1/08 REV 1
- Council Conclusions on EU guidelines on violence against women and girls and combating all forms of discrimination against them (December 2008)
- Council Conclusions on European Security and Defence Policy - Human Rights; Gender and Children Affected by Armed Conflict (May 2009) 10019/08
- The Women's Charter (March 2010) COM(2010)78
- EU strategy for equality between women & men (2010-2015) COM(2010) 491
- Council Conclusions on the Millennium Development Goals for the United Nations High-Level Plenary meeting in New York – EU Action Plan for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment 2010-15 (June 2010)

- Indicators for the Comprehensive approach to the EU implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1325 and 1820 on women, peace and security
- Council Regulation (EC) No 1257/96 (no reference to gender as such but states in Article 1 "help people in third countries, particularly the most vulnerable among them")
- Joint Communication to the European Parliament and the Council on Human Rights and Democracy at the heart of EU External Action – Towards a more effective Approach COM(2011) 886 final of 12.12.2011

A gender review commissioned by the European Commission and available on its website:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/secretariat_general/evaluation/docs/final_aer_2009_en.pdf