G20 MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Chair's Statement

**Gandhinagar, Gujarat, India
2-4 August 2023**

We, the G20 Ministers responsible for gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls from G20 members, guest countries, and representatives from international organizations as well as high-level representatives of the official G20 engagement groups and initiative viz., G20 EMPOWER, met in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 02-04 August 2023, under India's G20 Presidency's theme, "One Earth, One Family, One Future."

At a time when the world is facing multidimensional crises, we reaffirm our commitment to achieving gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls. The following actions taken in this regard will help accelerate progress on all the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

1. We note with concern and are fully aware that gender discrimination, sexual and gender-based violence, lack of supportive policy interventions and structural support, pre-defined harmful social biases, negative social norms, discriminatory laws or lack of enforcement of relevant laws, under-representation in leadership positions, as well as lack of access to and control over resources in many countries are still holding all women and girls back from enjoying their human rights and reaching their full potential.

2. We recognize the importance of overcoming the structural barriers which worsen the existing gender gaps and challenges. To this extent, we call for a paradigm shift in gender roles by equally recognizing all women and girls as active and positive agents of change to ensure their full, equal, effective, and meaningful participation as decision-makers in addressing global challenges effectively, decisively, and inclusively. As Ministers for Gender Equality / Heads of Delegation, we underline that progress in gender equality is not a women's issue alone, but needs to be taken forward by all.

3. We believe and emphasize that without the heightened commitment and concrete action of the G20 members in applying a decisive gender-mainstreaming approach, achieving gender equality, women's empowerment, and women—led development will remain an unrealized goal. In this regard, we welcome the adoption of the "G20 Action Plan on Sustainable Development through Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women" at the G20 Development Ministerial.

4. Ensuring that no one is left behind, we call on all the relevant G20 working groups within their respective mandates to commit to advance existing and new G20 collective actions regarding gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls to help bring on track and accelerate progress towards timely, full, and effective implementation of the 2030 Agenda and achieve equitable, inclusive and sustainable development for all women and girls by (i) enabling safe and equal access to quality education, skills training, decent work, and social protection; (ii) bridging the gender digital divide (iii) eliminating gender biases and promoting gender-equal

representation in leadership and other decision-making roles at all levels, including at grassroots levels, (iv) promoting meaningful gender-equal participation and leadership in climate change mitigation, adaptation actions, and disaster risk reduction; (v) facilitating access to safe and adequate nutrition and food security.

5. We appreciate the theme of 'Women-Led Inclusive Development at the Cusp of Inter-Generational Transformation' chosen for the G20 Ministerial Conference on Women Empowerment during India's G20 Presidency and to advance gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls by encouraging all the relevant G20 working groups to continue to prioritize the following areas of focus within their respective mandates: (i) Education, a game-changing pathway to Women's Empowerment; (ii) Women's Entrepreneurship, a win-win for Equity and Economy; (iii) Creating a Partnership for Promoting Women's Leadership at all Levels including at the grassroots; and (iv) Women and Girls as Change-makers in Climate Action with Digital Skilling underpinning the aforementioned priorities.

6. Education, a Game-changing Pathway to Empowerment of All Women and Girls

We recognize the crucial impact of education in empowering and transforming the lives of all women and girls and call upon all responsible on the need to:

i.   Increase investment for improving access to (i) affordable, inclusive, equitable, safe, and quality education, including in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) and vocational education for lifelong learning, (ii) skilling, upskilling, reskilling, and mentoring programs, (iii) foundational literacy, and (iv) financial literacy; and encourage greater enrolment of all women and girls in STEM education.

ii.   Address harmful gender norms and stereotypes present in the education curricula through inter alia gender-responsive parenting and teacher training strategies as well as creation of spaces free of violence.

iii. Bridge the gender digital divide and enhance the participation by women in the digital economy through initiatives and measures that focus on (i) improving access to affordable, safe, and quality digital technologies, including connectivity; (ii) investing in digital literacy and skills training; (iii) addressing and preventing potential risks for all women and girls in the digital world that can occur due to harmful gender-bias, for example in AI and algorithms, which perpetuate gender-prejudices and stereotypes (iv) promoting strategies to eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in public and private spaces, online and offline; and (iv) increasing active participation and employment in fields that use digital and emerging technologies, like Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, for promoting exchange of best practices, offering role models and using "champions" to encourage this change. In this

regard, we take note of the United States' Women in the Digital Economy Initiative, a collaborative effort to accelerate progress toward closing the gender digital divide.

iv. Remove all potential risks that all women and girls encounter from increased digitalization, including all forms of online and offline abuse, by adopting safety-by-design approaches in digital tools and technologies.

v. Reduce gender gaps in all relevant socio-economic sectors by (i) accelerating progress to achieve equal pay for equal work and work of equal value, ensure decent work, and high-quality jobs across all sectors, including women's equal opportunities in leadership and decision-making roles; (ii) addressing and eliminating sexual and gender-based violence, including domestic violence, and sexual harassment in the world of work across all sectors of the economy; (iii) ensuring access to safe and equal access to public infrastructure, including public transportation, and public spaces to promote access to education and employment opportunities; (iv) promoting investment in the availability and accessibility of affordable care infrastructure while also addressing unequal distribution of unpaid care and domestic work for facilitating the participation of all women in education and in the world of work; (v) providing gender-responsive social protection; (vi) supporting adequate social, educational, and care services and policies, both from the public and the private sectors, to support women in balancing their careers and family choices and encourage men to share the workload.

vi. Promote collection, availability, and usage of evidence-based disaggregated and intersectional data to ensure that no one is left behind, and address biases in the availability of representational data on all women and girls and account for their personal data protection and privacy.

7. Women's Entrepreneurship, key to Equity and Economy

To eliminate existing gender gaps and challenges restricting the expansion of all women and girls in entrepreneurship, there is a need to:

i. Promote women's financial inclusion by integrating all women, particularly women entrepreneurs, and MSMEs owned and led- by women into the formal financial system; and by strengthening their access to low-cost, convenient, need-based, and sustainable finance, including through digital finance and other tailored financial services, such as microfinance.

ii. Strengthen access to markets, including global value chains, to increase the visibility of businesses led by women.

iii. Facilitate capacity building and skills training, including networking and mentorship opportunities to build an enabling ecosystem for all businesses owned and led by women.

8. **Promoting Partnership for Promoting Leadership at Grassroots**

We acknowledge the significance of removing structural barriers that restrict participation of all women in leadership and decision-making roles at the grassroots level by:

    i.   Designing public policies and encouraging private sector contribution towards promoting equal representation of all women in political systems and governance.

    ii.   Recognizing women's rights organizations as one of the important pathways to advance gender equality and sustainable development, and supporting these organizations for ensuring quality implementation of gender-responsive policies and programmes.

9. **Women and Girls as Change-makers in Climate Action, Food Security & Nutrition**

We recognize the importance of enhancing the role of all women and girls as changemakers in building climate resilience by:

    i.   Designing gender-responsive frameworks and policy interventions and promoting investments to support and scaleup efforts on climate resilience.

    ii.   Promoting women's participation, leadership, and decision-making in climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction strategies including finance preparedness policies and plans.

    iii.   Encouraging collection and use of disaggregated data to address the disproportionate impact of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution on all women and girls.

    iv.   Facilitating gender-responsive and climate- and environment-resilient solutions, including water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) solutions, to mitigate the impact of climate change and ensure disaster risk reduction.

    v.   Promoting engagement with grassroots women's rights organizations for improving food security and nutritional outcomes, and combating all forms of malnutrition such as stunting, wasting, obesity, micronutrient deficiencies, and diet-related non-communicable diseases. In this regard, the importance of deployment of technology for monitoring nutrition services and early childhood care service delivery for pregnant women, lactating mothers, adolescent girls and children was emphasized. We take note of India's POSHAN tracker, a unique digital platform which seeks to digitize data related to malnutrition and service delivery allowing for near-real time monitoring and enabling policies for targeted intervention.

10. Recommendations of G20 EMPOWER Initiative and W20

i. The G20 Alliance for the Empowerment and Progression of Women's Economic Representation (EMPOWER) presented its recommendations to the G20 members under its four priority areas viz. education, leadership, entrepreneurship, and digital skilling. The G20 EMPOWER Initiative delivered a Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Dashboard, Best Practices Playbook, Pledge for EMPOWER Advocates, and the G-20 Empower Communiqué. The outcomes of the G20 EMPOWER during India's Presidency include a Digital Inclusion Platform and listing of Inspirational Stories on the G20 EMPOWER website.

ii. W20 recommended G20 members to advance their previous commitments under the 2022 Bali Leaders' Declaration, the "G20 Roadmap Towards and Beyond the Brisbane Target" for improving women's access to decent work and employment opportunities. W20 urged G20 leaders to develop and improve National Gender Strategies utilizing gender-disaggregated data and recommended each G20 member to establish a national 'Annual Review Mechanism', bringing together all key stakeholders and respective members of national W20 delegations to evaluate the progress, gaps, and challenges. Furthermore, W20 recommended the creation of an Annual G20 'Reporting & Review Mechanism' to track implementation and the impact of the commitments involving all women and girls and the results at the G20 level.

11. Geopolitical Issue

i. The war in Ukraine has further adversely impacted the global economy. There was a discussion on the issue. We reiterated our national positions as expressed in other fora, including the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, which, in Resolution No. ES-11/1 dated 2 March 2022, as adopted by majority vote (141 votes for, 5 against, 35 abstentions, 12 absent) deplores in the strongest terms the aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine and demands its complete and unconditional withdrawal from the territory of Ukraine. Most members strongly condemned the war in Ukraine and stressed it is causing immense human suffering and exacerbating existing fragilities in the global economy — constraining growth, increasing inflation, disrupting supply chains, heightening energy and food insecurity, and elevating financial stability risks. There were other views and different assessments of the situation and sanctions. Recognizing that the G20 is not the forum to resolve security issues, we acknowledge that security issues can have significant consequences for the global economy.[1]

ii. It is essential to uphold international law and the multilateral system that safeguards peace and stability. This includes defending all the Purposes and Principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and adhering to international humanitarian law, including the protection of civilians and infrastructure in armed conflicts. The use or threat of use of nuclear weapons

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[1] Russia disassociates itself from Para 11(i) due to its distinct view on the issue and from a few definitions in the text.

is inadmissible. The peaceful resolution of conflicts, efforts to address crises, as well as diplomacy and dialogue, are vital. Today's era must not be of war.

12. Way Forward

We reaffirm our strong commitment to eliminate gender-based discriminations and to close the gender gaps across all development areas, including education, entrepreneurship, leadership, and climate resilient action. To this end, we strive for greater collaboration and cooperation to further the agenda of women- led development. We urge proactive measures for effective development and implementation of gender-responsive development policies. We call upon governments, international organizations, institutions at all levels, and all individuals—including men and boys—to operationalize the 2023 G20 theme of the Ministerial Conference for Women Empowerment to ensure full, effective, and meaningful participation of all women and girls as active agents of sustainable development to accelerate progress on the SDGs.

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