COMMITMENT STATEMENT BY
H.E. LYONCHHEN TSHERING TOBGAY
PRIME MINISTER OF THE KINGDOM OF BHUTAN
GLOBAL LEADERS’ MEETING ON GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S
EMPOWERMENT
70th session of the UN General Assembly
United Nations, 27 September 2015, CR4

Co-Chairs,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

1. Twenty years ago, in the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, we made a
solemn pledge to ensure equal rights and opportunities for women and girls so that
they can live their lives free from want, fear and violence.

2. Since then, we have seen notable improvement in the lives of women and girls
throughout the world.

3. In Bhutan, we have made significant achievements in all 12 Critical Areas of the
Beijing Platform for Action through initiatives such as:

   • instituting gender mainstreaming in our Five Year Development Plans;
   • establishing an autonomous National Commission for Women and Children; and
   • passing the Domestic Violence Prevention Act to combat violence against
     women.

4. However, there is still much to be done, globally and in my own country, to achieve
the vision of the Beijing Platform of Action.

5. Even as we speak, the brunt of political and economic crisis, poverty and wars
globally are born by women, girls and children.

6. Her Majesty the Queen Mother Ashi Sangay Choden Wangchuck of Bhutan in her
Key Note Address on Gender Equality & Women’s Empowerment at UN ESCAP in
Bangkok last year underscored:

   • That violence against women is not only a scourge but also a barrier to peace,
     progress and democracy.
   • And that actions and interventions must address the patriarchal divisions of
     power, oppressive gender roles and the unequal valuing of women and girls.
7. With the adoption of the 2030 Agenda, the international community has a unique opportunity to ensure that addressing gender issues remain at the forefront of sustainable development.

8. To further strengthen the rights that women traditionally enjoy in Bhutan and to build on the progress we have made in addressing gaps, I pledge my Government's full commitment to the accelerated implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and to the realization of the gender equality goals and empowerment in the 2030 agenda.

9. More specifically:

a) We commit to support ongoing initiatives to increase representation of women in governance and decision-making at all levels. For this, we have commenced extensive nation-wide consultations to explore measures to encourage women's participation in politics.

b) We commit to strengthen targeted programs for the economic empowerment of women. This is critical to address the persistent burden of poverty on women and effectively remove inequality in economic structures and policies.

c) We commit to enhance investments in programs that ensure equal access in the critical areas of education and training, and health care for women.

d) We commit to render full support to agencies and CSOs that combat violence against women and girls.

e) And, we commit to promote programs and policies that strengthen the role of women in the management of natural resources and in the safeguarding of the environment.

In conclusion, I thank the People's Republic of China and UN Women for organizing this important event in conjunction with the United Nations Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda.

Thank you and Tashi Delek!