

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Katalin Bogyay
At the Circle of Women Ambassadors Luncheon**

10 April 2017

Hungarian Mission to the UN

Your Excellency Executive Director,

Ms Senior Adviser,

Mr Deputy Secretary General,

Dear Fellow Ambassadors, Dear Friends,

It is a great honor and pleasure to organise today's Circle of Women Ambassadors gathering together with UN Women, and I am honoured and proud to be able to welcome Her Excellency Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka and the distinguished delegation from UN Women here, at the Hungarian mission, to discuss the role of women in prevention.

Hungary, and personally I have also been supporting the work of UN Women since its foundation. I had started working with its first Director, Former President of Chile Michelle Bachelet, in my former capacity as President of the General Conference of UNESCO. During that presidency, gender equality was one of my priorities for the two-year period – at that time, there was no mention of the SDG Target 5, of course.

The Salon itself that I launched in 2015, in the name of Bridge building and cultural exchange, is also part of this effort. I organised the first Circle of Women Ambassadors in March 2015, because I think it is important for all the women Permanent Representatives and Ambassadors to meet and get to know each other. Last fall, President of the General Assembly Peter Thomson was the special guest of the event, and we talked about SDG 5 and the Global push for gender equality.

Today, we are going to discuss the role of women in preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention and sustaining peace.

This is a multi-faceted issue, because there is a wide array of field where women has a key role to play, through their knowledge and experience, and also their – our – capacity of bridge building, understanding, listening, and creating a real dialogue among the parties, be it in a conflict situation or within the UN.

It is also crucial to go beyond the protection of women and girls in conflict situations, and putting women's meaningful participation and leadership in decision-making processes at all levels to the heart of peacebuilding efforts, throughout the conflict cycle, because sustainable peace can only be achieved with women.

Besides armed conflicts, women have to face multiple other threats, including human trafficking or modern day slavery. Hungary plays an active role in promoting global action to tackle these challenges.

And prevention goes beyond the issue of peace and security.

Women play a pivotal role in water diplomacy. Hungary is co-moderating, with Tajikistan, a working-level dialogue on improving the integration and coordination of the work of the UN on the water-related goals and targets under the sustainable development pillar, with particular emphasis on the 2030 Agenda, and my priority is to focus on women within the water agenda.

The **fight against stereotypes** plays a key role in this respect. Where women are respected, valued parts of a society, where they have a meaningful role to play and their achievements are appreciated, the whole society benefits from it. For example, the promotion of **women in science** is a key issue. I am proud to be the patron of the “women in science” movement at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, aimed at strengthening the participation and promotion of women in research and the academic field. Every year, we attribute the award “Women in Science Excellence Award” to the most outstanding female members of the scientific community.

I always invite outstanding women, role models to our gatherings. I am happy to have Chess Grandmaster **Judit Polgár**, who has been nominated UN Women Global Champion Planet 50-50 last year, for being an example for women and girls whose dreams are to excel in a male-dominated field.

Prevention is also possible through the power of **art**. The Hungarian Mission held an exhibition entitled “Painted Dreams” during the high-level week of CSW, presenting the artwork of six Hungarian Roma Female artists. These extraordinary women used their talent to fight the multiple discrimination they are facing, and promote inclusion and peace in their community.

Dear Colleagues,

What we promote globally, we have to promote among ourselves, here, at the UN as well, and we are all proud to have great women Ambassadors taking the initiative in this regard. Gender parity has to be at the heart of our agendas, and we are grateful for H.E. María Emma Mejía Vélez, the PR of Colombia, for taking leadership on this issue. Another important initiative is the **Gender Champion Initiative** led by Switzerland - I am proud to say that at the Hungarian Mission, the majority of the diplomats are women, and we make sure to have women on all panels organized by our Mission. Moreover, we stand up for balancing work responsibilities, life and family roles, and the Hungarian Government has many valuable policies in this regard.

We have great women as presidents of the Third and Fifth Committee, María Emma Mejía Vélez from **Colombia**, and H.E. Inga Rhonda King, PR of **St. Vincent and the Grenadines** – both of whom are among the first women elected as presidents of these committees.

H.E. Ms. Gillian Bird from **Australia** is co-chairing the General Assembly and ECOSOC alignment on 2030 Agenda consultations. H.E. Mrs. Lana Zaki Nusseibeh from the **United Arab Emirates**, who unfortunately cannot be here today, is the President of UN-Women Executive Board for 2017.

Moreover, the co-moderators of the review of the Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons are Mrs. Catherine Boura from **Greece** and Ms. Alya Ahmed Saif Al-Thani from **Qatar**. The main voice at Friday’s commemoration event of the tutsi genocide was Ms. Valentine Rugwabiza of Rwanda.

Finally, I would like to seize this opportunity to thank, in my capacity as chair of the Committee on Conferences, for Ms. Catherine **Pollard**, Under-Secretary General for General Assembly and Conference Management for her work. Also, dear Cristina Gallach, we have organized together the 2016 Holocaust Remembrance Day, and the 2016 UN Gala evening - thank you for your outstanding work.

In conclusion, the world has to pay more and more attention to what women ambassadors do. Because they act with focus, intellect, professional expertise and care, and they are not afraid of the human voice. If we all unite our knowledge, force and talent, we can make the world listen to us and remember us.

Thank you.