



UNITED NATIONS

Secretary-General
Ban Ki-moon

New York, 8 March 2012 - Joint announcement by the President of the General Assembly and the United Nations Secretary-General on the occasion of the International Women's Day

The President of the United Nations General Assembly, Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, and the Secretary-General of the United Nations would like to jointly propose the convening of a Global Conference on Women by the United Nations in 2015, 20 years after the last women's summit in Beijing.

Given that women make up half of humanity and given the importance and relevance of women's issues for global progress, it is high time that such a world conference is convened. It is all the more important because of the enormous changes the world is going through, with both positive and other implications for women.

The President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General feel confident the international community will welcome this joint initiative. They also hope that the Member States, who have the final authority to convene the proposed conference, could take the necessary steps during this 66th session of the General Assembly.

They believe that the high point that the United Nations reached with the establishment of UN Women in 2011 can be meaningfully substantiated with a global programme focusing on women that can be articulated at the Fifth Conference.

The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, in 1995, adopted the current Forward-Looking Platform of Action. The Beijing summit was preceded by three world conferences, beginning in 1975 in Mexico City, and followed by Copenhagen in 1980 and Nairobi in 1985.

The enthusiasm of civil society, particularly women's organizations, for such a conference has added extra strength to the general support expected for today's proposal.

The President of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General believe that a world conference on women could review the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. They also believe it could tackle emerging issues, in particular those relating to women and political participation, UN Security Council Resolution 1325 that deals with women and peace and security, equal access to decent work and to decision-making and the involvement of rural women and girls. It could also cover aid effectiveness, food security, trafficking, drugs, migration, environment, climate change and information technology, all of which make an impact on women, and on nations and societies as a whole.

In all these matters, the role and involvement of young people, particularly women, would add an important dimension that was not properly reflected at earlier conferences.