

# New UN Women's Head Lays out 100-day Action Plan

UN Women Executive Director Michelle Bachelet

24 January 2011 – The head of the new United Nations agency promoting women's rights and full participation in global affairs laid out a 100-day action plan today, embracing a full spectrum of issues from supporting national partners to promoting coherence within the UN system.

"Women's strength, women's industry, women's wisdom are humankind's greatest untapped resource," the Executive Director of UN Women, Michelle Bachelet, a former president of Chile, told the first regular session of the agency's executive board. "The challenge then for UN Women is to show our diverse constituencies how this resource can be effectively tapped in ways that benefit us all."

Stressing the need to "balance ambition with common sense," Ms. Bachelet said UN Women would focus on five core principles: enhancing implementation of international accords by national partners; backing intergovernmental processes to strengthen the global framework on gender equality; advocating gender equality and women's empowerment; promoting coherence with the UN on the issue; and, acting as a global broker of knowledge and experience.

UN Women – known formally as the UN Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women – was established by the General Assembly in July last year, with the merger of four former UN agencies and offices: the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the Division for the Advancement of Women (DAW), the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues, and the UN International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (UN-INSTRAW).

The new agency is set to receive a large boost in funding and be formally launched on 24 February during the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women, the global policy-making body dedicated exclusively to gender equality and the advancement of women.

"I am determined that UN Women will be a catalyst for change, offering new energy, drawing on long-standing ideas and values, and bringing together men and women from different countries, societies and communities in a shared endeavour," Ms. Bachelet said.

She noted that UN Women's approach will be a global one, though its impact will be experienced primarily at the country level, "thus UN Women's technical support and expertise will be available, on request, to all countries, developed and developing countries, alike."

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In her remarks to the board, Mr. Bachelet also laid out five thematic priorities in the country-specific context: expanding women's voice, leadership and participation; ending violence against women; ensuring women's full participation in conflict resolution; enhancing women's economic empowerment; and gender equality priorities central to national, local and sectoral planning and budgeting.