

Remarks by H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf,  
President of the Republic of Liberia,  
At the Unveiling Ceremony of the New UN Women Logo  
Addis Ababa, Sunday, January 30, 2011

Mr. Secretary-General;

Executive Director Michelle Bachelet;

Members of the United Nations and African Union Families;

Empowered Women;

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Mr. Secretary-General, let me thank you for your kind words this morning and for your generous support of this effort. Thank you, Michelle, for the kind invitation to speak at today's unveiling of the new UN Women logo. I had the opportunity to congratulate you in New York on your new position, at a panel discussion on "Women as a Critical Force in Democratic Governance". At that meeting, we made the case for women's access in participatory institutions at the local, national, regional and international levels. We did so because we know women need the opportunity to voice their preferences on issues of national concern.

That you chose to hold this second unveiling here in Addis, on the margins of the African Union Summit, where all of Africa, and the rest of the world, are represented, is a mark of your foresight and your vision. The new logo is familiar yet different, conveying the message of equality for women worldwide. I feel truly confident that with you, Michelle, at the helm, UN Women is in very capable hands.

Until now, the entities with mandates and responsibilities for promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women read like an alphabet soup of United Nations acronyms. There was OSAGI and DAW and UNIFEM and INSTRAW, all

doing great work to advance the cause of women, but difficult for people in the UN system, let alone an outsider, to differentiate.

As a former UNDP official who interacted with many of these entities dealing with women's issues, I enthusiastically welcome the unanimous decision by the General Assembly, as part of the UN reform agenda, to place the Office, the Division, the Fund, and the Institute under a single umbrella, the new United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, or UN Women for short. The consolidation also brings together resources and mandates for greater impact.

This decision was long overdue. And although UN Women only became operational on January 1<sup>st</sup>, all indications are that it has "hit the ground running," bringing greater coherence and coordination to the four entities that preceded it.

Our time here is short, so I don't need to say much. This is success after a long fought battle, and Mr. Secretary-General, we now leave the decision of resources to you to battle it out. I simply wanted to join in applauding this new entity, to join you in extending a hand to all who contributed to this new entity which, we can all be assured, will support, address, and contribute to gender equality and the empowerment and advancement of women worldwide, building on the milestones and the successes already achieved.

Michelle, and all of you, you can count on all of us to be a great partner in this undertaking.

I thank you.