Roundtable dialogue
“Leave No One Behind: Actions and Commitments for Women’s Economic Empowerment”
September 19th of 2017, 3:00 pm

President Solis (Opening Welcome), 5 minutes

Señor António Guterres, Secretario General de las Naciones Unidas,

Señor Paul Kagame, Presidente de la República de Rwanda (TBC),

Señora Sheikh Hasina, Primer Ministra de la República Popular de Bangladesh,

Señora Christine Lagarde, Directora Gerente del Fondo Monetario Internacional,

Señora Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka, Secretaria General Adjunta de las Naciones Unidas y Directora Ejecutiva de ONU Mujeres,

Estimados representantes del Grupo de Campeones para el Empoderamiento Económico de las Mujeres,

Miembros y representantes del Panel de Alto Nivel del Secretario General de Naciones Unidas sobre Empoderamiento Económico de las Mujeres,

Amigas y amigos,

A un año de haber presentado el primer informe del Panel: “No dejar a nadie atrás: un llamado a la acción para la igualdad de género y el empoderamiento económico de las mujeres”, me complace enormemente darles la bienvenida a esta Mesa Redonda para reflexionar sobre los avances en la sensibilización y socialización de los impactos positivos que genera en la vida de las mujeres, las empresas y el crecimiento de los países, el aplicar las buenas prácticas y las lecciones aprendidas, y los retos pendientes para el fortalecimiento de la implementación de la agenda del empoderamiento económico de las mujeres.

I am very pleased to welcome you to this roundtable dialogue of the United Nations Secretary-General’s High Level Panel on Women’s Economic Empowerment. As part of the engagements we acquired a year ago, on the presentation of our first report, we have come together to discuss the development and
strengthening of women’s agenda for economic empowerment, ensuring our work becomes the necessary input for transformative change.

I would like to acknowledge the propitious time for the attainment of greater degrees of well-being and economic growth. Indeed, the 2030 Agenda and its multidimensional Sustainable Development Goals, have set a favorable situation to pose women’s economic empowerment as a mean and an end by itself. The work of the High Level Panel has achieved to incorporate the strategic axes of the Agenda, addressing the particularities of discrimination and exclusion of women in the economic sphere, while contributing to reinforce its implementation.

I want to seize the occasion to celebrate the vision of former Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki Moon who bravely shaped this space in the UN with leaders from all over the world and all kinds of sectors: from multilateral organizations, to economic experts, NGOs, academics, trade union leaders, business and government representatives. He honored my dearest colleague Simona, and myself, with our appointment as Co-chairs of this panel.

Undoubtedly, the richness and diversity of all of those who participated have turned our call to action into a robust proposal with intersectional and innovative ingredients, identify the gaps and impacts on women, the good practices and call to action through alliances, are not only a valuable asset that reinforced our reflection, but also a powerful lesson that we can henceforth deliver to the world.

Leadership and passion have been distinctive elements of our members, and on the path toward the consolidation of women’s agenda, these are essential components for sustainability. Fortunately, through the Secretary-General Guterres’ direction and compromise with the advancement of women’s rights, I am confident that we will manage to keep the lead in the following years, addressing new issues and gathering new actors. We will continue to expand commitments with private and public leaders.

I want to thank UN Women for its commitment to uphold a space that has become a milestone for women’s economic agenda at the international sphere. I am very grateful to the United Kingdom too, whose representatives in this panel have demonstrated selfless support to our efforts and initiatives.

Now that we have carried out a profound discussion about the “whats” and the “whys” it is time to set ourselves the task to explore and enrich the “hows”. Indeed, as Heads of State or government authorities,
I invite you to lead the challenge of designing and implementing initiatives, projects, programs and public policies.

Our Administration has put this subject at the core of its actions, with an integral instrument called the Equity and Gender Equality Policy, led by a women’s institute, allowing us to resize the role of the State and to mainstream the human rights approach and the autonomy of women across public institutions.

With concrete actions to address socioeconomic inequality and the persistence of poverty, particularly for informal and domestic workers; the sexual division of labor, with the migration of our Care Network to an articulated system; the financial and digital gap, through the design of a National Strategy of Financial Inclusion, among others, we are showing our understanding of women’s rights as a structural issue for our country, in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals, consistent with the commitments made in this Panel, and with the clarity that development is none without women.

I invite you to seize this opportunity to fight against stereotyped gender norms, discriminatory laws, digital, financial and property gaps, and all systemic restrictions on women’s economic opportunities. Certainly, the route of data collection and production and public-private alliances, created legal instruments in all levels, participatory processes and strategic partnerships is already showing its results.

Nonetheless, there is still much to do in the face of the challenge of discrimination and exclusion. I am confident that the members of the Champions of Women’s Economic Empowerment, among them Lithuania and Denmark, that I greet and congratulate as the newest members of the group and those to come, will serve the United Nations as an example that equality can no longer be a horizon and instead, become a reality for the women who cannot wait to show the world their talent and capacity.