

Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to the UN Gender Pledge

October 2021

Introduction

We, the representatives of the Kingdom of the Netherlands at the United Nations, are committed to advancing gender equality. Within our Mission, we want to foster an inclusive workplace where everyone is respected, valued and supported. Not only because we believe this to be morally right, but also because we are convinced that organizations that value diversity and that are diverse in age, gender identity, race, sexual orientation, physical ability, ethnicity, and perspective perform better. While this pledge is focused on gender equality, we are dedicated to increase our collective understanding of diversity and inclusion in the workplace in all its forms, and to meaningfully integrate diversity and inclusion in our policies and working methods.

This Pledge fits into the broader commitment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to promote gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, including the promotion and protection of their human rights, across the world. In line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, the Kingdom of the Netherlands recognizes gender equality as an essential component of international peace, security, development and economic prosperity. Gender equality is therefore at the heart of the Netherlands' foreign policy. At the same time, gender equality is far from reality across the world. Much work remains to be done, including in The Netherlands.

Gender equality must not only be affirmed in policy, but must also be articulated in practice. How the Kingdom of the Netherlands carries out its work at the UN should reflect and reinforce its commitment to gender equality. Mainstreaming gender into the working methods of the Mission will also help ensure it is consistently reflected in policies. The Permanent Mission of The Kingdom of the Netherlands therefore joins the initiative of the Permanent Mission of Canada to the United Nations in setting up a Gender Pledge that places efforts to uphold and promote gender equality at the forefront of the Mission's efforts.

This gender pledge sets out specific commitments and key actions on gender equality for the leadership and staff at the Permanent Mission. Achieving gender equality is not the sole responsibility of gender experts but of everyone – regardless of their gender. The Permanent Mission gender pledge is therefore signed by the Mission leadership and made the responsibility of all staff.

1. Staffing and Representation

1. We will advocate for women to be represented at all levels and in every section of the Permanent Mission, including at the Ambassador rank; individuals that contribute to the diversity of the Permanent Mission will actively be encouraged to apply for positions at the Permanent Mission; and the Permanent Mission will conduct inclusive, barrier-free selection processes for such positions.
2. We will advocate for all incoming delegations to formal or informal UN conferences and committees to have balanced gender representation. This expectation will clearly be communicated to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands and other incoming delegations. The Permanent Mission will notify senior management of delegations that fail to reflect gender representation.
3. We will increase our collective understanding of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, through dialogue and e-learning. for instance by completing an online course about Gender (“Gender ... (of)course”).
4. We will further strengthen gender analysis in all issue areas, through active engagement of all Permanent Mission staff with the gender focal point and gender equality experts within the Mission, and briefings on relevant gender equality priorities.
5. We will advocate for the Netherlands to nominate candidates for appointment to senior UN positions with the goal of achieving gender parity at the UN.

2. Management

1. The Permanent Mission leadership will regularly communicate to all staff the priority of gender equality, amongst others during an annual internal session on gender equality around International Women’s Day.
2. The Permanent Mission Leadership will actively promote and pursue an inclusive working environment and strive and uphold an organizational culture in which every employee feels safe and welcome to express his/hers/theirs identity and ideas amongst colleagues and in the presence of leadership.
3. The Permanent Mission leadership will enforce a *zero-tolerance policy on sexual harassment*. Furthermore, employees will be encouraged to report sexual harassment and be provided with a confidential mechanism to do so.
4. The Permanent Mission leadership will partake and actively promote participation of all staff to take part in an annual unconscious bias awareness training.
5. The Permanent Mission leadership will encourage the adoption of practices to enhance work-life balance where possible, including: 1) early information and

advance notice of meetings to enhance predictability and planning; 2) avoiding calling meetings during early mornings, evenings, weekends and public holidays; 3) supporting those who require flexible work arrangements, including for family responsibilities; 4) supporting parental leave; and 5) advocating for official UN meetings to respect regular working hours.

3. Policy

1. We will proactively identify opportunities to promote gender equality in the General Assembly, the Security Council, ECOSOC, and the Peacebuilding Commission, as well as other UN conferences and subsidiary bodies.
2. We will consistently advocate for strong language on gender equality and women's empowerment in resolutions, statements, and side events.
3. We will regularly consult with women's groups and groups promoting gender equality and the human rights of women and girls on the full range of policy areas, not simply those directly on the topics of gender equality and women's rights.

4. Communications

1. We will highlight The Netherlands' commitment to gender equality in communication products.
2. We will ensure visuals and photos in communications products have appropriate gender balance.
3. We will offer similar honorifics to all counterparts, regardless of their gender.
4. We will avoid unnecessary gendered terminology in all our communications.
5. We will strive to have a balanced gender representation at all events of three or more speakers organized by the Permanent Mission
6. We will encourage appropriate gender balance in the organization of events, decline to participate in events of three or more speakers where no good faith effort has been made to ensure gender representation, or otherwise highlight if there is a lack of gender representation in their statements during events.
7. We will be mindful of the equitable allocation of speaking time and roles between all speakers.

5. Review

1. The Head of Mission will appoint a Management Team focal point on gender equality supported by an expert-level officer of a different gender for a term of two years. The focal point will be responsible for providing guidance on enhancing gender equality at the Mission and tracking progress on the implementation of the gender pledge.
2. Gender pledge commitments will be reviewed on an annual basis by the focal point in cooperation with mission leadership, and in consultation with mission staff, to make appropriate adjustments.
3. The focal point will be responsible for drafting an annual overview on the implementation of the gender pledge. The overview will, inter alia, document the number, seniority, and responsibilities of staff, broken down by gender. The findings of this overview, including tracking data on year-to-year changes, will be shared with all staff and with Headquarters.
4. Best practices on advancing gender equality will be shared with other Dutch and UN Permanent missions, to encourage the development, improvement, and implementation of gender pledges.

6. Approval

1. The gender pledge will be signed by all incoming members of the Mission leadership.
2. All Permanent Mission staff will be required to read and uphold the gender pledge.