



Challenges, hopes, joys: NGO CSW65 Consultation Day

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We stand at a profoundly affecting moment in global history. We have seen through last year huge loss: loss of human lives, loss of jobs and livelihoods, increased poverty, the anxiety, fear and uncertainty triggered by the pandemic, but we also stand today at a moment of profound hope and anticipation -

The world today recognizes the immense power of interconnected collaboration. Through shared solidarity, friends, the world stopped last year. The entire world stopped. Because it was in humanity's interest to do so. And the entire world has started again, through this magnificent global cooperation and solidarity to make vaccines available, to recover from COVID...

Never more than now is it evident that global challenges are interconnected and can only be addressed through the world coming together.

We dreamed the Generation Equality Forum because we were frustrated and impatient with the sluggish pace of progress for gender equality; we were angry and concerned about the push back and reversals so many years after Beijing and after Mexico and after Nairobi and after Copenhagen; and we were inspired and motivated by the fierce and energized mobilization of feminists of all generations across the world, demanding equality, justice and peace.

That was the hope with which we set up the Generation Equality Forum. That collaboration, solidarity, intersectional mobilization, the world coming together would make the change that we needed to be...

And so, we set up this revolutionary model of intergenerational, multistakeholder co-leadership of the Forum to drive its agenda of movement building for gender equality and accelerated action for gender equality.

It was a revolutionary model, it **is** a revolutionary model – with civil society, young people, governments, the UN, the private sector, philanthropies and others in joined up, co-visioning and co-leadership. The challenge? We set up a revolutionary model, but we were not prepared for revolution! Co-leadership is about flattening power, sharing power, re-distributing power. It is easy to dream about, very hard to do.

We are talking about intergenerational leadership, co-leadership, multi-stakeholder co-leadership. We know how to do multi-stakeholder participation, we know how to do intergenerational participation, but leadership – that is what we are learning – how to collaborate with the full strength of our different constituencies; how to be leaders together; how to hear about agenda setting other than our own; how to cede space; share voice, listen and hear. We are learning, through mistakes, heartache but ultimately, with hope and joy...

Because joy it is - to see the ambition of what this co-visioning can accomplish – the scale, scope and potential for transformative action is within reach – there is such joy in this joint agenda setting, this shared visioning... and hope, that our determination to achieve the actions, **will not tire**.

COVID did not hold us back and there was joy in seeing that. We are emerging stronger; we **have** emerged stronger from COVID.

My fellow feminists, what we are building together is an idea of contemporary, invigorated, reinvigorated multilateralism. A United Nations of this time, “we the peoples” that serves its peoples - a United Nations that is inclusive, ambitious, courageous, effective. The Generation Equality

Forum is about intergenerational, multistakeholder solidarity, partnerships, the meaningful engagement of young people and a reimagined global contract for gender equality. It is a joyful journey of equality – therein lies the challenge, the hope, the joy.

Join us in this challenge, in this hope, and through this joy. Join us in Mexico at the end of this month and we will journey from there together to Paris at the end of June.

Thank you for your leadership. Thank you for co-creating this together with us. Thank you.