

# Promote Leadership Opportunities



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**Objective:** Harness Geneva's multilateral fora and enhance opportunities to develop and promote gender-equal leadership opportunities.

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*“Where women are full participants in a country's politics or economy, societies are more likely to succeed. And that's why we support the participation of women in parliaments and peace processes, schools and the economy.” – U.S. President Barack Obama*

## Key Facts:<sup>1</sup>

- Only one in five parliamentarians is female, or 21.9%, as of 1 December 2014, a slow increase from 11.3% in 1995.
- Only 17% of government ministers were women, with the majority overseeing social sectors, such as education and the family as of January 2014.
- From 1992 to 2011, fewer than 4% of signatories to peace agreements and less than 10% of negotiators at peace tables were women.
- Only 18.3% of global companies have a top-level female manager.
- Only four out of thirty-two Humanitarian Coordinators leading country-wide relief efforts are women.
- In the United Nations system, women represent only at 41.8 percent of mid-level management and 30% of senior leadership.
- In the U.S., Women account for only 18 percent of hospital CEOs and only 4 percent of healthcare company CEOs.

## Where We Are

Women have made strides in terms of gender equality and empowerment in the past twenty years since the Beijing Commission on the Status of Women. Unfortunately, there is still far to go to achieve gender equity, particularly in regard to equal pay and attainment of senior leadership positions. There are still significant gaps in gender parity at the highest levels in the UN system. More needs to be done to identify the unspoken and unwritten cultural norms that prevent more women from seeking and being appointed into senior roles. Ultimately, when there are fewer women in senior or policy level positions, younger or mid-career women have fewer role models. These barriers stand between each woman and **The Future She Deserves**.

## What We Need...

is Geneva's collective action to develop and promote gender-equal leadership opportunities, including gender parity within the UN, to set a standard for greater women's participation in leadership roles across governments and civil society. Women need more opportunities to build networks and identify mentors among senior female leaders.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics collected by UN Women.

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## How We'll Do It

Geneva offers a unique platform to promote women in senior leadership roles. Together, we can identify targeted interventions at Geneva-based international meetings and programs that foster opportunities to strengthen partnerships and linkages across sectors. Collectively, member states, civil society, and experts can influence how United Nations agencies and others ensure that women and girls have equal leadership opportunities. First steps should include:

1. Strengthen and promote leadership opportunities for women across Geneva platforms;
2. Leverage political power of the member states to implement the UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP);
3. Request UN agencies report regularly on recruitment and retention of women, particularly for leadership positions; and
4. Expand public-private partnerships to promote women's leadership.

## Potential Outcomes and Activities

U.S. Mission is planning a series of events to promote women in senior leadership roles, highlight women who are already in senior leadership positions, and give younger women the chance to discuss and learn with and from these leaders.

Working in partnership with others in the Geneva diplomatic community, we will call for organizations to report voluntarily on their progress in appointing qualified women to senior leadership positions as well as on the implementation of the UN SWAP indicators as a whole.

The women Ambassadors and Permanent Representatives to the United Nations in Geneva will organize the third annual Power of Empowered Women event focused on women's positive leadership in the domain of peace and security in areas that are especially relevant to the Geneva context.

The U.S. Mission in partnership with "Women@TheTable" will host a salon, in advance of the International Women's Day + CSW meetings, where participants will explore through interactive catalytic questioning how we can better galvanize the voices of women from the grassroots to International Geneva so that their unique points of view are included and acted upon in the corridors of power.

**\*\*We want your insights to other opportunities and your help in addressing them!**