

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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**VIDEO MESSAGE FOR INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY
8 March 2010 (recorded 12 February)**

The fight for women's rights is central to the UN's global mission.

Fifteen years ago, in Beijing, Governments committed themselves to equality, development and peace for all women, in all countries.

The Beijing Declaration was a landmark on the road to women's empowerment.

It has guided policy making.

It has inspired women and girls to strive for equality and opportunity, and reminded everyone that this is their right.

We have seen progress.

Girls are now more likely to receive an education.

Women are now more likely to run businesses or participate in government.

But much work remains.

Death in childbirth is still too common. Too few women have access to family planning.

Violence against women remains a cause of global shame, and sexual violence in war is endemic.

I have just appointed a special representative to mobilize international action to address these crimes.

At the United Nations itself, we have more women in senior posts than at any time in history.

Securing women's rights is central to all our hopes for peace, security and sustainable development.

As we look back on 15 years of achievement, let us look forward to a world of equality and progress for all.