

# Media Update

17 May 2019

---

## United Nations

SECRETARY-GENERAL's MESSAGE

### World Telecommunication and Information Society Day

17 May 2019

Today we celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, highlighting the importance of international technology standards in accelerating innovation worldwide.

Technological advances such as 5G and the Internet of Things have the potential to deliver considerable social and economic benefits and to drive progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. The standards-making process of the International Telecommunication Union is more important than ever, and I commend the ITU's commitment to inclusivity, consensus and bridge-building among governments, companies and universities from all regions of the world.

Yet, alongside these invaluable processes, we must also recognize our shared responsibility to ensure that these technologies are not used to incite violence, to fuel hatred, or to mislead the public. We must be alert to these and other perils while joining efforts to harness technological advances for the common good.

On World Telecommunication and Information Society Day, let us commit to working together to ensure that the digital economy delivers for all.

---

### Vesak Day

17 May 2019

SECRETARY-GENERAL's MESSAGE

---



"Vesak", the Day of the Full Moon in the month of May, is the most sacred day to millions of Buddhists around the world. It was on the Day of Vesak two and a half millennia ago, in the year 623 B.C., that the Buddha was born. It was also on the Day of Vesak that the Buddha attained enlightenment, and it was on the Day of Vesak that the Buddha in his eightieth year passed away. The General Assembly, by its [resolution 54/115](#) of 1999, recognized internationally the Day of Vesak to acknowledge the contribution that Buddhism, one of the oldest religions in the world, has made for over two and a half millennia and continues to make to the spirituality of humanity. This day is commemorated annually at the UN Headquarters and other UN offices, in consultation with the relevant UN offices and with permanent missions, which also wish to be consulted.

---

## UN Women

PRESS RELEASE

### **Consolidated and concerted action needed to curb child marriages from the country through awareness and legislative reforms**

**UN Women and WPC of National Assembly to work together for ending child marriages, gender disparity**

ISLAMABAD: UN Women and Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) of the National Assembly of Pakistan on Thursday joined hands to work together for advancing the women's empowerment and gender equality agenda, which is central to Pakistan's efforts towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Agreeing that the issue of child marriage needs a strong focus and efforts at all levels, both the entities stressed the most urgent need for consolidated and concerted action to curb child marriages from all parts of Pakistan through advocacy, awareness-raising and legislative reforms.

UN Women and WPC-NA were meeting at the National Assembly where Country Representative UN Women Pakistan Jamshed Kazi and MNA and Secretary WPC Munazza Hassan signed a Memorandum of Understanding



(MoU) to advance women's empowerment and gender equality across Pakistan.

The WPC is a cross-party forum of women parliamentarians who come together to work on an agreed agenda for women's socio-economic empowerment and political participation in the country. UN Women is the United Nations organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Under the partnership, WPC will support the mandate of UN Women to attain broad-based consensus amongst all women parliamentarians for the socio-economic and political development of Pakistani women, and to enable women parliamentarians to work beyond and above party lines for advancing the women empowerment and gender equality agenda.

Secretary WPC Munazza Hassan said, "Child marriages issue lies at the core of efforts WPC has been doing to improve condition of women and girls. We will contact each parliamentarian, male and female, to listen to their concerns around child marriages bill and address them."

"We want to get it passed unanimously," she stressed. To scale up efforts for pro women legislation at all levels, Hassan informed that she will hold a meeting with Speaker Provincial Assembly of Punjab to urge them for establishing the Women Parliamentary Caucus of Punjab Assembly at earliest. Hassan appreciated UN Women for their commitment to help the government achieve targets of gender equality and SDGs.

Country Representative UN Women Jamshed Kazi said, "With the initiation of this important partnership today, UN Women and WPC aim to collaborate for strengthening women's political participation and leadership through strategic planning, research and coordination; and media outreach."

"Timing of this signing is very important as the bill against child marriages is now a national agenda. We must act now to make sure the future of our girls and women is safe and that they have right to say no before reaching certain age," he underlined.

"We will closely work on issues pertaining to gender integration in laws and policies with a focus on women's empowerment and reducing discrimination and violence against women and girls. All matters that are being discussed in the Parliament should be first looked through the gender lens. Enhancing

parliamentary skills and contributions of women parliamentarians in national and provincial assemblies will lie at the core of our work.”

Today with this MoU signing, UN Women reaffirms its commitment to the Government of Pakistan for supporting the implementation of its long-term initiatives to safeguard women’s rights in the country, Jamshed remarked.

UN Women will specifically support WPC in the development and implementation of a Strategic Plan, organizing learning and networking initiatives, commemorating national and international occasions with the objective to raise awareness on women’s issues and rights, and holding dialogues with male parliamentarians and other stakeholders on issues related to gender equality, including advocating for pro-women legislations. Others present at the signing ceremony included women members of the parliament and WPC, and UN Women Pakistan officials including Aisha Mukhtar, Deputy Country Representative, Saman Ahsan, Head of Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, Human Rights and Governance Portfolio, and Habib Asgher, Head of Communications.

\*\*\*