



Government Equalities Office

Minister for Women and Equalities
4th Floor
100 Parliament Street
London SW1A 2BQ
E: enquiries@culture.gsi.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/geo

Natalie Samarasinghe
Executive Director
United Nations Association - UK
3 Whitehall Court
London
SW1A 2EL

25 March 2015

Dear Ms Samarasinghe

Thank you for your letter of 6 March calling for a renewed UK commitment to the fight against gender inequality. This Government is committed to protecting and progressing the human rights, empowerment and equality of all women and girls. Increasing women's economic participation, ending violence and discrimination against women and girls, and ensuring women are involved in decision making at all levels are priorities for this government.

The UK Government participates actively at CSW, which is the primary global platform for the advancement of women's rights, and we are seen as international leaders on gender equality and in strong government/civil society relationships. This year's delegation was led by Baroness Northover, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development, and the Official delegation was led by Helene Reardon-Bond of the Government Equalities Office. A number of Parliamentarians also attended and were actively involved in civil society events.

At CSW59 the UK called for a strong Political Declaration that reaffirmed commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action. We worked with other governments to ensure that language on the human rights of women and girls was included in the Political Declaration and Working Methods Resolution. We recognise the crucial role that civil society plays in achieving gender equality and we fought to protect reference to NGOs in the outcome documents. We worked to protect and progress the UK's key international priorities for women including PSVI, addressing social norms including FGM and CEFM (following last year's PSVI and Girls summits), women's economic empowerment, education, VAWG and SRHR.

We called for a strong and explicit commitment to achieve gender equality, the empowerment and the realisation of the human rights of girls and women in the post-2015 development framework. This requires a standalone gender goal and the integration of transformative targets and indicators throughout all the goals. You can read the UK CSW country statement at <http://bit.ly/1GLYpop>.



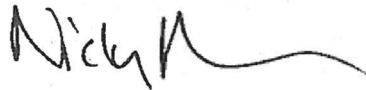
Government Equalities Office

We welcome the 15th anniversary of United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 and recognise the role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, peace negotiations, peace-building, peacekeeping, humanitarian response and in post-conflict reconstruction.

Both I and my fellow Minister for Women and Equalities Jo Swinson MP, and the UK government as a whole are committed to achieving gender equality and to protecting the rights of women and girls everywhere. We will continue to tackle social, political and cultural norms that allow discrimination, misogyny and violence against women and girls to persist.

I would like to thank UNA-UK for its tireless dedication to this important issue and look forward to continuing to work with you to end gender inequality once and for all.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nicky Morgan', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**The Rt Hon Nicky Morgan MP
Minister for Women and Equalities**