Mr. Donald Trump

President of the United States

The White House

1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20500

January 20, 2017

Dear President Trump:

Our organizations represent hundreds of thousands of Americans, thought leaders, program implementers, and business leaders currently advancing rights and opportunities for women and girls, global development, and humanitarian assistance for peace and security around the world. While our organizations bring differing perspectives, and employ different methods in our work, one thing that unites us is our commitment to advancing gender equality, and the empowerment and human rights of all women and girls, in the United States and around the world. We believe that all people are created equal and deserve the opportunity to realize their full potential and exercise their rights.

This principle is central to our democracy and a fundamental American value. The economic, health, social, and political rights that women in the U.S. and around the world have secured to this point must not be reversed or eroded. These rights must be core to our foreign policy, our response to humanitarian emergencies, and our efforts to fight poverty around the world.

The Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have been strong partners for civil society working toward the bipartisan goal of empowering women and girls.  We are eager to see this work continue and stand ready to support initiatives aimed at advancing opportunities for women and girls worldwide, both in the U.S. and abroad.

We noted with interest the State Department tasker inquiring about programs and positions that benefit women and girls worldwide. It is our hope that this attention is borne out of a desire to strengthen and elevate these programs and structures.

As a businessman with international interests, you know well that a more stable and prosperous world benefits all. As our new President, we hope and trust that you will continue the long and proud tradition of promoting American ideals in our foreign policy and assistance. The U.S.’ positive engagement in the world as a partner in helping people lift themselves out of poverty and oppression will serve our country well and resonates with American values of equality, equity, and justice.

For decades, the U.S. has been a model and beacon of hope to billions of women and girls who endure daily violence, poverty, and discrimination. Both Republican and Democratic administrations have invested in women’s health, economic opportunity, rights, education, and much more. For example, the U.S. President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) started under the leadership of President George W. Bush and has now reached tens of millions of people through life-saving medications and one million adolescent girls via critical HIV prevention interventions.

With these initiatives and many others, the U.S. has been a leading actor advancing women’s rights at home and abroad. This leadership both reflects and advances American ideals and strength. We know that investments in women and girls bring high returns for economic growth, well-being, and democratic governance. These programs maximize the benefits gained from the investment of U.S.’ taxpayer dollars.

For example, research by the International Monetary Fund has found that gender inequality is simply bad for economic growth.[[1]](#footnote-1) A 2015 McKinsey Global Institute study found that under a “scenario in which women participate in the economy identically to men…it would add up to $28 trillion, or 26%, to the annual GDP in 2025 compared with a ‘business-as-usual’ scenario.”[[2]](#footnote-2) Such growth of economies around the world will further strengthen the U.S.’ economic position by creating more opportunities for U.S.’ exports. To work toward such, we must build an environment where women are healthy, empowered, and free from violence and discrimination.

On behalf of the millions of Americans and billions of women and girls around the world who count on the U.S.’ partnership, we respectfully request your Administration to significantly build upon the U.S.’ strong commitment to reaching women and girls with effective evidence-based programs. Investing in gender equality transcends partisan politics and supports the U.S. Government’s standing as a moral leader, advances American foreign policy objectives, and creates economic opportunities for the United States.

Sincerely,

1. 1,000 Days
2. Action Against Hunger
3. Advancing Girls' Education in Africa (AGE Africa)
4. Advocates for Human Rights
5. Advocates for Youth
6. AFL-CIO
7. American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)
8. Amnesty International USA
9. Breakthrough
10. Build Change
11. CARE USA
12. Center for Biological Diversity
13. Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)
14. Center for Inquiry
15. Center for Reproductive Rights
16. Center for Women's Global Leadership, Rutgers University
17. ChildFund
18. Church World Service
19. CORE Group
20. EngenderHealth
21. Episcopal Relief and Development
22. Equality Now
23. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
24. Feminist Majority Foundation
25. FHI 360
26. Friends of UNFPA
27. Futures Without Violence
28. Gender Action
29. General Federation of Women’s Clubs (GFWC)
30. Girl Determined
31. Girl Up
32. GirlForward
33. Global Campaign for Education-US (GCE-US)
34. Global Fund for Women
35. Global Health Council
36. Global Initiative for Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
37. Global Rights for Women
38. Global Women’s Institute
39. GreeneWorks
40. Handicap International
41. Heartland Alliance
42. Helen Keller International
43. HelpAge USA
44. HIAS
45. IMA World Health
46. InterAction
47. International Center for Research on Women
48. International Justice Mission (IJM)
49. International Medical Corps
50. International Rescue Committee
51. International Youth Foundation
52. IntraHealth International
53. Islamic Relief USA
54. Jewish Women International
55. John Snow, Inc.
56. Landesa
57. Landesa Center for Women’s Land Rights
58. League of Women Voters
59. Legal Momentum: The Women’s Legal Defense and Education Fund
60. MenEngage Alliance
61. Mennonite Central Committee U.S. Washington Office
62. Mercy Corps
63. Mercy-USA for Aid and Development
64. National Advocacy Center of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd
65. National Association for Social Workers
66. National Organization for Women
67. One Earth Future Foundation
68. Oxfam America
69. PAI
70. Pathfinder International
71. Peace X Peace
72. Peaceful Families Project
73. Physicians for Human Rights
74. Placerville Historic Preservation League
75. Plan International USA
76. Planned Parenthood Federation of America
77. Population Council
78. Population Institute
79. Population Media Center
80. Population Services International (PSI)
81. PRBB Foundation
82. Project Concern International (PCI)
83. Promundo-US
84. Refugees International
85. Save the Children
86. School Girls Unite
87. Sierra Club
88. Tahirih Justice Center
89. The Alliance for International Women's Rights
90. The Baha'is of the United States
91. The Hunger Project
92. The Presbyterian Church USA
93. The Solidarity Center
94. The WomanStats Project
95. Too Young To Wed
96. U.S. National Committee for UN Women
97. Unchained At Last
98. United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society
99. United Nations Association of the United States of America
100. Volunteers for Economic Growth Alliance (VEGA)
101. WaterAid
102. We Will Speak Out US
103. What Works Association
104. Win-Win Strategies
105. Women for Women International
106. Women Graduates-USA
107. Women of Reform Judaism
108. Women Thrive Alliance
109. Women Watch Afrika, Inc.
110. Women Win Foundation, Inc.
111. Women’s Refugee Commission
112. Women's Action for New Directions
113. WomenStrong International
114. World Learning
1. Hakura, Dalia, Mumtaz Hussain, Monique Newiak, Vimal Thakoor, and Fan Yang. “Inequality, Gender Gaps and Economic Growth: Comparative Evidence for Sub-Saharan Africa.” IMF Working Paper. June 2016. <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2016/wp16111.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. McKinsey & Company. “The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women’s Equality Can Add $12 Trillion to Global Growth: Executive Summary.” September 2015. Page ii. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)