



43^{ème} session du Conseil des droits de l’homme

**Intervention de S.E. M. Jean Asselborn
Ministre des Affaires étrangères et européennes
du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg
au nom des pays du Benelux**

**à la table ronde de haut-niveau à l’occasion du 25^e anniversaire de la Déclaration et
de la Plateforme d’action de Beijing**

“Accelerating the commitments of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action”

Genève, le 25 février 2020

Thank you Madam President,

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the three Benelux countries, Belgium, the Netherlands and my own country Luxembourg.

This 25th anniversary is a cause for celebration as well as reflection. Progress has been slow and uneven, with stark differences across the globe. In our own region, the Gender Equality Index shows persistent inequalities with only marginal progress between 2005 and 2019.

Progress has also been accompanied by new challenges: a rise of social and political movements aiming to overturn existing laws on human rights; shrinking civic space and diminished funding for women’s rights organizations; the rise of hate speech, intimidation and marginalization.

We need to push back against those who would reverse our collective normative achievements and cooperate to accelerate progress. In our view we need to do four things:

- 1) We need to broaden the support base for the Beijing agenda and take action to engage young people. Adolescent girls in particular risk being left behind. It is critical to invest in their Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights with their full and meaningful participation. In this regard, we call upon the six action coalitions to pay specific attention to the next generation.
- 2) We need to put women's rights organizations and women human rights defenders center stage in the Beijing +25 process and the Generation Equality Forum. We need to support them politically and financially, for they play a decisive role in forging durable change.
- 3) We need to promote intersectoral cooperation, for if we don't step out of our silos, progress will stagnate.
- 4) We need to strategize on how to address new challenges like climate change, digitalization and innovation that impact the human rights of women and girls.

Thank you Madam President.