

Generation Equality Forum – France commits to gender equality and women's and girls' rights

France hosted the Generation Equality Forum in Paris from 30 June to 2 July. The event was co-organized with Mexico under the aegis of UN Women and in partnership with civil society and youth-led organizations. A quarter of a century after the last UN World Conference on Women, which took place in Beijing in 1995, the Generation Equality Forum provided an opportunity to implement the approaches of multilateralism through action advocated by the President of the Republic and feminist diplomacy, adopted more than three years ago. This effective multilateralism resulted in concrete announcements and the creation of long-term multi-stakeholder partnerships. **More than USD 40 billion in new funding was released and 1,000 commitments announced to support a global plan to accelerate gender equality**, charting a course of action to obtain concrete and ambitious results for women and girls by 2026 and addressing the impact of the Covid-19 crisis. In addition to its role of mobilizing governments, international organizations, the private sector and civil society, which participated fully in the governance of the Forum, **France made a series of international commitments on priority issues.**

1/ Commitments to guarantee women's sexual and reproductive health and rights and freedom to decide about their own bodies

France pledged an additional EUR 100 million over five years for sexual and reproductive health and rights, distributed as follows: a contribution of EUR 90 million to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to purchase and distribute contraceptives and sexual and reproductive health products (UNFPA Supplies Programme); support of EUR 5 million to an innovative programme: Shaping Equitable Market Access for Reproductive Health (SEMA), hosted by AMREF, the African Medical and Research Foundation; a contribution of EUR 5 million to the Organization for Safe Abortion Dialogue (ODAS) in West and Central Africa, led by the NGO Ipas; and support for the Global Partnership Forum on Comprehensive Sexuality Education (CSE) launched jointly by UNFPA and UNESCO. In addition to its multilateral commitments, through its bilateral action implemented by the French Development Agency, France will dedicate EUR 250 million to sexual and reproductive health and rights over 5 years.

France also decided to make **a new commitment of EUR 50 million to the French Muskoka Fund until 2026**, with a view to reducing maternal and child mortality in West Africa.

2/ Commitments to ensure girls' education

France is strengthening its support for the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) to promote gender equality in schools. As part of the replenishment of the Global Partnership for Education fund for the period 2021-2026, France will contribute **EUR 333 million to the Partnership, half of which will be used specifically for actions to promote the equality of girls and equality in education.**

3/ Commitment to defend and support women human rights defenders

The Forum provided an opportunity for the President of the Republic to reaffirm the country's support for women human rights defenders, as attacks on journalists, academics, activists and lawyers, who dedicate their lives to fighting for fundamental rights and freedoms, are continuing to occur in many countries. The President of the Republic **announced the launch of the "Defenders of Freedom" initiative** to support rights defenders and the organizations that support them around the world, and offer a reception facility in France for women and men who are especially threatened. The first cohort of this programme will be reserved exclusively for women rights defenders.

The Forum also provided an opportunity for France to put gender equality at the heart of all aspects of its diplomacy by:

- Launching the **Paris Call for Generation Equality in Sport**, together with UN Women and the **International Olympic Committee**, to improve gender equality in sport, resulting in new commitments, including at national level;
- Initiating the process to create the **first international ISO standard for gender equality**, which will harmonize and strengthen best practices on this issue;
- Creating a **Charter to fight against gender stereotypes in the cultural and creative sectors**, bringing together 76 signatories in 23 countries with a commitment to change their practices;
- Launching its **third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security** and joining the Compact on Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action;
- Announcing the launch of the parliamentary process to **ratify ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the world of work**;
- Joining forces with **the WHO and the NGO "Women in Global Health" to launch a campaign to improve the position of women in the health care sector**, built around concrete actions to address the issues brought to light by the crisis in relation to unequal access to decision-making positions and pay;
- Together with the Agence française de Développement (French Development Agency – AFD), mobilizing the Public Development Banks to finance gender equality, notably through the launch of **"2x Challenge"**, a new mechanism for recording and tracking gender-focused financing by international companies.

For France, the Generation Equality Forum was an opportunity to **build a strong and lasting relationship with French and international feminist civil society organizations, which every day continue the fight against conservatism on the ground**. The Forum's hybrid format allowed more than 500 civil society speakers to take the floor during the 100 events organized on the online platform, and nearly 50,000 participants to contribute to the discussions. Through partnerships with cultural institutions such as the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, the Institut du Monde Arabe, the Centre Pompidou, the Institut National de l'Audiovisuel and the Musée National de l'Histoire de l'Immigration, Paris became the world capital of Generation Equality.