



MANIFESTO - UK GENERAL ELECTION 2017

The UN Women National Committee UK (National Committee) is the voice of UN Women here in the United Kingdom. UN Women is committed to the elimination of gender inequality and the empowerment of women for the benefit of our economies, human rights and peace and security across the globe. Through their inter-agency leadership and coordination role, UN Women support other UN organizations and member states in the promotion of gender equality by sharing evidence-based best practice, minimum standards and guidance tools. The National Committee supports the work of UN Women in its mission through advocacy, fundraising and working with a range of organisations in the UK to achieve change.

We need a UK Government that is prepared to be ambitious, passionate and committed to achieving gender equality both at home and abroad and we urge all parties to rise to this challenge.

During this General Election campaign we are calling on all political parties to commit to making gender equality a key priority of the next UK government by setting challenging new targets to address inequality both at home and abroad. In particular we ask for the following commitments:

Internationally:

All party manifestos should contain a specific pledge to retain the existing legislation on a minimum aid funding level based on 0.7% of GNI (Gross National Income). Parties are asked to commit to strongly supporting multilateral agencies, including UN Women. These agencies are an essential part of the UK development programme as they are one of the most effective mechanisms to distribute aid. In particular parties are asked to confirm that funding to UN Women will be at a minimum maintained at current levels.

UK aid priorities should support programmes that directly address gender inequality; sexual violence; support maternal and sexual health systems and encourage women's development in education, skills and employment.

All parties should specifically commit to retaining a separate government department for International Development with its own dedicated Cabinet Minister.

Domestically:

Parties should publicly commit to prioritising the embedding of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as set out by the UN in government policy and strategy at all levels.

They should prioritise policies to promote greater gender equality in the workplace and eliminate the gender pay gap. Policies should include specific approaches that appropriately value unpaid caring and promote shared responsibility for it within households; and ensure women's full participation in leadership at all levels of political and public life.

Parties should commit to actively promoting the SDG agenda within the business community and incentivise companies to promote the agenda as part of their business plans.

As part of this strategy they should also commit to establishing a separate Commission, preferably chaired by the Prime Minister, to implement the SDGs domestically. Such a commission should include members appointed from the business sector and civic society along with representatives of the devolved administrations and local government. In addition, parties should commit to the appointment of a Cabinet-level Minister in the Cabinet Office with strategic responsibility for implementation of the SDGs across Government.

The adoption of these commitments would pave the way for the elimination of gender inequality and the empowerment of women both globally and here in the U.K. We look forward to receiving your positive response.

Please forward your reply via email to ann.mckechin@unwomenuk.org

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