 **TEDUTRAIN 22**

**POSITION PAPER FROM THE DELEGATE OF BELGIUM ON UN WOMEN**

Belgium, which is also referred to as the Kingdom of Belgium officially is a Country Located in the Northern Part of the continent of Europe. Belgium Shares borders with many European countries including France, Germany, Luxemborg, etc. The capital is Brussels; the Country covers an area of 30,528 km2 (11,787 sq mi) and has an estimated population of more than 11.5 million people making it the 22nd most densely populated country in the World and 6th in Europe (Pateman, Robert and Elliott, Mark 2006)

UN Women is the United Nations entity which strives effortlessy to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women making it a global champion for women and girls, UN Women was established to accelerate progress on meeting their needs worldwide. In July 2010, the United Nations General Assembly created UN Women which cleary makes it an Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women. In doing so, UN Member States took an historic step in accelerating the Organization’s goals on gender equality and the empowerment of women (United Nations. 2010-01-06).

The UN has made significant progress over many decades in advancing gender equality. A modern strategy will be implemented by Belgium for its development cooperation. Domestically, all government levels will adopt, implement and evaluate gender mainstreaming legislation or methods. In the fight against gender discrimination and violence against women and girls, promoting gender equality and promoting and protecting women’s and girls’ human rights and fundamental freedoms are core priorities of Belgium’s internal and external policies since years (Jean & Lombart, 2013).

In addition Belgium’s commitment entails that no tradition, no religion, no value, nor any custom or culture can ever justify gender discrimination, violence against women and girls, or violations of their rights and also including full access to sexual, reproductive health rights and services. Since 2002, it is clearly evident in the constitution that Belgium expressly guarantees the principle of gender equality. Over the last years, new legislation and action plans were adopted at all levels of governance. Belgium contributes 2.000.000 € to implement the UN Women project in the Democratic Republic of Congo on ‘Appui aux droits et participation des femmes Congolaises dans le cadre de la resolution 1325’. Belgium also provides core contributions to other UN agencies which have an important commitment to gender (UNFPA, UNICEF, UNDP and OHCHR) (United Nations General Assembly, 2010).

To this end, gender equality, women’s rights and women’s empowerment are part of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) but are also an essential means to this development. To emphasize the commitment of Belgium in promoting women as a member on the United Nations, it is crystal clear that Belgium has paid a very vital role in supporting women and girls. Speaking at the Global Leaders' Meeting on 27 September 2015, Belgian Prime Minister Charles Michel said: "Twenty years after the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the time for balance sheets is over; we have to move towards concrete and accelerated implementation” (UN Women, November 5, 2015)

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