

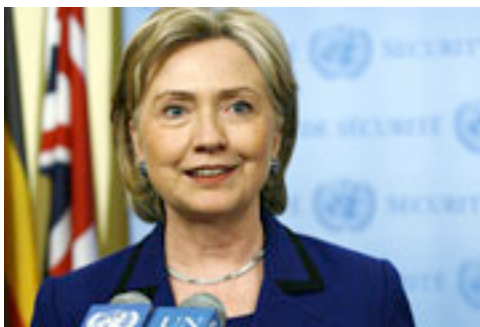


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Ban hails US Secretary of State Clinton for her work towards female empowerment



US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton

12 March 2010 – Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon paid tribute today to the long-running efforts of United States Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to advocate for the rights of women, saying her leadership on the issue should serve as an inspiration to others.

Mrs. Clinton's "leadership and commitment for gender empowerment" deserves credit, Mr. Ban said as the two officials met today for talks at United Nations Headquarters in New York on a series of issues, including the Middle East peace process and the relief and recovery efforts in post-quake Haiti.

Mr. Ban noted that Mrs. Clinton led the US delegation to the landmark Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in 1995 and which led to a declaration and platform of action calling for stepped-up efforts to improve the status of women, including better access to education, health care and jobs, and greater protection against violence.

"All your life you have been speaking out for the central truth that women are the key to all our hopes – development, peace, and a better world, and you have been during all your life working very hard to make a more just, equitable world, where women are equally treated and given equal opportunities," he said.

The UN Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), which is conducting a 15-year review of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action, wraps up its latest session today after two weeks of discussions at UN Headquarters.

Speaking today, both Mr. Ban and Mrs. Clinton stressed that women are essential to the maintenance of peace and security and to ensuring prosperity and progress and that it was vital to enhance the role of women across the world to try to attain those objectives.

Earlier this week, Mr. Ban told a CSW panel that violence against women devastates individuals and societies alike and that united, concerted action is necessary to end impunity for those who commit violent acts.

“Whether it is domestic violence, sex trafficking, so-called ‘honour’ crimes or female genital cutting, violence against women and girls continues to be a horrific and all-too common crime,” the Secretary-General said.

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Victims of violence against women must be supported, perpetrators punished – Ban