

Thank you Madam Moderator.

Your Royal Highness, your excellencies, distinguished delegates and colleagues, my name is Kehkashan Basu and I am speaking on behalf of the NGO Major Group. As reiterated by the panel today, we, too, would like to emphatically state that achieving Agenda 2030 is impossible if we do not fulfil the needs, aspirations, and development of one half of humanity. Gender equality and women's rights must be addressed in all its diversity – we cannot continue to address its challenges in silos. We also call for more frequent reviews on SDG5 and it must be a focal point on the discussion agenda at every HLPF.

What gets measured gets done and the lack of disaggregated data as well as weak monitoring mechanisms have constantly stymied progress on gender equality, something we as NGOs working on the ground have witnessed firsthand. As echoed by the distinguished panel, it is now unequivocally acknowledged that the pandemic has disproportionately impacted women and girls, in all countries. The impacts in the global south have been even more severe. The process of recovery has to be cognizant of this disparity. It must make more space for women's voices and institutions that represent them, especially from marginalized communities.

Technology and digitalization are going to be the drivers of the post pandemic recovery. Here, too, women and girls face innumerable challenges. In conservative societies, there are additional hurdles that prevent access. We need a holistic approach, that addresses the intersectional challenges with transparent and accountable mechanisms that enable prudent policy making. It cannot be a one size fits all solution. We must tailor it to meet the specific needs across the spectrum of race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age, income, geography, and disability. Let us ensure that we leave **no woman** behind.

I thank you.