



Message from Ambassador Anwarul K. Chowdhury,

Former Under-Secretary-General and High Representative of the United Nations; initiator of the UN Security Council resolution 1325 as the President of the UN Security Council in March 2000 and Founder of the Global Movement for The Culture of Peace (GMCoP), a civil society coalition based in New York promoting the UN Declaration and Programme Action on Culture of Peace.

8 March 2022, International Women' s Day, New York



This year' s International Women' s Day comes as the world remains steeped in the COVID-19 pandemic and its staggering impacts on women. Covid has exacerbated the gender gap.

"Gender equality today for a sustainable tomorrow," is the theme for the Day this year. The new data released by UN Women highlighted that the pandemic has markedly deteriorated women' s, especially young women' s, safety at home and in public spaces.

This year' s International Women' s Day is also being observed at a time when a major war now appears inevitable. However, I keep believing that peace is possible, even in these troubling times. I honor all the local peacebuilders in Ukraine who are continuing their work for peace, even at great risk to themselves.

Women' s rights are under threat from a backlash of conservatism and fundamentalism around the world. UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres lamented that everywhere, we still have a male-dominated culture.

My work has taken me to the farthest corners of the world, and I have seen time and again the centrality of women' s equality in our lives. This realization has now become more pertinent amid the ever-increasing militarism and militarization that is destroying both our planet and our people.

As I reiterate time and again, women bring a new breadth, quality, and balance of vision to a common effort of moving away from the cult of war towards the culture of peace. Sustainable peace is inseparable from gender equality.

Women' s equality makes our planet safe and secure.

Adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1325 on women and peace and security twenty-two years ago opened a much-awaited door of opportunity for women, who have shown time and again that they bring a qualitative improvement in structuring peace and in the post-conflict architecture.

We should never forget that when women – half of world' s seven plus billion people - are marginalized, there is no chance for our world to get sustainable peace in the real sense.

Let us strive to build a gender equal world. We need to understand that “Feminism is not about making women strong.

Women are already strong. It' s about changing the way the world perceives that strength.”

Feminism is not a women's issue,

it's an issue for humanity. I am proud to be a feminist. All of us need to be. That is how we make our planet a better place to live for all.

Our individual actions, conversations, and mindsets can have an impact on our larger society.

Together we can make change happen.