

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE DEPARTMENT OF  
STATE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE SECRETARIAT OF  
FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES FOR THE PROMOTION  
OF GENDER EQUALITY, THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN  
AND WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Department of State of the United States of America and the Secretariat of Foreign Relations of the United Mexican States, hereinafter "the Participants";

**RECOGNIZING** their desire to strengthen the ties of friendship and cooperation between the United Mexican States and the United States of America;

**INTERESTED** in ensuring that their commitment to gender equality is reflected as a cross-cutting issue in their bilateral relationship;

**CONVINCED** that equal participation of women, from all communities and ethnicities, is necessary for the full and complete development of both countries;

**RECOGNIZING** the role of women as agents of change in society and their contribution to the economic development, democratic institutions, citizen security and prosperity of both nations;

**CONSIDERING** the importance of supporting the full social, political, economic and cultural engagement of women;

**AWARE** of the importance of cooperating in promoting and protecting human rights;

**BEARING IN MIND** international efforts regarding gender equality and development;

Have reached the following understandings:

**SECTION 1  
Objective**

The objective of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to provide a framework for the Participants to advance equality, empowerment and the promotion of the human rights of girls and women as part of their bilateral relationship.

## **SECTION 2**

### **Scope of Cooperation**

In order to achieve the objective referred to in Section 1, the Participants identify the following areas of cooperation as key to creating equal and prosperous societies:

- i. Promoting economic empowerment and opportunity for women and girls;
- ii. Promoting social development that supports gender equality;
- iii. Strengthening citizen security, with a particular focus on women and girls;
- iv. Promoting increased access to justice; and
- v. Any other areas as mutually decided by the Participants.

## **SECTION 3**

### **Forms of Cooperation**

In order to achieve the objective of this MOU and to promote gender equality, the Participants are dedicated to incorporating gender throughout the bilateral relationship and to carrying out cooperative activities, such as the following:

**i. Promoting Economic Empowerment and Opportunity for Women and Girls:**

The Participants recognize that women are important agents of growth and development whose full potential has too often gone untapped. Women's economic participation promotes innovation, agricultural productivity, the development of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. It also strengthens business management and improves return on investment. In addition to boosting economic growth, women reinvest a large portion of their income in their families and communities. Bilateral cooperative activities to promote women's economic empowerment and opportunity for women and girls may include but are not limited to:

- Promoting and supporting entrepreneurial networks and public-private partnerships to foster the exchange of information, training, and best practices which empower women to take full advantage of economic opportunities;
- Promoting access to training, markets and financing mechanisms for women entrepreneurs, particularly for small and medium enterprises;

- Promoting bilateral actions to foster increased economic engagement of women as a key element of the strategies to increase our mutual economic competitiveness; and
- Encouraging opportunities for women in the formal labor sector, at all levels, so that women can take full advantage of training and advancement opportunities and compensation and benefits programs.

**ii. Promoting Social Development that Supports Gender Equality:**

Social development, with a focus on women and girls, is key to growing the next generation of leaders for the public, private and non-governmental sectors. It includes raising awareness of gender equality, and helping women and girls receive the education and develop the skills they need to fully participate in public life. Bilateral cooperative activities to promote this type of social development opportunities for women and girls may include but are not limited to:

- Promoting awareness about gender equality and laws that address it, and about the elimination of discrimination in schools, the workplace and other public spaces;
- Promoting the use of technology to foster equal access to education, including in the science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) fields;
- Encouraging the participation of women in civil society- including the development and implementation of community programs - and in all other aspects of public life; and
- Supporting women's leadership development through exchange programs, development of networks, capacity building and mentoring.

**iii. Strengthening Citizen Security, with a Particular Focus on Women and Girls:**

Ensuring citizen security is crucial to building prosperous and secure nations. Criminal activity, including gender based violence (GBV), undermines efforts to promote gender equality and women's full participation in civil, social, political and economic spheres. Bilateral cooperative activities in the area of citizen security may include, but are not limited to:

- Creating networks and promoting the use of technology and innovative techniques to disseminate and share best practices to combat gender based violence (GBV), including programs which engage women, men, girls, and boys;

- Combating trafficking in women and girls, including for forced labor or sex trafficking;
- Establishing new shelters and improving existing ones for victims of gender based violence (GBV) and trafficking in persons, in part through public-private partnerships and cooperation with civil society groups; and
- Supporting women's participation in capacity building initiatives to promote the rule of law and reduce impunity.

**iv. Promoting Increased Access to Justice:**

Full and equal access to justice is a critical element of citizen security. Women and girls should be able to avail themselves of judicial remedies, guarantees, and protection mechanisms to redress criminal acts, particularly those involving violence. Bilateral cooperative activities in the area of access to justice may include but are not limited to:

- Supporting bilateral exchanges to build the capacity of judicial and law enforcement actors to develop, implement, and enforce laws that promote and protect human rights for women and equal opportunity for women and men;
- Promoting the dissemination of information on laws that affect gender equality, including organizing forums on full and equal access to justice which provide specialized attention to women affected by crimes, particularly those involving violence;
- Developing outreach capabilities, including workshops, to help ensure that survivors of gender based violence (GBV) and other criminal acts understand their legal rights;
- Promoting networks that provide legal assistance and other kinds of assistance to women and girls with family law issues, where appropriate through public-private partnerships and other means; and
- Cooperating with civil society to strengthen the legal framework for the protection of women's rights, as well as its implementation and enforcement.

The Participants may also engage in other bilateral cooperative activities as may be mutually decided in furtherance of the objective of this MOU.

**SECTION 4**  
**General Provisions**

The Participants may designate representatives to coordinate activities and discussions under this MOU.

Any cooperative activities under this MOU are subject to the availability of funds and personnel of each Participant, and are to be conducted in accordance with the laws and regulations of each Participant.

Signed in Washington, D.C., in duplicate, this eighteenth day of September, two thousand and twelve, in the English and Spanish languages.

FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF  
STATE OF THE UNITED STATES  
OF AMERICA

FOR THE SECRETARIAT OF  
FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE  
UNITED MEXICAN STATES

*Hillary Rodham Clinton Patricia Espinosa C.*