

Interventie voor UNGA Special Session ICPD Beyond 2014

Mr President, distinguished delegates,

[Opening]

" I remember she told me her story once and it went something like:

the-men-came-and

they-burned-my village

tied-my-girls-

took-my-girls-

whipped-my-husband-

cut-my-breasts-

I-ran-away-

through-the-bush-

found-a-ship-

crossed-the-sand-

then-they-put-me-in-here.

Or some such story like that. I got confused with all the stories in that detention center. All the girls' stories started out: "the-men-came-and-they-..."

This is the story of Little Bee (from Nigeria), the hero from the book *The Other Hand*. Little Bee's story is about the search for security. About living under the constant threat of danger. Her story is about homesickness that really hurts – about loss that never ends. It's about what you are prepared to do for each other, for your sister, for your husband, for a child, for a stranger. It's about how two women protect each other. I thought of this

story as I prepared for this important session. About the need to look out for those who need our protection and in particular, the next generation of women and girls.

[Voortgang, maar niet genoeg]

- We can be immensely proud of the achievements made in 20 years. The ICPD agenda really brought change to people's lives, all over the world: fewer women die in pregnancy and childbirth; skilled birth attendance has increased; more women have access to education, work and the political arena. Fewer adolescent girls are having babies too soon. Population growth has slowed.
- I would like to take this opportunity to express our admiration for the impressive review process and UNFPA's laudable role. Dr Babathunde Osotimehin's leadership has been crucial.
- And yet there is absolutely no room for complacency. The ICPD agenda is as relevant today as it was in 1994. Why?
- Because despite major achievements, more needs to be done to live up to the ICPD aspirations. A crucial agenda like this one cannot remain unfinished. Lives are at stake and we should truly leave no one behind.
- Every day, 800 women die from causes related to pregnancy and childbirth – 99% occurring in developing countries. For adolescent girls in many countries, this is the leading cause of death.

- More than 200 million women in developing countries want to prevent pregnancy, but lack access to effective contraception. The results are devastating: 80 million unintended pregnancies, 30 million unplanned births and 40 million abortions, half of which are unsafe and life-threatening. Globally, 1 in 5 girls give birth before they turn 18.

[Actie nodig, nu en post-2015]

- These are just a few examples that show us we have to deliver even more on the promises of 1994. Let us renew our promise and in particular on the following points:
- Deliver on comprehensive sexuality education for all young people.
- Deliver on sexual and reproductive health services, information and education.
- Deliver by ending child, early and forced marriages and female genital mutilation.
- I am encouraged by the outcome of the Open Working Group on the Post 2015 Sustainable Development Goals, since it addresses these issues of women's empowerment and ICPD. Now we have to follow through and adopt the relevant goals and make the means available.

[Samenwerking]

- The Netherlands is fully committed to make the ICPD ambitions a reality for all – in The Netherlands and worldwide. It is important for individual happiness. But it is also important for prosperous societies. We cannot waste the precious talents and resources of our young.

- But I realize these are not easy issues. They often concern practices and customs that are hard to discuss. But let us have an open dialogue.
- Last year in UN General Assembly week, I co-hosted an event about early and forced marriages. There many leaders opened up about the hopes they had for their daughters. It showed that we share a common humanity and that we all care deeply about the fate of the next generation. Let us talk together and work together on how to renew our promises based on the Cairo agenda to this generation. Let us make a world of rights and opportunity happen for them. Let us live up to the ICPD promise.

Thank you