Remarks

by

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Under-Secretary-General

High Representative

for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries

and Small Island Developing States

during the Gender Just Climate Solution Awards

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14:45 - 16:15

Capacity Building Hub - Zone 4

Madrid, COP25
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Colleagues,

I would like to thank the organizers for the kind invitation to contribute to this important event, who are “Women Engage for a Common Future” and the Women and Gender Constituency, supported by the Climate Technology Center and Network, and hosted by the Paris Committee on Capacity Building.

Indeed, women around the world comprise a critical constituency in advancing sustainable development solutions of all kinds, and particularly on climate change.

I have been a champion of gender equality at a regional level, and now at a global level. In a past role in a regional intergovernmental organisation I headed a division that supported 22 Pacific island countries on gender. One of the projects that our organisation worked on together with nine other Agencies was to develop a toolkit to support climate change practitioners working in national governments, NGOs, regional and international organisations integrate gender into all aspects of policy, programming and project work.

In my current role, I visited a village in Malawi earlier this year, which was one of the centres for a clean cook stove initiative. The cooperative making these stoves comprised mostly women, whose lives were not only transformed by being employed by the project, but also in using the stove, which not only provides better efficiency for cooking, but also in the reduction of smoke affecting their health. The stoves were sold for $2, with a production target of 2 million for the year target was set for the year, and at the time of my visit it had already exceeded 50 percent in six months.

Without further ado, I have the honour to present the award-winning project in the category “Non-Technical Solutions”.

The award goes to a project that showcases sustainable, gender-responsive urban policies, addressing the challenges of solid waste management in the poor suburbs of the Colombian capital of Bogota.
The initiative has enabled 26 women waste-pickers to gain access to decent jobs as recyclers. As a result, 30 tons of paper and 12 tons of plastic are recycled annually in these suburbs.

Many other activities have been developed over the years, involving over 3,000 citizens from 9 neighbourhoods in a holistic urban concept, such as urban gardening and the creation of ‘Bankomunal’- a community savings and credit initiative for women lacking access to formal banking.

Training in environmental management, local public policies and citizens’ participation, but also combatting gender inequalities, have allowed the women to exercise their rights to protect their environment and cultural heritage, and at the same contributing to the Peace Process in Colombia.

Establishing citizens’ monitoring of public policies has led to the nomination of a woman as community leader in the district council. This has contributed to reducing gender-based violence.

The exemplary nature of this project lies in the holistic approach linking women’s socio-economic rights to a sustainable and inclusive urban development model, with a strong participatory approach.

I invite a round of applause for the award winner in the Non-Technical Category, which goes to:

**Ms. Maria Victoria Bojaca, of the organization “ENDA BOGOTA”**.