

Interactive dialogue 2 of the Summit for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda- Tackling inequalities, Empowering women and girls and leaving no one behind

Speech by Ambassador Gil Haskel – Head of Mashav, Israel
New York, UN, Sept. 25

The Year 2015 will ever be remembered in human history as the year of Sustainable development, the year in which all nations, put aside their differences and came together to adopt a comprehensive achievable development agenda, based on sustainable pillars.

This is the year in which lessons of the past turned into actions of the future. Israel is proud to have been an active partner in this historic process.

Probably the most solid pillar of this process has to be the one of equal development opportunities for all, a pillar that makes sure no-one is left behind – especially due to race, color or gender.

Israel is a strong believer, that reinforcing gender equality and the empowerment of women is an essential requirement in achieving sustainable development.

It is at the heart of human development.

Israel widely invests in this field in our global development program, and we call all our partners to do the same.

History of development activity taught us all, that statements and resolutions are not enough, and only a combination of national policy change, blended with grass root capacity building can bring about real change – this combination is the backbone of Israel's long standing international development cooperation activity worldwide.

Through MASHAV, Israel's agency for international development cooperation, we have consistently been working towards promoting women empowerment, considering it as a critical component of development policy and planning, and a central key to sustainable development, which can only be achieved when women and men enjoy equal opportunities to reach their potential.

Education – be it early childhood or adult education, is, evidently, the most powerful instrument for changing women's position in society. Investing in women's and girls' education is one of the most effective tools in achieving equality and reducing poverty.

Based on this motion, the State of Israel, in cooperation with UN-Women assisted in establishing ACTIL - the Africa Centre for Transformative and Inclusive Leadership, in partnership with Kenyatta University, in Nairobi, Kenya and the Mount Carmel International Training Center in Haifa, Israel.

The objective of ACTIL is to spread amongst African women the importance of empowerment through the creation of wealth at the household and community levels by transferring high-end agro-technological skills to women entrepreneurs and by that inducing family and community development.

Let me reaffirm and strengthen Israel's commitment to continue our efforts to develop innovative and affordable technologies and solutions, and to continue sharing our knowledge and expertise to inspire and support fellow nations, communities and individuals in their struggle to achieve sustainable development and social equality.

I find it extremely difficult to end my speech without saying a word on our region – the Middle East – the Middle East in General, and the Palestinian authority in particular, are in great need of development cooperation. Israel has always declared, and we are doing so again today, in this distinguished gathering – let us all unite together – Israelis and Arabs alike, in a common development agenda, for the goodwill of the people of our region.