

30.1 **Ms Arnholm** (Sweden):

Thank you very much, Mr Moderator. Dear ministers, dear colleagues and dear delegates, almost one year ago, I was in this very impressive room for the first time. I was here to participate in the "Stand up for Malala" event. I would like to bring this brave and courageous girl to this meeting as well. Her struggle for the right to education must be at the core of the UNESCO and the post-2015 agendas. I think her example of taking action on her values and really walking the talk should make her a role model for all of us.

30.2 I would also like to mention another important and somewhat older woman, who we heard at the beginning of the meeting, after lunch. Ms Mlambo-Ngcuka, Executive Director of UN Women, stated very clearly that there must be a stand-alone goal on gender equality in the post-2015 agenda. I would really like to emphasize that.

30.3 In my country, Sweden, and in my country's region, the Nordic region, we still have a long way to go before all individuals can form their lives without being stuck in the straitjacket of gender norms. But still we have come a long way.

I know many are envious that we, the Nordic countries, score high when it comes to global gender-gap ratings. What does this depend upon? Well, I can assure you that it is not the air we breathe. It is not the dark winter nights or the snow. I am quite sure that it comes down to education for all. We have had education for all boys and girls since the 1840s. That is quite a long time and I am sure that if you have to pick one thing and stay focused on one goal, I think that education for all is the way to go.

30.4 I would like to stress, too, that this stand-alone goal for gender equality must take into account not only women and girls but also men and boys. In Sweden, as well as in many other countries, we now face the fact that boys are falling behind when it comes to education and results in schools. All 15-year old boys in Sweden can read, but 25% of them cannot understand and make use of what they read. I think that is a huge problem that underlines the fact that we must make gender equality for boys and girls, men and women, one stand-alone goal.

30.5 Finally, I would just like to point out that Malala is a very young opinion-maker of the world and someone who has really made a difference. I think that to listen to the young is really the way to go and I would like to congratulate UNESCO for a successful Youth Forum that took place last week. I want to make sure that we listen carefully and take care of the recommendation that the young people of the world left for us.