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ANNUAL DESMOND TUTU INTERNATIONAL PEACE LECTURE

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‘WOMEN AT THE HEART OF SUSTAINABLE PEACE’

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It is an honour and a pleasure to be here in Cape Town to deliver the annual Desmond Tutu International Peace Lecture.

The title of my lecture is ‘women at the heart of sustainable peace’.

Arch, how many times have we heard you say that the world would be a peaceful place if it were ruled by women? Your record for speaking out for women’s empowerment is exemplary, in your work here in South Africa and through your foundation. You are known internationally as a champion of women, and as Chair of the Elders you led, with characteristic vigour, our Girls Not Brides campaign. And Leah, you have been a role model and example for women in your work for the cause of equality and women’s rights, and your tireless campaign to organise South Africa’s domestic workers into a union to fight for equality in pay and conditions of work. You have had an extraordinary impact on the lives of those around you and millions more. I salute you both.

In this lecture I want to talk about why women should be at the forefront of peace building, and the kinds of initiatives that need to be taken to ensure that we are. To do this I will draw on my own experiences, particularly working in the Great Lakes region of Africa. A peaceful world requires not only the end of conflict but also the end of the kind of injustices – poverty, inequality, the risks posed to development by climate change – that plague our world. So I will also speak of my experience working on climate action and climate justice, to discuss with you recent initiatives of women involved in leadership on climate. I will conclude by

considering the question of women's leadership: how women lead and how we can further support each other by sharing experiences and sharing knowledge.

Women's participation in the prevention and resolution of conflicts is critical to building sustainable peace because no society can develop – economically, politically or socially – when half of its population is marginalized. So how do we put women at the heart of sustainable peace?

In the context of international law, the starting point is UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security adopted in 2000. This instrument stresses the importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in all efforts for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security as well as promoting special measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, in particular rape and sexual abuse, in situations of conflict. However, initially progress was slow and few women were appointed to senior positions in conflict situations, either by the UN or other bodies.

In 2009 the deputy Secretary General of the UN asked me to chair a civil society advisory committee to the UN on Resolution 1325 to see how we could use the tenth anniversary to strengthen it and demand implementation. I, in turn, asked Bineta Diop, then executive director of Femmes Africa Solidarité, to co-chair this advisory committee with me. We conducted hearings during 2010 in different parts of the world where we encouraged women civil society leaders to share their perspectives and analyses, and we listened to the experiences of women working at grassroots level seeking to participate in peacemaking and peace building. I recall one woman saying that 'a typical peace process involved bad men forgiving other bad men in fancy hotels in front of television cameras!' We learned about the initiatives women were taking, including pressing for national and regional Plans of Action under Council Resolution 1325. The UN Secretary General committed to appoint more women as his special representatives in post conflict countries.

Bineta Diop and I then persuaded President Museveni to hold a ministerial Security Council meeting on the issue, in October 2010 while Uganda held the Security Council chair. It was one of the longest and best attended Security Council meetings ever, at which the participating government ministers, including US secretary of state Hilary Clinton, brought their opinions to bear, raised the profile of the issues related to women, peace and security,

bringing it more into the public conscience, and agreed to strengthen significantly its application.

When, in February 2013, Secretary General Ban Ki-moon appointed me as his special envoy for the Great Lakes Region of Africa, he made it clear that he wanted, for the first time, to appoint a woman as a senior mediator in a conflict situation. I felt both honoured and challenged in accepting this post, but it was also clear to me that as a woman I would somehow have to try to do this differently, I would have to draw on my experience and work in promoting and strengthening the resolution on women, peace and security, for now, it was not just talk but action.

The Great Lakes region has been plagued by decades of political instability, armed conflicts and humanitarian crises, against a backdrop of tensions over natural resources and other potentially destabilizing factors. The use of rape as a weapon of war in the conflict – the degree, methods and viciousness of the use of sexual violence – have been well documented.

My appointment as special envoy followed the adoption of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the region, signed on 24 February 2013 by initially eleven Heads of State, and guaranteed by four institutions: the UN, the African Union, the Conference of the Great Lakes Region and SADC. Achieving a peace accord itself was a remarkable feat. My role as special envoy would involve formulating a plan of action for Heads of State to implement this framework, which I characterised as a ‘Framework of Hope’, with the end goal of moving towards sustainable peace in the region. The eleven Heads of State – rising to thirteen when Kenya and Sudan signed up – were all men. When I asked them each to nominate a suitable candidate to form a technical support committee to plan and guide the oversight mechanism for the framework, all of them nominated men.

Arch, my friend, women do not rule the world yet.

So, how to mitigate this clear gender imbalance? Again I turned to my friend, Bineta Diop, now the AU Commission’s Special Envoy for Women, Peace and Security, for help. She agreed to attend meetings of the Technical Support Committee to ensure that issues of gender and women’s empowerment were given priority.

We had to do more. We had to change approach, so that the process involved not just political leaders – the men – but also *all* of civil society, including women. And we had to be careful not to limit women’s engagement in the process to the issue of gender-based violence, as that tends to continue the characterisation of women as victims. Prevention of gender-based and sexual violence situations is a significant priority that requires concentrated effort by women and men in the peace-building process. But for too long in the Great Lakes region, as in other situations of conflict throughout the world, women have been merely viewed as victims, not as agents of change. Women in the region have been subjected to extreme brutality – including sexual violence – during the conflict, but they have also cared for their families and emerged as leaders in their communities while the men took up arms to fight. Women have done so much groundwork mobilising and organising for peace at the grassroots level, and this work needs to be acknowledged. Empowerment of women requires their full participation at *all* levels and on *all* issues of decision-making and peace building. We had to broaden women’s role to include participation in the high-level negotiations traditionally the realm of the elite men: implementation, monitoring and accountability under all aspects of the framework; progress on livelihoods, development, agriculture, access to energy; political transition, reconstruction, and post-conflict justice.

To counterbalance the men-only oversight mechanism and technical support committee, I initiated a parallel platform for ‘women’s voices in the region, to be heard and influence the regional and national mechanisms’. The Women’s Platform, launched in January of this year, aims to provide support to women’s groups that are active in four areas: advocating for and monitoring progress on the framework’s implementation and plans of action under 1325; combating violence against women and supporting survivors; supporting women’s livelihoods and participation in development; and promoting local access to clean energy. Support is provided through grants for women’s organisations; convening organisations for capacity-building and shared learning; and advocating with the donor community and philanthropic bodies to increase resources for women’s organisations.

The action plan adopted by the Heads of State in January 2014 for implementation of the region’s framework of hope, embraces benchmarks and activities specifically pertaining to women: women serving in local and cross-border conflict management that emphasise early warning and early response; inclusion of women in addressing sources of instability and promoting cross-border reconciliation dialogues; inclusion of women in efforts to support,

advocate for and monitor progress on the framework's implementation; women's inclusion in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programs; and ending impunity for, responding to, and preventing future sexual and gender-based violence.

By increasing the role of women in the peace building process at all levels and promoting in the action plan women's inclusion in the implementation mechanisms, Heads of State have made some progress in creating space for women to participate, but I have to sound a note of caution. We are not there yet, and the work required to unravel this complex conflict, to effect political transition and reconstruction, to develop structures for post-conflict justice, and to ensure security, including economic and social security, is very much ongoing and requires continued monitoring and scrutiny. It is a source of joy and relief that the Special Envoy appointed to succeed me, Said Djinnit (when the Secretary General appointed me as Special Envoy on Climate Change in July) fully supports the Women's Platform and making women central to decision making. It is great when men champion women's equality – as Arch has done all his life.

I want to shift emphasis, now, for a few minutes, to discuss the work I am currently undertaking on climate change and climate justice.

The physical world faces potential catastrophe because of climate change and we are running out of time to take the necessary steps. We need to rapidly and equitably make the transition to a carbon neutral world. This is the only way to avoid the consequences of a world that would be three to four degrees warmer than pre-industrial levels. The consequences include more extreme weather, rising food insecurity, the spread of disease, higher levels of poverty and instability, and the displacement of possibly 200 million people by 2050. We need to change our economic systems – how we produce energy, how we use our land and other natural resources, how we transport people and goods, and how we live, eat and work – if we are to survive. We simply cannot have a peaceful and prosperous future unless we act on climate change.

Climate action is an area where women across all sectors of society are leading the way in efforts to build resilience and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Women like Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, South Africa's Minister for International Relations and Cooperation. Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, who calls me 'Mama Mary', presided over the 2011 UN Climate Change Conference, COP17 in Durban. She worked extraordinarily hard and

stayed with the debate right to the end, which, after a marathon session of negotiations, led to a deal being reached, ‘the Durban Platform’. This Durban Platform brings us to Paris next year where world leaders have undertaken to agree terms to a legally binding treaty to address climate change. The deal came out of a progressive alliance of small island states, less developed countries, African states, and the EU, with South Africa coming in and bringing with it the other BRICS economies so that finally China and the US had no choice but to participate.

By a happy coincidence three women chaired successive COPs in Copenhagen, Cancun and Durban, and those three women – Connie Hedegaard, Patricia Espinosa and Maite Nkoana-Mashabane – agreed to lead a Troika of Women Leaders on Gender and Climate Change, mainly women Ministers of Environment and Energy, and we included some supportive men. My Foundation organises the Troika of Women Leaders, and we had a side event at the COP in Durban, where we plotted to bring gender balance into all future COPs, and to have gender as a standing item on the Agenda. The Doha COP in 2012 was chaired by a man, but we had organised so effectively that he was willing to put the issue for negotiation. I will never forget the emotion in the hall when the decision was adopted to have gender balance in all delegations to the COP, and in bodies such as the Green Climate Fund, and to work for gender sensitive climate policy. Christiana Figueres, the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) called it the ‘Doha Miracle’ as we clapped and cheered and hugged each other!

Two weeks ago, on the eve of the New York Climate Summit, building towards Paris 2015, my foundation together with UN Women co-hosted a Women’s Leadership Forum: ‘Raising Ambition for Climate Action.’ Current and former women Heads of State and Government, ministers, leaders from grassroots, youth and indigenous organisations, civil society, the private sector, the scientific community, and the UN system, came together to demonstrate women’s leadership on climate action and highlight gender-responsive actions at all levels.

We discussed climate actions that benefit the climate while also benefitting people and protecting their rights. Responding to climate change means doing things differently, and doing things differently means it is possible to break away from old norms. So climate action can be gender-sensitive and can protect rights. It can be designed to reduce inequalities and to

contribute to poverty reduction.

Approaching climate change as an issue of inter-generational justice, as a development and human rights issue, is what *climate justice* is all about. Climate justice provides us with principles to inform effective and transformative actions, including participation, gender equality, the protection of human rights including the right to development, and the need for fairness in sharing both the burdens and the benefits of climate action.

By amplifying the voices of the women leaders participating in the forum, we sought to inject an increased sense of urgency into government efforts to develop innovative, sustainable and inclusive responses to the climate change challenge. Christiana Figueres had a practical recommendation. She said that women in positions of authority, like her, when they come into a room dominated by men, should ask ‘what’s wrong with this room?’ She has started to do that, and it is having an effect!

Leadership in a women’s way does not just involve political leaders, Heads of State, ministers, business leaders and heads of agencies. It encompasses community leadership, indigenous leadership, grassroots and youth leadership. What distinguishes leadership in a women’s way is the insight of women, and the willingness to encourage and mentor young women. Having now come into more opportunities for leadership, we still lead with a consciousness of how to do it, a critique of how we’re doing it, a determination we’ll do it better and a reaching out to all of those who exercise leadership. Women are more comfortable linking with their counterparts because we all profoundly understand that the issues are more important than the individual. We need to work further to ensure that we have a leadership that connects the various ways in which we come together, communicating and collaborating, sharing experiences, sharing knowledge to make a difference.

There was a very special moment during the opening ceremony of the Climate Summit in New York on 23 September, when a woman from the Marshall Islands, Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner spoke, and then read her poem. I had met this 26 year old on the climate march, and she is an exceptional young leader. What I liked was that she spoke to us as a leader and a mother, telling her baby ‘I take this moment to apologise to you, we are drawing the line here because baby we are going to fight!’

At the concluding ceremony of the Climate Summit another great woman leader spoke, and she spoke on behalf of the Elders. Graca Machel judged well the message she wanted to convey. There was a self-congratulatory mood in the hall, and she reminded the Heads of State and delegates gathered about ‘courage, leadership and obligation’ and told them bluntly: ‘I have the impression that there is a huge mismatch between the magnitude of the challenge and the response that we heard here today.’ She told them they need to go back to the drawing board and ask hard questions, and to step up ambition. That was real leadership!

In conclusion, let me borrow again a phrase that I heard Arch use when we were on a panel together a few years ago. Arch was speaking with animation and enthusiasm, and a woman journalist accosted him with a question: ‘Archbishop Tutu, why are you such an optimist?’ He looked at her, shook his head, and said, ‘No dear, I am not an optimist, I am a prisoner of hope.’

That is a good way to remain hopeful in the face of such terrible outrages and human rights violations in our world today. But I am particularly hopeful that women will take their rightful place in the 21st century, and that this will make all the difference!

Thank you.