


United Nations Nations Unies

**Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and
Advancement of Women**

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS
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4 February 2009

Dear Ms. Bolen,

Many thanks for your letter of 4 December 2008 to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, in which you note the significance of both his commitment to ending violence against women and President Obama's selection of Ms. Hillary Clinton and Dr. Susan Rice for key cabinet level positions. Many thanks also for the copy of your book "Urgent Message from Mother: Gather the Women, Save the World."

The Secretary-General considers this an opportune occasion to bring the discussion of issues related to gender equality and advancement of women to the fore. The United Nations is therefore committed to pursuing all avenues for strengthening its own capacity to address the challenges that women face and harness the opportunities that are available to them.

The Secretary-General has taken note of your suggestion to hold a 5th World Conference on Women early in this century. The process of preparing for a major world conference on women is long, as you rightly pointed out in your letter. While the decision to hold a world conference rests with Member States, once it is taken, the Secretary-General is committed to ensuring its effective implementation.

I invite you to join forces with the Secretary-General's Campaign to end violence against women. Violence against women is a major obstacle to promoting women's full engagement in society. It must be addressed if we are to succeed in meeting the call which you make very eloquently in your book, "Gather the women and save the world".

Yours sincerely,



Rachel Mayanja
Assistant Secretary-General
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