

**Speech by Head of Delegation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
Jacqueline Prins during the session of the UN Commission on the
Status of Women 62.**

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**[Het gesproken woord geldt! / Check against delivery! / Seul le
texte prononcé fait foi! / Es gilt das gesprochene Wort!]**

Mister / Madam Chair, thank you,

I am honoured to make this statement on behalf of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, which exists of four countries: Curacao, Sint Maarten, Aruba and my own country the Netherlands.

In all these four countries, and all around the world, we hear stories of ‘Me Too’. And I believe ‘Me Too’ is the sound of courageous women and girls. A voice of gender injustice that used to be a whisper. In 2018 it is louder than ever before.

I wish for a world in which Me Too refers to equal access. When women and girls say Me Too, it should mean ‘yes, I also have equal access to land rights. Yes, I also have equal access to economic independence. And yes, I also can decide freely over my body and my life’. Me Too.

Unfortunately, this is not the case yet. Not yet do rural women in the world have equal access to credit, means of production, land, property rights and decision-making on policies and investments that affect them. Not yet is there equality in access to knowledge, funding, leadership positions and the labour market. And this situation is outrageous.

Therefore, the Kingdom of the Netherlands supports women's organisations to enhance equal access to resources and opportunities, through programmes such as 'Funding Leadership and Opportunities for Women' and 'Leading from the South'. We will continue to support women worldwide in making their voices heard and protecting their space to speak up.

But let's not forget rural women in the Netherlands and in Europe. Even though women often work on the farm of their partner, only 11% of agricultural companies in the Netherlands are owned by women. Not yet do women hold an equal share in decision making power. Rural women in the Kingdom of the Netherlands do not have equal access to effective participation, decision-making and leadership in women's enterprises, farmers' organizations, producer cooperatives, trade unions, and other organizations; not yet.

If we want women and girls to have 'equal access' in the Kingdom of the Netherlands, in Europe and in the world, we need to tackle

universal root causes of gender inequality. One of the root causes for unequal access is gender stereotyping and the problem of gender norms. It is the misconception that a woman can only assist her partner in the family business but cannot own and run the farm. That she is solely responsible for doing household chores and her male partner needs to be the financial provider. It is me being judged for being a mother who is ambitious and works long hours.

Gender stereotypes do not do justice to individual preferences and talents. They limit personal development and cause societal problems. They prevent equal access for women and girls.

Ladies and gentlemen.

We know that the coming days our diplomats will have endless discussions on listings. They will disagree on the groups of women particular texts should apply to. Let me be open about our position. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is committed to the inclusion of ALL women and girls. Migrant women, working women, single mothers, LGBTI women, black women, rural women, sex workers, older women, refugee women, business women: yes, we are all included.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is striving towards a world in which all people, women and girls, men and boys, are provided equal access. Where rural women and girls are free to make the choices that fit their

individual talents and where they can express themselves in a way that is true to their identity. Free from gender stereotyping and with equal access to decision-making, resources, and equal access to opportunities. Because in the end this results in equal access to happiness for all.

Thank you.