



21 May 2020

Dear Ms. Donovan and Ms. Kanikkannan,

I would like to thank you for your letter of 19 February 2020. I apologize for the delayed response which was due to an administrative oversight from my office. We appreciate your raising this issue with us which has been brought to the attention of colleagues working on UN Women partnerships.

UN Women is strongly opposed to any actions that promote discrimination of any sort, in line with multiple UN standards. We understand the concerns that you raise.

UN Women also believes that collaboration with the private sector is essential to achieve the rights of women and girls. Private sector actors hold enormous power over people's lives and can, as you have noted, have both positive and negative impacts depending on their business practices. UN Women works with a number of private sector partners through various vehicles to try to encourage private sector action that advances the rights of CEDAW and the objectives of the Beijing Platform for Action. This work always requires balancing the advantages of such partnership with the risks inherent in private sector engagement.

While you will appreciate that we are not able to provide details of our discussions with our partners, we are grateful for your sharing the information in your letter and will be taking it into account in our partnerships in the future.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka".

Phumzile Mlambo-Ngcuka
Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director

Ms. Paula Donovan
Co-Director
AIDS-Free World

Ms. Sharanya Kanikkannan
Legal and Policy Advisor
AIDS-Free World