

Examen d'accréditation d'interprètes de langue française 2021 – Anglais (SERIE 2)

Anglais / discours 3

Réunion : The New School – Women and power

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Introduction : Intervention de l'actuel Secrétaire général des Nations Unies sur l'égalité femmes-hommes.

Éléments à fournir (vocabulaire) : aucun

Dear students, dear friends,

As a man born in Western Europe, I have enjoyed many privileges. But my childhood in a military dictatorship in Portugal opened my eyes to injustice and oppression. As a student doing voluntary work in the slums of Lisbon, throughout my political career and as the leader of the UN Refugee agency, I have always felt compelled to fight against injustice, inequality or the denial of human rights. And today as Secretary General of the United Nations, I see one overwhelming injustice across the globe, an abuse that is crying out for attention, that is gender inequality and discrimination against women and girls.

Everywhere women are worse off than men, simply because they are women. Migrant and refugee women, those with disabilities and women members of minorities of all kinds face even greater barriers. And *these* discrimination harms us all. Just as slavery and colonialism were a stain on previous centuries, women's inequality should shame us all in the 21st. Because it is not only unacceptable, it is stupid. Only through the equal participation of women can we benefit from the intelligence, experience and insights of all of humanity. Women's equal participation is vital to stability, *help* prevent conflict and promote sustainable and inclusive development. Gender equality is the prerequisite for a better world.

Dear friends and dear students,

This is not a new issue. Women have been fighting for their rights for centuries. The women's rights movement came of age in the 20th century. Women heads of state dispelled any doubts about women's ability to lead. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights asserted the equal rights of men and women and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women outlined a vision of gender equality.

Today, young women like Malala Yousafzai and Nadia Murad are breaking barriers and creating new models of leadership. But despite these advances, the state of women's rights remains dire. Inequality and discrimination are the norm still everywhere. Progress has slowed to a standstill and in some cases has been reversed. There is a strong and relentless pushback against women's

rights. Violence against women, including femicide, is at epidemic levels and more than one in three women will experience violence in some form during her lifetime.

Legal protections against rape and domestic violence are being diluted or rolled back in some places and rape within marriage continues to be legal in 34 countries. Women's sexual and reproductive rights are under threat from different sides. Women leaders and public figures face harassment, threats and abuse online and offline. The policing of personal freedom and dress are a daily reality for millions of women and girls. From governments to corporate boards to award ceremonies, women are still excluded from the top table. Policies that penalize women like austerity and coercive reproduction are back in fashion. Peace negotiations still largely exclude women 20 years after all countries pledged to include them. And the digital age could make these inequalities even more entrenched.

Dear friends and dear students,

Gender equality is fundamentally a question of power. We live in a male-dominated world with a male-dominated culture and we have done so for millennia. Patriarchy, a social system founded on inheritance through the male line, continues to affect every area of our lives. We are all men and women, girls and boys, suffering the consequences. Male-dominated power structures underpin our economies, our political systems and our corporations.

All too often, alongside violence, control, male-dominated power structures and even discrimination, women and girls contend with centuries of misogyny and the erasure of their achievements. From ridiculing of women as hysterical or hormonal to the routine judgment of women based on their looks, misogyny has been everywhere.

The damage done by patriarchy and inequality goes far beyond women and girls. Men have a gender too. It is defined so rigidly that it can trap men and boys into stereotypes that involve risky behavior, physical aggression and an unwillingness to seek advice or support. Around the world, men have shorter lifespans than women, they are more likely to be in prison, to use and experience violence and they are less likely to seek help. We have defined men's power in ways that come at great cost to men themselves.

Gender equality has enormous benefits for men's personal relationships. Men who share caregiving and spend more time with their families are happier and have happier children. On a larger scale, transforming the balance of power is essential not only as a question of human rights, personal development, health and well-being. It is critical to solving some of the most damaging and intractable problems of our age, from deepening inequality and polarization to the climate crisis.

Dear friends and dear students,

I see five areas in which achieving gender equality can transform our world.

First, conflict and violence. There is a straight line between violence against women, civil oppression and conflicts. Trillions of dollars are spent every year on peace and security, but we should be asking whose peace and whose security. Interstate conflict makes headlines but in some of the most violent parts of the world, levels of femicide - the killing of women - are comparable to a war zone. Rape and sexual slavery are routinely used as a tactic of war and misogyny is part of the ideology of almost all violent extremist groups. Conversely, involving women leaders and decision-makers in mediation and peace processes leads to more lasting and sustainable peace.

Second, the climate crisis. The existential emergency we are facing is the result of decisions that were taken mainly by men but have a disproportionate impact on women and girls. Drought and famine mean women work harder to find food and water, while heat waves, storms and floods kill more women and girls than men and boys.

Dear students and dear friends,

The third area in which women's rights and equal opportunities can create a breakthrough is in building inclusive economies. Worldwide, women still earn just 77 cents for every dollar earned by men. The gender pay gap is one reason why 70% of the world's poor are women and girls. Women's equal economic rights and opportunities are a global imperative if we are to build a fair globalization that works for all.

Fourth, the digital divide. Digital technology can be an enormous force for good, but I am deeply concerned by the male domination of technological professions in universities, start-ups and Silicon Valleys of this world. And unless women play an equal role in designing digital technologies, progress on women's rights could be reversed. Lack of diversity will not only expand gender inequality, it will limit the innovation and scope of new technologies, making them less useful for everyone.

Fifth and finally, political representation. Women's participation in parliaments around the world has doubled in the last 25 years, to one quarter. Fewer than one tenth of states are led by a woman. One of my first priorities as Secretary-General of the United Nations was to bring more women into leadership positions. On the 1st of January this year, we achieved gender parity: 90 women and 90 men in the ranks of full-time senior leadership two years ahead of the target date I set at the start of my tenure. Let us all play our part and I thank you.