



His Excellency António Guterres
Secretary-General
United Nations
405 E 45th St.
New York, NY 10017

January 16, 2026

Dear Secretary-General Guterres:

As Members of the Democratic Women's Caucus and Reproductive Freedom Caucus, we write to express our concern regarding the proposal to merge the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UN Women under the UN80 Initiative. We support the work of UNFPA and UN Women. In order for each entity to successfully execute their distinct missions that support women and girls around the world, UNFPA and UN Women must remain separate.

More than 50 years ago, UNFPA was founded with bipartisan support from the United States.¹ Despite the views and actions of the current administration, we as Members of Congress have always been, and remain, committed to supporting UNFPA's global efforts to advance sexual and reproductive health and rights. As our legislative record can attest, we anticipate a future when we will once again work together with UNFPA to ensure a world where every pregnancy is wanted, every childbirth is safe, and every young person's potential is fulfilled.² UN Women, founded in 2010, has a separate and powerful mandate: to champion global gender equality by delivering programs, policies, and standards that uphold women's human rights and to ensure coherence and coordination across the UN system.³

The proposal to merge UNFPA and UN Women threatens to undermine their essential mandates and unique operational roles. The merger would jeopardize decades of global progress to address the unmet need for contraception, end preventable maternal deaths, center rights-based approaches, and advance gender equality at precisely the moment when sustained, consistent

1 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *United States of America* (UNFPA donor profile), <https://www.unfpa.org/donor/united-states-america>

2 United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), *About Us* (UNFPA), <https://www.unfpa.org/about-us>

3 United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN Women), *About UN Women* (UN Women), <https://www.unwomen.org/en/about-us/about-un-women>

leadership and focused attention is most needed. By weakening UNFPA and UN Women's unique mandates, we are concerned that the world will be unable to meet the 2030 UN Sustainable Development Goals, particularly Goal 5 on gender equality⁴ and Goal 3 on health,⁵ including universal access to sexual and reproductive health care and reducing maternal mortality. Safe, affordable reproductive and maternal health is a cornerstone of gender equity, but the broader work of empowering all women and girls globally extends well beyond UNFPA's mandate and requires the independent role of UN Women.

Global leadership and coordination are needed now more than ever before. As countries cut their international spending, , the world experiences the loss of USAID's technical expertise, and policy changes globally harm communities' ability to exercise their rights and get the care and information they want and need, this proposal risks further watering down the mandate, financing, and prioritization of sexual and reproductive health and rights. Additionally, this proposal would limit the scope and resources dedicated to the key work of UN Women including combatting gender-based violence, advancing economic and educational opportunities for women and girls, and promoting the participation of women in peacebuilding efforts.

We urge you to reconsider the proposed merger of UNFPA and UN Women. Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter and for your commitment to sexual and reproductive health care rights and gender equality for all women and girls.

Sincerely,



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Lois Frankel
Member of Congress



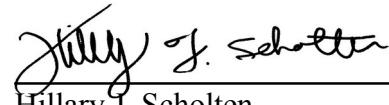
Grace Meng
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



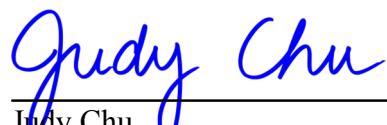
Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress

4 United Nations, *Achieve Gender Equality and Empower All Women and Girls* (Sustainable Development Goal 5), <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

5 United Nations, *Health — Sustainable Development Goal 3: Ensure Healthy Lives and Promote Well-Being for All at All Ages* (United Nations Sustainable Development), <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/health/>



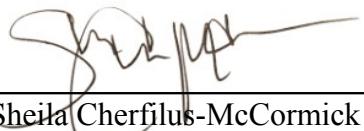
Judy Chu
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Deborah K. Ross
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Gwen S. Moore
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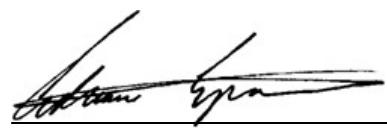
Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
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Frederica S. Wilson
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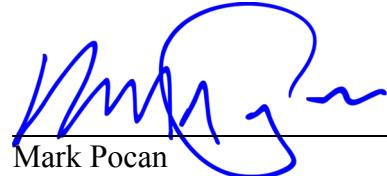
Laura Friedman
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Mark Pocan
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Sylvia R. Garcia
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Dina Titus
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Lizzie Fletcher
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CC: The Honorable Mike Waltz, U.S. Representative to the United Nations
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