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Excellencies, delegates, colleagues.

Thank you to the organizers – the Finnish Federation of Graduate Women, the National Council of Women of Finland, the Coalition of Finnish Women's Associations – NYTKIS, UN Women Finland, YWCA Finland, and the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations. I am pleased to be joining this seminar and to provide a few comments.

Thank you to Mona Sinha for the insightful and strategic Keynote Speech.

We have heard how essential it is to harness the potential of technology and innovation to accelerate progress to achieve gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, while ensuring that the use of digital tools and services does not compound existing gender gaps or further sideline the most marginalized.
Indeed, integrating a gender perspective in technology and innovation is crucial for achieving the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

As the digital world becomes an increasing reality for all of us, Mona raises some critical points on how despite their potential to do good, digital technologies may perpetuate gender inequality and marginalization, potentially even reversing some of the gains previously made. It is concerning that:

The digital world is powerful but it remains unregulated
That women continue to have limited decision-making roles and power in this world

Despite efforts, the digital gender divide persists and continues to grow, especially for the most marginalized and underrepresented groups

Women are now being exposed to new forms of harrasment and gender-based violence, and their online presence and user data is being misused to invade their privacy and control them

Clearly safeguards and oversight are needed to ensure that technology does not become another tool of oppression but is leveraged to promote and expand women's human rights.

I think Mona is right in encouraging us to "seize this opportunity to transform the digital world as a centerpiece in the movement for advancing gender rights."

To make this happen, we need to call for a great paradigm shift, to reassert human agency over technology and explore new avenues to adopt a human-centric approach to digitalization, with the feminist principles of inclusion, intersectionality, and systemic change at its core.

And, yes, to facilitate this kind of systematic change transnational and multi-stakeholder coordinated action will be necessary. The UN backed Global Digital Compact provides an important starting point to make our digital future more equitable and inclusive. However, as noted, it will be critical here to ensure that women's voices and needs are included in the Global Digital compact. The Generation Equality Action Coalition on Technology and Innovation, convened by UN Women, is also another opportunity for a collective, multi-sectoral, multi-stakeholder response.

To close, let me reinforce some key actions we need to take.

We must:

- prioritize digital equity to close the gender digital divide by increasing women and girls' digital literacy and skills with an intersectional lens, and integrating gender perspectives in national digital policies;
- focus on education, and create gender-responsive digital learning environments, remove stereotypes, and transform STEM education;
- promote the participation, employment, and leadership of women in technology and innovation, including policies that facilitate the recruitment, promotion and retention of women in tech;
- adopt gender-responsive technology design, development, and deployment by empowering women as technology creators, and promoting participatory approaches;
- and finally, strengthen fairness, transparency, and accountability, by adopting mandatory measures to better identify, prevent and mitigate the negative impacts of digital technology on women.

Thank you.