



**Senator the Hon Penny Wong**  
**Minister for Foreign Affairs**

Bridget Mather PSM  
Chair  
Zonta Australia Committee  
admin@zontaaustralia.org.au

Dear Ms Mather

Thank you for your letter regarding the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls (SDG 5).

The Albanese Labor Government shares your strong commitment to gender equality as an essential part of sustainable development. We know that greater political and economic participation by women makes societies wealthier and more peaceful – any country that wants to develop fully must encourage the full participation of all its people.

In February, I launched DFAT's new *International Gender Equality Strategy*. The strategy outlines how Australia is driving gender equality in our international engagement, including our international development program. The strategy has five priority lines of effort:

- 1) Working to end sexual and gender-based violence and protect and advance women's sexual and reproductive health and rights;
- 2) Pursuing gender responsive peace and security efforts;
- 3) Delivering gender equitable climate action and humanitarian assistance;
- 4) Promoting women's economic equality and inclusive trade; and
- 5) Supporting locally-led approaches to women's leadership.

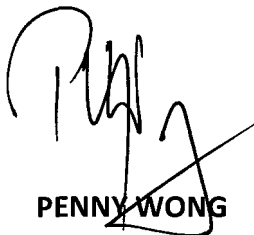
The work under this strategy complements our work under our *International Development Policy*, released by the Albanese Government in 2023, to ensure Australia's efforts are more effective in tackling poverty, supporting climate action, providing humanitarian relief and delivering health, education and economic and social development programs.

At a time of heightened global uncertainty, the Albanese Government remains steadfast in our support for human rights, gender equality, climate action, and the global rules and norms that underpin international stability and security. We are reprioritising our international development program to bolster support to our region, building economic, health and climate resilience and advancing gender equality and human rights.

In 2025-26, the Albanese Government will deliver \$5.1 billion in official development assistance – an increase of more than \$135 million from 2024-25. New development investments of more than \$3 million must include gender equality objectives, and 80 percent of all development investments will address gender equality effectively.

On behalf of the Albanese Government, I commend the work of Zonta International Australia in advocating for gender equality, ending violence against women and girls and supporting gender equal climate action in Australia and internationally. We look forward to continuing to work together in support of these goals

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Penny Wong', with a large, stylized flourish extending from the bottom right.

**PENNY WONG**

30 APR 2025