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From the Ambassador

Dame Barbara Woodward DCMG OBE

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Ms Isobel Smith
President
Soroptimist International Great Britain and Ireland

Dear Ms Smith

Thank you for your kind letter on my appointment as UK Permanent Representative and Ambassador to the UN in New York. As the first female British Ambassador to China, promoting gender equality and tackling domestic violence has been a personal commitment during my five-year ambassadorship.

While I have been inspired by the female leadership role models we have seen driving covid, I am concerned by the impact on women's working lives and the rise in domestic violence. But, I am encouraged by UN Secretary-General António Guterres' commitment to gender equality, reiterated in his recent Mandela Lecture.

This year is an important year for gender equality. We not only celebrate the 25th anniversary of the *Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action*, considered the most progressive blueprint for advancing women's rights; this year also marks ten years until the deadline to meet the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

I look forward to continuing this agenda and working with you when I move to New York.

Yours sincerely,

Barbara Woodward