AT GOALKEEPERS 17, LEADERS CHALLENGE THE WORLD TO MEET DEVELOPMENT GOALS BY 2030
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Young activists, leaders, and experts from around the world joined U.S. President Barack Obama, Canadian P.M. Justin Trudeau, Nobel Peace Prize winner Malala Yousafzai, UNSGSA Queen Máxima, hosts Bill and Melinda Gates, and other prominent figures at a day-long gathering in New York aimed at driving the support and inspiration needed to reach the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

Goalkeepers, an initiative of the Gates Foundation, was created to track progress annually and engage new leaders to develop novel solutions to a wide range of urgent development issues including poverty, hunger, gender inequality, education, disease, water and energy, war and conflict, and climate change.

The Special Advocate spoke about the power of technological innovation to open up financial access to the poor during a session on digital financial inclusion. The day’s presentations also focused on women's movements, community health worker programs, and efforts to combat child undernutrition. Outside the doors of the Goalkeepers event, the UNSGSA is also featured in a related public campaign aimed at inspiring action and commitment.

Queen Máxima’s Remarks at Goalkeepers 2017, Purpose-Driven Technology session

Good morning ladies and gentlemen! As Stephen Fry just said, as the UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate, I have been working for more than a decade on what we call financial inclusion—that is, giving everyone, everywhere the financial services they need to protect themselves against hardship, to invest in their future, and to really, finally, be able to be part of economic progress.

As the Special Advocate I’ve witnessed up close the power of purpose-driven technology to really change people’s lives. And I’ve seen that when we develop the right technology for the right reasons, we can empower billions of people. A low-income woman whose digital savings accounts will allow her to really pay the tuition for the children to go to school…Or smallholder farmers who’ve expanded production thanks to online credit…Or migrant workers who can use safe mobile payments to send home money to their loved ones in their home countries.

We have really made great progress, but still today 40 percent of the world's adults are locked out of the financial system. We need to move much more quickly. One reason for this urgency is our commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals. Financial inclusion has been widely recognized as a crucial enabler for reaching these goals in 2030. So if we want to catalyze real progress, financial inclusion needs to be in place soon.

A new revolution in financial technology is beginning to unfold. Blockchain, artificial intelligence, and big data are already really transforming the financial landscape. In China, Kenya, and Tanzania, for example, financial services are being provided on a massive scale thanks to innovative technologies. Today, technology is making it possible also for people to co-design financial services to reflect what they really need.

And I cannot stress enough, if we do not listen to the people's needs, we're really not going to be able to help them transform their lives and really develop themselves. At the same time we must ensure that we protect their privacy, their dignity, and their rights.

I'm really very excited when I say that this work, ten years ago, it was going very slowly. But today with technology, I think we might actually be able to make it even before I retire, if I ever do.

Thank you very much, everybody, and please, let's partner to make history.
Click [here](#) to watch video of the event.