

MESSAGE

I would like to extend my warm greetings to everyone participating in the *Women of the Mountains* conference taking place in Utah addressing the welfare of women and children in mountainous regions.

For many years I have tried to promote positive human values and the importance of compassion in human society, for it has always seemed to me that it is essential that we foster these qualities in our children when they are young. This is why the relationship between mothers and children is so pivotal. Nearly all of us receive our first lessons in peaceful living from our mothers, because of our need for love and to survive. From the earliest stages of our growth, we are completely dependent upon our mother's care and it is very important for us that she expresses her love. If children do not receive proper affection, in later life they often find it hard to love others. This is one of the essential ways in which a mother's love, in the long run, has a bearing on peace in the world.

Therefore, it is clear to me that taking steps to ensure the welfare and protection of women and children, improving their prospects for health, education and economic development and encouraging women in leadership roles can only benefit them and society at large.

My own mother, who showed me the basic value of kindness, was a woman of the mountains. Consequently I have some personal interest in the themes of your conference and happily offer you my support.

THE DALAI LAMA (SIGNED)

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