

Statement

by

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*High-level Plenary meeting of the
49th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women*

Madame Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentleman,

Allow me to congratulate you Madame Chair, your Bureau and the Secretariat of the Division for the Advancement of Women on the preparation of this very important session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Mr. Kofi Annan, the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for Reports that represent a valuable contribution to and encouragement for our future work.

Madame Chair,

The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina underlines its commitment for reaffirmation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform of Action and the outcome document of the 23rd special session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. We would like to confirm our support for and our commitment to the full and effective implementation of these documents as well as of the agreed conclusions adopted at the sessions on the Commissions on the Status of Women since Beijing.

We also recall our commitment to the achievement of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and its Optional Protocol.

Madame Chair,

I am pleased to inform you that the National Action Plan for Promotion of Women's position according to the Beijing Declaration is, for the first time, under the preparation in Bosnia and Herzegovina. There are also some significant changes which should be mentioned, in particular, the results already made in improving the women's and young girls' position and protection of their basic rights in the areas defined under the Beijing Platform for Action.

From Beijing + 5, Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted significant number of laws in the field of the gender equity and equality, and the most important ones are as follows: Gender Equity Law, Family Law and Law on Protection Against Domestic Violence.

I would like to emphasize here that the Gender Equity Law defines both direct and indirect discrimination, gender based violence, disturbance and sexual disturbance and introduces sanctions against offenders. The Law defines and enacts further general elements of proceedings in institutions and subjects within the institutions in order to observe gender equality principles in the areas referred to the Law as follows : education, work and access to all kinds of resources, social protection, health care, sports and culture, public life, media and gender based violence.

The Law, along with new laws, sets forth obligations of competent authorities to adopt programs and measures for achievements of gender equality in all areas in compliance with the Gender Equality Law provisions.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina, the gender equality, in general, is increasingly considered as a criteria in shaping policy, strategy, work programs, laws and etc..

Madame Chair,

Allow me to explain the National Institutional Mechanisms for gender mainstreaming in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Due to its specific state structure, it is very important to mainstream gender at all levels (state, entity, cantons, municipalities), as well as ensure that all institutional mechanisms are functional.

All institutional mechanisms have been established within the legislative and executive authorities. However, we are aware of the fact that the very establishment of those mechanisms is not sufficient to fully mainstream gender in the country.

The Gender Equality Agency has been established at the state level. At the entity level, Gender Centers as expert bodies, directly reporting to entity Prime Ministers, and focal points nominated in each entity ministry, have been established as well. Co-ordination Boards for gender equality are operational at the cantonal level, as well as Commissions for gender equality at the municipal level.

Institutional mechanisms for gender equity and equality in partnership with NGOs work on the following activities: gender awareness building, improvement of relevant statistics without which adequate specific actions are not possible, elimination of women trafficking in the region, elimination of the domestic violence as well as gender based violence, media promotion of gender issues, women and young girls health empowerment and gender mainstreaming in education at all levels. The Government of Bosnia and Herzegovina welcomes and encourages the activities of NGOs in implementation of numerous projects on human rights and gender equality and equity.

Madame Chair,

The Implementation of the Beijing Platform of Action is closely related to the Millennium Development Goals which are of crucial importance for Bosnia and Herzegovina's sustainable development. In Bosnia and Herzegovina context, Millennium Development Goals targets include, inter alia, increased percentage of women in executive authorities, increased rate of economically active women, and achievement of male/female equal ration in primary, secondary and higher education.

Thank you