



STATEMENT BY  
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BEFORE HIGH-LEVEL PLENARY  
49<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

ON  
REVIEW AND APPRAISAL OF THE BEIJING DECLARATION AND  
PLATFORM FOR ACTION AND  
THE OUTCOME DOCUMENT OF THE 23<sup>RD</sup> SPECIAL SESSION  
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*Please Check Against Delivery*

New York, 1 March 2005

**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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**Madame Chairperson  
Distinguished delegates**

On behalf of Indonesia's delegation, I have the great honour to extend the warmest greeting of Indonesian women and its people to all the honourable member countries attending the 49<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude and deep appreciation to the Secretariat for the excellent preparations made for this meeting and for the warm hospitality shown to all delegates.

The Government of Indonesia is committed to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The State Ministry for Women Empowerment, as the national machinery for the advancement of women, is coordinating the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Allow me to highlight the major achievements of Indonesia on the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action at the national and sub-national levels (that is, the provincial and district city levels).

As you may be aware, Indonesia was recently hit by the greatest natural disaster that has ever occurred in the history of our country. The earthquake and Tsunami in Aceh and North Sumatra not only caused the loss of many lives, mainly women and children, but also destroyed most of the island. Of its 16 districts, 11 of them were wiped out and there were almost 200 thousand casualties with thousands still missing today. On this important occasion allow me to extend our appreciation and gratitude to all international and donor agencies as well as countries that sympathised and provided real support to the victims and to our Government during the emergency phase. We expect that support will continue up to and during the rehabilitation and reconstruction phases in the aftermath of the disaster.

Since many natural disasters are caused by poor environmental management, we therefore propose to have a look at existing gender differences and inequalities in the use and management of our natural resources and the impact of such activities on the environment. Studies have shown that women as well as men play a major role in the sustainable use and management of forest ecosystems, agricultural lands, water and energy resources and the environment through human settlements. Our studies will allow us to make appropriate changes accordingly.

**Women and Poverty & Women and Economy**

Prior to the occurrence of the tsunami, Indonesia had been able to make progress in several areas to advance its social development, not the least of which was its efforts to combat poverty among women. In 2002, the Government of Indonesia established the Committee on Poverty Alleviation and equipped it with comprehensive policies and strategies aimed at employment creation, community empowerment, capacity building and social protection. To enhance national capacity and improve coordination, the Government drafted legislation for a National Strategy for Poverty Alleviation to be discussed by the Parliament. Through these strategies and policies, the Government has taken concrete steps to support poor women's economic activities

through, among other things, provision for the satisfaction of their basic needs and those of their families (for food, health, education, employment opportunities, agricultural facilities and credit schemes). The State Ministry for Women Empowerment has also given priority to promoting the productivity of women in micro and small enterprises. It is estimated that 60 percent of Indonesia's micro businesses are managed by women. This is in line with the strategies and policies underlined by the Committee on Poverty Alleviation.

In order to increase small businesswomen's access to credit, improve their marketing skills and help them acquire technology, the State Ministry for Women Empowerment has signed several useful Memorandums of Understanding with the Governor of the Central Bank (Bank of Indonesia), with the Coordinating Minister of the Economy and Finance, the Mandiri Foundation, Indonesia Cooperatives Council and Indonesia Women Business Association. An important resource for women entrepreneurs is the availability of Financial Consultants from the Banking Partnership facilitated by the Task Force of the Committee on Poverty Alleviation. Indonesia Women Business Association is one of the consultants that provide support to women in micro and small enterprises to make them more bankable. Other efforts involve mapping the activities of women in micro and small enterprises and taking note of their problems for analysis.

In dealing with poverty alleviation, especially among women, we are convinced that we should not approach the matter as a philanthropic gesture, but as a culturally honorable strategy to build the capacity of women and boost their self esteem. In this regard, adoption of a participatory approach must be emancipatory in nature. We strongly believe that there can be no genuine participation without emancipation in all areas where women are deeply involved.

### **Education and Training of Women**

The Government sought to improve women's education by referring to the 1945 Constitution which stipulates that education is the right of every citizen. This is also emphasized in Article 5 of Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System. On that basis, it is clear that equal opportunities must be provided to both males and females to acquire education. Despite this, the current situation reveals gender disparity in the national development system. The disparity becomes even more significant when related to economic conditions. Poor women have less opportunity than other groups. Besides the economic, there are several other reasons that explain the disparity, such as lower motivation among females, long distances to travel to school, the socio-culture of the community which may not value equally the education of girls and as it does boys, and marriage at a young age. At policy management level, it was found that policies in education are generally not gender biased. However, at implementation level, discriminatory practices against women occur. Further, the decision-making process for educational policy does not benefit greatly from women's participation, which in turn can result in formulating policies that are not gender sensitive. However, using the target of the Dakar framework, the Government of Indonesia hopes to minimize and, if possible,

eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005 and achieve gender equality in education by 2015. With the intensive Nine Year Compulsory Education campaign for boys and girls aged 7–12 years, the gender disparities in primary and secondary education have almost been eliminated, however at the tertiary and higher levels of education they are still obvious. One of the strategies implemented to bring about gender mainstreaming in education is the provision of scholarships for bright girls from poor families and the acceleration of programmes for the eradication of illiteracy among females aged 15 – 44 years.

Indonesia places great emphasis in this area because education and training have proven empirically to be the most effective ways to empower women. Ultimately, the goal is to build their capacity for self-empowerment in the future. To do this, we have to identify a potential group of educated women who will serve as a collective stimulus to foster the growth of awareness for self-empowerment **in order to prevent women being hindered in their socio-economic and socio-cultural empowerment.**

### **Women and Health**

In reproductive health and family planning, Indonesia is engaged in several activities to eliminate practices of discrimination in providing health services for women. The highest level of political commitment toward the provision of reproductive health care was actually made almost 20 years ago to reduce maternal mortality through the safe motherhood programme. Later on, the programme was transformed into the Mother Friendly Movement and "Alert Husband". The establishment of Mother Friendly Hospital and Mother Friendly Sub-District facilities allows respectively for appropriate obstetric care and the monitoring of pregnant women. Realizing that the achievement of gender equality is impossible without men's support, men are being encouraged to take on more active roles in the productive and reproductive spheres: in the home, in reproductive-decision-making, in education, in the workplace, in the political, legislative and public policy arenas. Indonesia has therefore taken measures to address the issue of enhancing men's support for women's rights and empowerment, particularly in reproductive health and family planning issues. This is being done through: (1) the setting of policy to increase male participation in family planning; (2) the creation of a Male Involvement Division in the National Family Planning Coordinating Board and (3) men's awareness and involvement in their partners' reproductive health, incorporated in the Mother Friendly Movement; (4) the promotion of the Safe Motherhood campaign and Husband Alert campaign, in order to motivate men to be more responsive to their partners' reproductive health; and, (5) the initiation of a long term gender mainstreaming project in reproductive health and essential reproductive health. Furthermore, the following activities are intended to increase men's support for women's rights and empowerment by namely: (a) promoting men's understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to respecting the human rights of women and in promoting gender equality and equity; (b) protecting women's health, including support for their partners' access to sexual and reproductive health services; (c) preventing unwanted pregnancy; (d) reducing maternal mortality and morbidity; (e) reducing transmission of sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS; (f) sharing household and child-

rearing responsibilities and promoting the elimination of harmful practices towards women's reproductive functions and (g) by seeking to eliminate gender-based violence.

### **Violence against Women**

With respect to the elimination of gender-based violence, Indonesia has just passed Law No. 23/2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence. This Law was enacted to ensure the safety and security of women and prevent them from falling victims to violence, especially violence in the family. The forms of violence in the family can be physical, sexual, psychological, economic and social, the latter through abandonment. This law also provides for legal sanctions against perpetrators. The elimination of violence against women in the family is based on respect for their human rights and on the need for gender equality and equity. Long before passage of the law, the Government launched the National Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women 2001-2005 in November 2000 under the State Ministry of Women Empowerment with the support of Non-Governmental Organizations. The launch was a follow-up action to the Declaration of Commitment made in November 1999 by the Nation and the Society to Eliminate Violence against Women. The Declaration was signed by various groups, Ministers of Government, leaders of the People's Consultative Assembly and the Parliament as well as people from various regions as a sign of national determination to eliminate violence against women through the implementation of the "Zero Tolerance Policy".

Several Crisis Centres and Special Treatment Units for victims of violence have been established in major city hospitals and police stations. Other efforts to combat domestic violence have been made through: dissemination of information on women's human rights at the grassroots level; provision of field operators (usually by GOs ); increased collaboration between NGOs and NGOs on the mechanism to eliminate violence against women; the provision of a practical manual on efforts to eliminate domestic violence; as well as mapping of cases of violence from 1994 – 2001 by one of the prominent NGOs in Indonesia called Rifka Annisa.

With regard to the promotion of human rights, the 1945 Constitution has been amended four times. Two of its articles refer specifically to women's human rights, elimination of discrimination against women and gender equality. Apart from that, the Government and the Parliament have also passed Law No. 39 on Human Rights in 1999, which emphasizes the need to promote and protect human rights, including women's rights.

### **Women and Armed Conflict**

But the household is not the only place where women face the risk of violence. Several places in Indonesia have been affected by conflict and these have had adverse impacts on entire communities, in particular on women and children. They have suffered displacement, loss of home and property, loss or involuntary disappearance of close relatives, vulnerability to sexual and physical abuses and so on. Measures to correct this situation include the active participation of women, victims of conflict, in peace talks at the decision-making level and the protection of women living in situations of conflict; the

establishment of Women's Desks at Police stations to treat victims of violent acts, including violations by the military; the provision of aid for widows and orphans, for example by equipping the family to earn income or through the availability of scholarships; the provision, through non-governmental organizations, of technical assistance to female victims of conflict, offering relief and psychological counseling, food distribution; and, calls for peace and harmony in troubled regions.

### **Women in Power and Decision making Positions**

In the case of women's ability to contribute to development, we note that few women occupy positions of power and decision-making authority in executive, legislative and judicial bodies, compared to men. Women number just one third of the body of civil servants. The majority of positions held by these women are low in rank, while those holding higher ranks are very few in number. Only a tiny minority of women hold key decision-making positions in the regions, such as heads of villages, and even fewer hold higher posts such as Head of Sub-District (camat) and above. There are no women among the members of the State Audit Board and there is one woman for every 20 members of the State Advisory Council and one woman for every six members of the Supreme Court. The number of high-ranking women in political parties is still small. To increase the awareness of society, including women and governments sectors, about the importance of gender equity and equality, our Ministry has executed various advocacy and orientation programmes particularly intended to enlighten political parties, religious leaders and women's organizations. Our efforts have been supported by NGOs, among them the Indonesian Caucus for Women in Politics which has been tasked to map and collect information on women in politics, and the Indonesia Caucus for Women in Parliament tasked to provide advocacy and political education to women, so that they can develop political networks and conduct research and training for women in politics.

Affirmative action to boost the representatives on women in the legislature is embodied in Law No. 12/2003 concerning General Elections. Article 65 (1) states that a quota of 30 percent must be given to women in the legislature. To ensure this law has the desired effect, the Government, acting in collaboration with NGOs, has developed several strategies to bring about such an outcome. These strategies will serve to: (a) develop and strengthen networks among women's organizations; (b) increase the representation of women in political parties; (c) facilitate advocacy to leaders of political parties; (d) create access to the media; (e) promote awareness and understanding of women through education and training; (f) increase the quality of women as electoral candidates; and, (g) conduct campaigns based on the substance of Law No. 12/2003 in 20 provinces. Despite this effort, women's representation in the legislative body is still small, only 11.9 percent -- way below the allocation of 30 percent. More efforts are therefore needed and more women should in fact be made aware and empowered to increase that figure.

### **Institutional Mechanism for the Advancement of Women**

With regard to institutional mechanisms to assist the State Ministry at the provincial and district levels, the Government has already established 30 women's

empowerment bureaus/divisions at provincial levels with support from the Ministry of Home Affairs. At the district level, covering 440 districts or municipalities, there are already 230 women's empowerment units divisions. These will act as extended arms of the State Ministry of Women's Empowerment at the regional level, with a mandate similar to that of the State Ministry, namely to provide policy leadership and technical advice for gender mainstreaming. At present, there are 29 Working Groups on Gender established in 29 out of 61 sectors at the central level and 39 Gender Focal Points established in government ministries; 150 Working Groups and 304 Gender Focal Points have been established in the 440 municipalities. Training, advocacy and socialization on gender and gender mainstreaming have intensified at the provincial and district levels. However, due to limited gender expertise and budgetary constraints, training of the entire government bureaucracy is not possible at present. Another obstacle is the regional socio-culture which may not be conducive to the advancement of women and gender equality.

### **Human Rights of Women**

In Indonesia, the human rights of men and women are guaranteed in the 1945 Constitution which states that every citizen, whether male or female, has equal rights and obligations before the law and government. To give concrete expression to this constitutional reality, Indonesia has ratified, at the international level, the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women through the enactment of Law No 7/1984 and has ratified several ILO Conventions regarding equal remuneration for equal work and equality in employment and occupation. The principle of equality before the law is also enshrined in numerous laws and government policies. A few examples of such laws include Law No. 39/1999 on Human Rights; Law No 12/2000 on General Elections which encourages political parties to nominate at least 30 percent women as electoral candidates; Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System; Law No. 13/2003 on Labour; and, Law No. 43/1999 on equality between male and female civil servants. Recently, we passed Law No. 23/2004 on the Elimination of Domestic Violence to protect female or male victims of violence in the family.

### **Women and the Media**

We are also concerned about other subtle forms of abuse of women. To eliminate the negative portrayal of women in the media, we believe women should be empowered by enhancing their skills, their knowledge and by providing them greater access to information and information technology. The Government has conducted intensive advocacy campaigns, roundtable discussions, socialization of all media people, ranging from reporters and feature writers to newspaper editors, on gender mainstreaming and gender concepts. Publication of various information kits has been initiated and the kits have been distributed widely to increase the community awareness of the issues of women empowerment and gender equality. Incentives, such as public recognition and awards, are given annually on Indonesia Mothers' Day to media personnel who write, publish and produce gender sensitive articles and columns.

## **Women and Environment**

We acknowledge that women have the potential to assume many roles in environmental management because of their inclination to nurture. They can encourage proper management of natural resources to be used for the production of economic goods, or even maintain the surroundings in which their families dwell. With support from the Government, a group of non-governmental organizations has established a Women's Movement on Environmental Care and an Alliance for Sustainable Development. The main missions of the Movement and Alliance are: (1) to extend women's partnerships in preserving and conserving the environment and in supporting sustainable development; (2) to strengthen existing networks of cooperation in environment and sustainable development and to encourage possible new partnerships with other institutions; (3) to improve and to increase community awareness about environmental management and preservation and promotion of sustainable development; and (4) to link local, regional and global actions by women for environmental management and preservation as well as sustainable development.

## **The Girl Child**

Finally, the Government, in collaboration with related stakeholders, is fully committed to the elimination of discrimination against girls in education and health services and to their protection from economic exploitation. Towards those ends, several measures have been implemented: in education, we have launched a Nine Year Compulsory education programme for girls and boys and we recently passed Law No. 20/2003 on the National Education System which ensures the equal right of girls and boys to obtain an education. To date, there are almost no significant gaps between boys and girls at the elementary and secondary levels but the situation is different at the tertiary levels. In the health sector, the Government has promoted several concrete actions, among them are those designed to provide information, communication and education (IEC) and counsel on reproductive health to adolescents by means of the mass media, peer groups, Internet, schools (through extra-curricula activities), establishment of counseling centers throughout the country and through the integration of adolescent reproductive health into the national health framework by means of an amendment to Law No. 10/1992 on Population Development.

Despite many achievements in the implementation of the Declaration and Beijing Platform for Action, we have identified some gaps and challenges that persist, such as women's disproportionate representation among the poor; the high prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS among women; the low level of women's participation in decision making at various levels; continued violence against women, including trafficking in women and children; gender stereotyping; and lack of sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics. We do hope that through this important meeting we can share our experiences and learn how to solve some of those problems that we continue to face.

Thank you.