

# Jordan

PERMANENT MISSION OF H.K. OF JORDAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

**Statement by**

**HRH Princess Basma bint Talal**

**Chairperson**

**Jordanian National Commission for Women**

**at the**

**High-Level Plenary**

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*Madam Chairperson*

*Distinguished Delegates,*

I feel privileged today to speak on behalf of my country, Jordan, as well as the Consultative Committee for the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM Consultative Committee) composed of Canada, Mexico, Niger, Slovenia and Jordan.

The Consultative Committee supports the leading role of UNIFEM in protecting and advancing the rights and empowerment of women. UNIFEM's programme addresses critical gaps in our follow-up to the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Declaration. UNIFEM contributes to building capacity at country level and through UN Country Teams to pursuing key commitments, ranging from translating Security Council Resolution 1325 into practice, to strengthening accountability by encouraging Gender Responsive Budgeting, to addressing feminized poverty, to advocating for women's participation in democratic governance and to ending violence against women.

During 2004, the Consultative Committee commissioned an assessment to determine whether UNIFEM's status and resources within the UN system are commensurate with its expanded role as provider of technical assistance and as advocate for gender equality and women's rights in our institutions. One of the conclusions was that the very expertise that is needed is positioned in a way that

limits UNIFEM's ability to respond to all the expectations that the system has. I suspect that this is also true for many of the national machineries represented here.

The assessment also concludes that UNIFEM is also under-resourced to meet the demands of its expanded role. The Consultative Committee therefore hopes that Member States fully fund UNIFEM's four-year programme, thereby doubling its core resource base, which has remained at around \$20 million annually for the past four years. In this regard, the Committee notes the valuable role that the programme countries play and urges them to contribute further to UNIFEM's core resources. The way that Member States and the UN system itself position and resource gender expertise is an important indicator of the extent of their commitment to gender equality. If we are serious about maintaining the momentum of the Beijing Platform for Action, we will position gender equality and women's rights at the centre of all of our actions.

***Madam Chairperson,***

Allow me now to speak in my national capacity. First of all, my delegation would like to associate itself with the statement just made by the distinguished representative of Jamaica on behalf of the G77 and China.

In my country, Jordan, like other countries of the region, major global and regional events have affected our lives during the past five years. However, this did not weaken our commitment and resolve to continue our work on implementing the Beijing Platform for Action. Reinforced by the high level of political will expressed by His Majesty King Abdullah II, there have been major breakthroughs in so far as legal amendments are concerned, and in establishing a system of reserved seats for women's representation in parliament. The headway we have made in gender mainstreaming has been recognized, prompting a commitment from the government to mainstream gender perspectives into all future national developments plans, as well as all government institutions.

These breakthroughs have been achieved despite exacting circumstances. The work of the Jordanian National Commission for Women, Jordan's NWM, which coordinated my country's progress report to the United Nations Beijing +10 Questionnaire, notes that regional and national political and economic developments are identified as a major factor affecting women's advancement. Limitations of institutional capacities exacerbated by economic factors also slow down our progress. Fundamental changes in women's status often run contrary to deeply ingrained sociocultural beliefs, and progress can sometimes appear frustratingly slow. However, in Jordan, we believe that if we are aiming for change to be permanent, it is always essential to ensure societal understanding and acceptance of the process.

As we participate together in this important milestone event, we reaffirm our resolve to strengthen our efforts, as well as to working together to identify new approaches that we can incorporate within our respective national priorities. Beijing +10 is a catalyst which renews our initiatives to fully implement the Platform for Action and our commitment to the universal goal of women's advancement. Yet, such meetings also necessitate an acknowledgement of local conditions and contexts which shape the processes through which women's advancement evolve. I hope that the outcome of this meeting will be sensitive to the diversity of our cultures, religions and interests, and create an enabling environment for our national initiatives to flourish.

*Madam Chairperson,*

My delegation looks forward to the opportunity provided at this time to share and learn from others, and to use that knowledge to reinvigorate Jordan's efforts towards gender equality, development and peace.

Thank you.