

SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM



Statement by

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for the Advancement of Women in Vietnam,
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*Madam Chairperson,
Ladies and gentlemen,*

Allow me on behalf of the Vietnamese delegation to extend our warmest greetings to the Chairperson and the delegates at this very significant meeting. We highly appreciate the United Nations for reviewing the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. This is an opportunity for the whole world to look back and confirm achievements over the past 10 years of striving for the advancement of women and more importantly to renew our efforts to continue implementing the Platform's objectives in the 21st century. We hope that the high-level round table discussion entitled "Innovation in institutional arrangements for promoting gender equality at the national level" will contribute to promoting international cooperation on gender equality and the advancement of women throughout the world.

Madam Chairperson,

At the outset, my delegation would like to associate itself with the statement made yesterday by the distinguished representative of Jamaica on behalf of the G77.

The Vietnamese Government and people have always made great efforts to realize the Beijing Platform's objectives. We successfully implemented the National Strategy and Plan of Action for the Advancement of Women by 2000 and have been effectively carrying out the National Strategy by 2010. With the endeavors of branches and sectors at all levels, Vietnam is proud of the Comprehensive Poverty Reduction and Growth Strategy, which fully incorporates gender perspectives and clearly identifies objectives for gender equality in all fields.

Over the past ten years, the role and status of Vietnamese women has significantly improved. Vietnam continues to rank the first in Asia for women's representation in the National Assembly, 27.31% for the period of 2002 — 2007, an increase of nearly 10% in comparison with the period of 1992 — 1997. The proportion of women in the People's Councils - agencies representing the people's will and aspiration - across the whole country at provincial, district and commune levels is 23.80%, 23.22%, 20.10% respectively; an average increase of 2.7% in comparison with the previous term. The rate of literate women is 90.9% compared to 82.3% in 1993. Women's economic power has increased thanks to legal regulations stating that names of both the wife and husband have to be put in the land, house and property certificates. Women's life expectancy presently is 73 and men's is 70, an increase of 7 years in comparison with 1995. With these efforts, Vietnam has no difference between the UN Human Development Index (HDI) and the Gender Development Index (GDI) — currently Vietnam ranks 87 out of 144 for the GDI. Vietnam is also among the few countries that

have completed the 5th-6th National Report on CEDAW implementation. In addition, we are currently developing a Law on Gender Equality, planned to be finalized by 2007.

Since the 1995 Beijing Conference, the national machinery for the advancement of women in Vietnam has been strengthened from central to grass-root levels with the system of Committees for the Advancement of Women at 45 ministries-agencies and 64 cities-provinces across the country. The Vietnam Women's Union with nearly 12 million members continues to be a socio-political organization supporting empowerment activities for women in all fields of social life.

From our achievements, we would like to share with you some of our lessons learnt, namely the thorough grasp of State policies by governmental ministries and agencies at all levels, the efforts of the national machinery for the advancement of women and the will of women themselves. We also would like to share with you the lessons drawn from global experiences in the effort for gender equality and advancement of women which present an effective approach to achieve sustainable development and promptly decrease poverty rate.

Madam Chairperson,

With strong political will, Vietnam has made encouraging achievements. However, in common with many other countries in the region, we are dealing with some negative effects of globalization. Various existing or emerging issues such as trafficking in women, the HIV/AIDS epidemic, the burden of housework, women's lack of access to communications and new technology, male preference, and the traditional thinking of policy makers have limited the implementation of the Platform for Action. Therefore, looking forward, our tasks are great. They require not only political will but also effective strategic measures and a spirit of cooperation which should be stronger than in the past in order to achieve our common goal: action for equality, development and peace.

In keeping with the strategic objectives of the Beijing and Beijing Plus Five Conferences as well as related regional and international communications, Vietnam commits to further promote the implementation of the National Strategy by 2010, to continue finalizing the law and policy framework on gender equality; to develop the national economy, to reduce poverty and to ensure the realization of equal rights for women and girl children. On this occasion, we truly thank the international community for its cooperation and support to Vietnam in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.

We wish our meeting every success. Thank you.