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Statement by H.E. Gyan Chandra Acharya, Permanent Representative of Nepal to the United Nations at the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women on agenda item 3: Follow up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

(28 February 2011, New York)

Mr. Chairman,

I would like to congratulate you on your assumption of the chair of the fifty-fifth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

My delegation aligns itself with the statement made by the distinguished Representative of Argentina, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Nepal welcomes the newly launched United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN-Women.

Mr. Chairman,

The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action remains the most comprehensive global policy framework for gender equality and empowerment of women. The Millennium Declaration includes gender equality and empowerment of women as one of its eight goals. Important international human rights instruments have been adopted for ending discrimination against women. However, much remains to be done.

In line with Beijing Platform, Nepal attaches great importance to the advancement of women. We believe that we cannot achieve sustainable peace and development without ensuring equal rights to women.

The Constituent Assembly of Nepal, elected in 2008, stands today as one of the most-inclusive assemblies in the world with one third representation of women.

Mr. Chairman,

Nepal has adopted a rights-based approach to social, economic and political empowerment of women. Ensuring gender equality and gender mainstreaming constitutes one of our top priorities as enshrined in the Interim Constitution of Nepal. Nepal considers gender equality a basic human right, a fundamental value and an issue of social justice. Nepal

women. Likewise, laws have been enacted to ensure proportional and inclusive representation of women in various organs of the State, including bureaucracy, army and police.

Mechanisms relating to gender budgeting have been initiated which take into account the advancement of women in the programs launched by the Government in all sectors. Involvement of women in the formulation and implementation of local development programs has been institutionalized.

Working with the civil society and other stakeholders, micro-credit programs, dedicated education programs and food for education programs targeted to the girl and women have contributed to empower them at the community level.

Despite all our efforts, financial resources and capacity constraints stand in the way of full implementation of the programs related to women empowerment. International cooperation and support measures go a long way in further strengthening national programs in our countries. Nepal has taken several legal, administrative and other policy measures to bring to an end all forms of discriminations and violence against women. Relevant laws have been amended to make them compatible to gender equality. Human Trafficking Control Act has been enacted. The Legislative-Parliament has also enacted Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act.

The Government of Nepal has recently launched the National Action Plan for the effective implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820 which signifies the high priority that the Government accorded to the full and equal participation of women in peace, security and sustained development of the country.

National Women Commission has been working as an autonomous statutory body for the protection and promotion of the rights and interests of women, including their effective inclusion in the development mainstream. The Commission has recommendatory and investigatory powers.

Despite significant resource constraints, Nepal has made impressive progress in reducing the maternal mortality rate. MMR has been reduced to 229 per 100,000 now from 539 per 100,000 in 1996. Our aim is to reduce it further and that too substantially in the next few years.

In conclusion, Mr. Chairman, my delegation reiterates its firm commitment to BPFA. We underscore women's paramount role in building a peaceful, stable, democratic and prosperous world.

Thank you!