



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY

STATEMENT BY MS. LEYLA OŐKUN
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OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

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COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

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Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished Delegates,

It is a pleasure for me to address this distinguished group of people on behalf of my delegation. I would like to take this opportunity to express my congratulations for the establishment of UN Women.

We strongly agree with the Secretary General's report noting that women's equal access to scientific and technological knowledge and skills is first and foremost a rights issue, in as much as education is a basic human right.

In this line, we carry out multifaceted activities in accordance with the objectives specified in the 9th Development Plan of Turkey.

The benchmarks in the 9th Development Plan include achieving %100 schooling for girls and boys at all levels; eliminating illiteracy among women and providing enhanced and diversified vocational training programs for women in order to increase their employability by 2013.

As was taken note of in the SG's report of this year (*E/CN.6/2011/5 para 22*) Turkey's "Snowdrops" and "Father, send me to school" campaigns as well as "Girls, let's go to school," had a significant impact on girls' schooling, which led to closing the gap between girls and boys at the primary school level.

Again, as underlined in the *paragraph 25 of the SG's Report*, regarding concerns about girls' safety at school and their vulnerability to sexual violence on the way to or within school, *Turkey has established boarding schools in villages and small settlements, in particular where girls drop out from school*, and has recently been working on providing infrastructure such as safe transportation.

In addition to the campaigns carried out for the schooling of girls, substantial measures such as conditional cash transfers, investing in more boarding schools for remote villages and Catch-Up Training Classes to close the gap for drop-out students are ongoing.

I am also greatly pleased to note that these dedicated efforts have increased schooling rate of girls nearly up to %100 and have reduced the gender gap to 0,6% at the primary school level.

The Ministry of National Education initiated a project to facilitate the accession of students to information technologies and for conscious and safe Internet use in pre-school education.

In addition, the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Labor and Social Security have established an interagency cooperation to ensure transfer of the skills and capabilities adopted in formal and informal education into employability.

Mr. Chairperson,

In conclusion, my delegation wishes that the deliberations to take place during the 55th Session of the CSW will lead to most substantial results for ensuring girls' full access to education, training, science and technology.

Thank you.