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**STATEMENT
BY**

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**Commission on the Status of Women
Fifty-sixth session**

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”

United Nations, New York, 2012

Madam Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first to express Slovenia's full alignment with the statement delivered by Denmark on behalf of the European Union.

We are again together to review what we have accomplished since last session of the Commission on the Status of Women in our endeavours towards reaching the destination, which was agreed upon in the *Beijing Platform for Action* and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly. During the past days speakers from this podium brought the rich first-hand experiences from capitals and addressed progress achieved and challenges that nations and our global community are facing.

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How does the government of Slovenia meet some of these challenges?

Women's equal participation in political decision-making is both, a gender equality principle and a precondition for achievement of substantive gender equality. We have been active almost two decades and worked on many different fronts at the same time to speed up a progress in this area, including through legislating so called gender quotas. Finally, in the national elections of last December, these efforts materialized in significant increase of the proportion of seats won by women in our National Assembly (19 % increase). With 32 % of women members of parliament Slovenia now ranks as 23rd country out of 144 countries for which Inter-Parliamentary Union provided latest statistics on women in national parliaments (January 2012).

Gender-based violence against women, including domestic violence is a form of discrimination that seriously inhibits women's ability to enjoy their rights and freedoms on a basis of equality with men. Thus, the Government of Slovenia has been constantly scaling-up both, prevention of violence against women and protection of victims. By the end of 2011 the first ever national study on extent and prevalence of violence in private sphere and analysis of responses of institutions involved in any kind of intervention with victims of domestic violence was finalized. Its findings will be used to make better informed decisions on actions required to ensure effective implementation of the *Domestic Violence Prevention Act* (adopted in 2008) and the *Resolution on National Programme on Prevention of Domestic Violence* (adopted in 2009). Last year Slovenia also signed the Council of Europe landmark Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence and the national procedures for its ratification are under way.

The third biannual action plan for implementation of the *2005 – 2013 National programme for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men* was also completed in 2011. Implementation of the national programme included activities to improve social inclusion, working conditions and livelihood of rural women. In 2006 the Government of Slovenia adopted also the *National Programme of Gender Mainstreaming in Agriculture and the Development of Rural Regions in Slovenia*. Its key goal is to contribute to ensuring food safety and sustainable development of rural areas, especially by involving rural women in development programmes

and activities. The principle of gender equality is central also to the *Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013*.

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Yet, Madam Chairperson, the results achieved continue to lag behind the ambitious commitments made in Beijing and standards that emanate from the CEDAW Convention, both, in my country and worldwide.

Hidebound and rigid views of women's and men's roles are one of the most potent actors inhibiting the achievement of gender equality goals, including with regard to the empowerment of rural women and enhancing their roles in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges.

I am confident that we will be able to close this session with a sense of satisfaction at having taken another important step forward towards our common goal (– the realization of gender equality and empowerment of women).

Thank you.