



GOBIERNO DE
CHILE

STATEMENT

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Mr. President,

We associate ourselves with the comments of the delegations which preceded us and welcome the historic adoption of the resolution establishing the long-awaited Entity for gender equality and empowerment of women, *UN-Women*.

Almost four years after the publication of the report of the High-Level Panel on United Nations System-wide Coherence and after lengthy negotiations in which our country participated actively, gathering support for the Entity, the joint efforts of Member States, the system and civil society have created an Entity that will enable us effectively to respond to the aspirations of the women of the world. We hope that UN-WOMEN will be fully operational as soon as possible and that it will have sustainable financing.

Mr. President,

In the year of our Bicentennial, we can say that in Chile we are closer to achieving equal opportunities and rights for women and men and we reaffirm our commitment to implement the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Platform for Action.

We should also like to express the hope that this will be a year of balance, renewed efforts and interconnection, as we celebrate Beijing + 15, the tenth anniversary of the Millennium Development Goals, the tenth anniversary of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security, and the OAS Inter-American Year of Women.

Mr. President,

The President of Chile, Mr. Sebastián Piñera Echeñique, has set as a priority goal of his Government that, by the end of this decade, Chile will not only have eliminated and overcome adversity following the earthquake but will also have become a developed country, without poverty and with opportunities for all.

Accordingly, the National Women's Service (SERNAM) will be focusing in 2010-2014 on *the enhancement of women's economic autonomy, by increasing their insertion in the labour market, removing the obstacles in the way of their effective access to that market* and increasing their work opportunities to achieve approximately 50 per cent participation. At the same time, post-earthquake needs will be taken into consideration.

Consequently, in view of the important role played by women in our country's reconstruction, the Emergency Reconstruction Programme entitled "*Women, let us lift Chile*" was launched in April and in the same month the *Presidential Advisory Commission on Women, Work and Motherhood* was established, composed of experts in various subjects, as well as representatives of trade unions and business, focusing on interdisciplinary analysis and development of a comprehensive proposal designed to achieve three main goals:

- Ensuring the best care for children.
- Making the cost of motherhood irrelevant to the recruitment of women, so that they can be truly integrated into the world of formal paid labour.
- Making it easier for Chilean men and women to combine work and family.

For this purpose, the Government of Chile will promote comprehensive modernization of the existing labour legislation on protection of motherhood.

In pursuit of these policies, Chile welcomes the initiatives taken by the United Nations system in this regard, including the recent launch of the *Women's Empowerment Principles* formulated by UNIFEM and the United Nations Global Compact and the recommendations made in the resolution on women's economic empowerment co-sponsored by Chile at the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Mr. President,

As regards the third Millennium Development Goal, SERNAM is implementing the program to encourage good labour practices with gender equity, based on the *Code of good gender-based labour practices*, which is compulsory in the public service and which was the basis for work with leading private businesses in Chile.

In addition, our *gender-based pension system* values the contribution of domestic work and motherhood and entitles all Chilean women, including those who have not performed paid work, to a pension and an additional bonus for each child. 60 per cent of those who have benefited from this reform are women.

In relation to the support system to mothers in the work force, Chile has been working on the implementation of the *Program for Women Heads of Households* that gives care and academic tools to children after school hours while their parents are at work.

Another measure to improve the living standards of women and their families is the *social welfare system* providing lifetime coverage, starting with the programme *Chile is Growing with You*, which helps low-income women to be independent by providing a child care network so that they can enter the labour market or pursue studies.

As regards public health, the Plan of Explicit Guarantees (GES) guarantees to all treatment for the most prevalent diseases and provides a comprehensive response to women's most common health needs.

Mr. President,

We have also worked hard to prevent violence against women and establish social and criminal penalties for it. In accordance with *General Assembly resolution 61/143 on the subject*, Chile has taken a series of initiatives to facilitate a steady increase in reporting and a decrease in the prevalence of such violence. *Recently, urgent attention was given to the draft legislation on femicide and a request was made for the inclusion of special protective measures for women victims of domestic violence.*

Mr. President,

Chile is the first Latin American country to have a *Plan of Action on resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security*, comprising comprehensive and cross-cutting measures to protect women and girls in armed conflicts and to encourage women to participate in the processes of peace consolidation and reconstruction of democracy. In addition, we co-sponsored *Security Council resolutions 1820 (2008) and 1888 (2009)* on sexual violence in armed conflicts.

In this connection, Chile welcomes the appointment of Ms. Margot Wallström as *Special Representative of the Secretary-General on sexual violence against women and children in conflict*.

As regards gender mainstreaming, Chile – together with Estonia – facilitated *Economic and Social Council resolution 2009/12 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system*. We hope that the contents of this resolution and the relevant report of the Secretary-General will guide the gender mainstreaming work entrusted to UN-Women.

On this subject, a panel entitled “Empowerment of Women through Education” was held in Geneva on 7 June 2009. It was organized by Chile and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to promote the implementation of Human Rights Council resolution 6/30 on integrating the human rights of women throughout the United Nations system, sponsored by Chile.

Nationally, Chile has since 2000 been pursuing a strategy of gender mainstreaming in policies and management systems of public agencies. Since 2009, the Gender Equity System has been included as a strategic element of quality management and quality assurance (ISO 9001:2008), which will improve standards for monitoring and developing the commitments of each ministry and public service.

Mr. President,

Our country has high standards on maternal-child health and has been a tireless promoter of initiatives for the achievement of MDGs 4 and 5 in the world and we are concerned to note that these are the Goals furthest from attainment.

We know that **between 350,000 and 500,000 women die each year from complications of pregnancy and childbirth**. And 98 per cent of these deaths occur in the developing world. These figures are unacceptable, because these deaths could be avoided with basic and timely medical care and improvements in the technical capacity and management of systems of maternal and child care.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, 15 years after Beijing and with a view to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals, we reaffirm Chile’s commitment to gender equality and are confident that in the Bicentennial Chile will intensify its work to promote women’s empowerment and women’s rights.

Thank you.

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