

**49th Session
of the Commission on the Status of Women**

High-Level Plenary

**Statement by
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Madam Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

It is an honour to address the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women on behalf of the Hungarian Government.

Hungary expresses its full alignment with the statement delivered by the Luxembourg Presidency on behalf of the European Union and welcomes the adoption of the Declaration of the 49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

The Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing and its Platform for Action had a significant impact on the policies of the countries all around the world in the field of gender equality. The past ten years have been important advances for women in their pursuit of equality.

Madam Chairperson,

Allow me to give a brief overview of our activities in the field of gender equality in Hungary.

The Hungarian Parliament has ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women very early, at the beginning of the eighties and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women in 2001.

Progress has been made - among others - in such areas as legislative reform, enhancement of national machinery, but still we are facing challenges in eliminating poverty and violence against women and children.

The Hungarian national mechanism ensuring equal status of women was established in 1995. The first Minister without Portfolio for Equal Opportunities was appointed and the Government Office for Equal Opportunities was established in 2003.

In 2004 several ministries merged into the Ministry of Youth, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. Promotion of equal opportunities for women and men is one of the basic responsibilities of the minister. The minister also performs tasks related to the co-ordination and control of the implementation of the CEDAW Treaty.

In the Republic of Hungary the Constitution and other legal regulations state the prohibition of discrimination. The Act on "*Equal treatment and promotion of equal opportunities*" was adopted in 2003. The adoption of the new regulation is of outstanding importance.

The Hungarian Parliament adopted a Resolution on the development of a national strategy to prevent and effectively manage domestic violence in 2003. The resolution rejects all forms of violence within families. It highlights the priority of protection of human rights, to which everyone is entitled, stating that violence within families cannot be considered as a private matter. The resolution expresses the recognition that a national strategy has to be developed in order to prevent violence within families. The resolution states that the activities of social

institutions are absolutely necessary in terms of prevention, victim assistance and education, and calls for co-operation between public and social organisations.

The draft Law on Restraining Order applicable due to violence within families is under preparation on the basis of these assumptions. The improvement of the institutional system for victims of domestic violence is in the phase of implementation.

The political representation of women among the Hungarian Parliamentarians in the European Parliament exceeded 30 percent. Although in the national parliament the women's representation is still low but the number of women holding an executive position has increased.

Low level of employment among both men and women is a major challenge faced by employment policy in Hungary. The employment of women is characterised by horizontal and vertical segregation alike. Despite the higher level of qualifications the average gross earnings of women in 2003 are 19 % lower than those of men.

Increasing the rate of employment - including the promotion of the employment of women - is one of the priority objectives of the Hungarian Government. A variety of measures have been introduced recently to help women's participation in the labour market.

The employment of women is facilitated on the supply side primarily by improving the employability of women - paying special attention to disadvantaged groups of women - by facilitating the reconciliation of the requirements of family and employment, while on the supply side it is facilitated by the provision of support to employers relating to the employment of groups in disadvantaged position in the labour market.

The health status of the Hungarian population requires special actions of improvement. The Hungarian National Public Health Programme outlines the tasks for the decade ahead, in order to improve the health status of the population with special attention to women.

In Hungary, the level of women's education is continuously rising, primarily among young women. The qualifications of women are higher than men in terms of school years. On the other hand, there are still stereotypes relating to traditional gender roles in various areas. In order to change them it is important to acknowledge that gender equality is a responsibility of the whole society including both genders.

Madam Chairperson,

We reaffirm our commitment to the CEDAW, Beijing Platform for Action and underline the importance of the link between these documents and their implementation to the Millennium Development Goals.

Thank you, Madam Chairperson.