



# CROATIA

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**STATEMENT by  
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**Commission on the Status of Women  
Fifty-fourth 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 21st century":

Implementation of strategic  
objectives and action in critical areas of concern and  
further actions and initiatives: review of the  
implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform  
for Action and the outcome of the  
twenty-third special session and its contribution to  
shaping a gender perspective in the realization of the  
Millennium Development Goals

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Mr. Chairman (Chairperson), distinguished delegates and participants,

It is my great pleasure to address the Commission on the Status of Women and to contribute to this important session on the review of the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action.

In the past five years Croatian Government has strengthened its basic institutional mechanisms and has introduced important new legislative amendments and strategies with a view to preventing gender discrimination and improving the policy of equal opportunities.

Two important new organic laws have been adopted in the area of human rights. In 2008, the Croatian Parliament adopted the new Gender Equality Act which is aligned with the provisions of valid international standards as well as with EU directives dealing with gender equality. The Act prescribes the general prohibition of discrimination on the grounds of sex, marital or family status and sexual orientation. The Anti-Discrimination Act came into force on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009. New Act on the Protection against Domestic Violence was also adopted last year. A large number of measures have been systematically implemented, focusing on suppressing domestic violence and other forms of violence against women on the basis of the National Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence.

In 2006 the Croatian Parliament adopted the third National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality 2006-2010 as the basic strategic action plan for eliminating discrimination against women and establishing real equality between women and men. The National Policy, following principles and structure of the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW, as well as the MDG goals, contains a number of measures for promotion of human rights of women, equal opportunities on the labour market, promotion of gender-sensitive education, equality in decision-making, measures for combating violence against women, women's health and strengthening institutional mechanisms. It also stipulates measures related to financial support to NGOs and women's economic, social, cultural and political empowerment.

As we have continued with the strengthening of our gender equality machinery, which includes Governmental Office for Gender Equality, Ombudswoman for Gender

Equality, Committee for Gender Equality of the Croatian Parliament and commissions for gender equality in all Croatian counties, a large number of new gender equality commissions have been established at town and municipal levels.

In addition to these legislative and institutional achievements, it is also important to mention that we are continuously faced with increased numbers of educated women. We can report that more than 60 percent of graduates from universities are female and 50 percent of those who received PhD's are also women. .

When it comes to the participation of women in power and decision-making positions, I would like to highlight that Croatian Prime minister is a woman who is strongly committed to the promotion of gender equality policy. The President of the Constitutional Court is also a woman. Women represent the majority of judges at the courts of law. Furthermore, 23 percent of parliamentary seats are held by women, and 20 percent of members of the Government are women. The number of women in public decision-making positions at the local levels has increased after the last local elections. Additionally, women occupy approximately one third of the highest ranked administrative positions in the public administration.

It must be emphasised that great progress has been achieved in implementing measures related to elimination of sexist language and promoting language that reflects the principles of gender equality in the labour market. In 2008, the Central Bureau of Statistics adopted the new National Classification of Occupations which introduces female and male linguistic form of occupation.

Good progress is recorded in the women's entrepreneurship. The share of women entrepreneurs in Croatia is growing and is currently approaching almost 30%.

Numerous public campaigns have been implemented on the national and local level, including those against domestic violence, on women's health, and political participation of women. All these actions resulted in increased public awareness about non-equality between women and men and on the necessity to further support the implementation of equal opportunities policy, which has also been confirmed by the results of different gender researches in the field.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Thank you for your kind attention.