

Islamic Republic of I R A N

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

Statement by:

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Fifty-Fourth Session of the Commission on the Status of Women

**Agenda Item 3: Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to
the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly**

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you and other members of the Bureau on your election. I am pleased to see you chairing this important gathering.

Inspired by the religious and cultural principles as well as its national priorities, the Islamic Republic of Iran has succeeded to attain effective steps for promoting the status of women in the country. For the information of this august body and within the allocated time, I would like to point out a number of these achievements taking into account critical areas of concern as alluded to in the Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action. The complete and comprehensive report of my country on the Beijing document has already been submitted to the Division for the Advancement of Women through the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP).

Mr. Chairman,

The persistent and increasing burden of poverty on women is one of the main critical area of concern in the Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action . As a national goal, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has strived to uproot poverty and to promote social justice. The legal framework of the country embedded in the Constitution as well as in the various Development Programs provided the suitable grounds for the Government to effectively peruse its poverty eradication policies throughout the country. Furthermore, the “Charter for Women’s Rights and Responsibilities” as a comprehensive model for promoting the status of women bestows the Iranian women the right to enjoy social security and economic facilities and commits the Government to render its support to women in case of poverty, divorce and disability. Recently, a national plan entitled "Targetizing subsidies System” has been initiated by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran by which public subsidies are distributed on the basis of different categories of the salary. This plan is highly important in particular for female-headed households. On the other hand, particular attention has been paid to the expansion of insurance system and women's social services. So far, the number of females benefiting from insurances granted to by the Social Welfare Organization has increased 1.8 times in 2007 as compared to 1996. Female- headed households enjoy priority for benefiting from these economic and social services.

On the field of education and training of women, the Islamic Republic of Iran has attained great achievements for promotion of women's status illustrated by 4.5 times increase in women admissions to the public universities as compared to the year 1996.

Distribution of literate women, in proportion to the total population of women in the country who are above the age of 6, reached 80.34% in 2006. This figure was 67.1% in 1991 and 74.1% in 1996.

Creating appropriate grounds for equal access to all economic opportunities are among the major principles of the Islamic Republic of Iran .The process of support and empowerment of women with regards to their abilities in the economic fields together with emphasis on the importance of family foundation are all given particular

attentions within the policies of the country. The integration of various governmental bodies for access to skills training, support of credit funds to women in creating self employed jobs, increase in the quantity and quality of women cooperatives in towns and rural areas, with emphasis on the deprived areas are among the measures undertaken by the Government.

Mr. Chairman,

Reviewing of the Beijing Declaration and Plan of Action 15 years after its adoption, indicates that offering a single prescription for all global problems in particular in areas that are related to national and regional cultures will remain unsuccessful if it fails to behold the special characteristics of different peoples and nations. Therefore, it seems crucial to improve common views and opinions and concurrently to respect the existing diversities and particularities with regards to religion, culture and traditions of people around the world.

The unfair global economic structure as a result of accumulated wealth in the hands of a few number of countries which lead to the spread of poverty at the global level is beyond gender issues and is threatening the livelihood of all people both men and women. Despite the fact that women and children are the most vulnerable at the time of crises, and thus require further attention, yet solving their problems of economic nature requires global understanding of reasons behind the crises, and adequate amendments to the economic structures at the international levels.

The Beijing Document requires review in terms of both content and implementation. Further attention is needed to the critical areas of concern in particular those which have been neglected notably women and armed conflict, women trafficking, family breakdowns and decline in morality and spirituality as well as emerging issues affecting women. The Islamic Republic of Iran while appreciating all the efforts made by the international community would like to declare its readiness to take part in every global effort aimed at eliminating women's problems at the global level and in every dimension.

Thank you