



**PERMANENT MISSION OF
THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**235 East 45th Street, 16th floor
New York, NY 10017**

tel. (212) 519-9500
fax (212) 370-1954

www.netherlandsmission.org

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STATEMENT BY

H.E. Ambassador Herman Schaper

**Permanent Representative of the Mission of the Kingdom of the Netherlands
to the United Nations**

**Fifty-fourth session of the Commission on the Status of Women
High-level plenary**

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Mr/Madam Chair,

Let me first align myself with the statement of the Kingdom of Spain on behalf of the European Union.

Mr/Madam Chair,

It has been fifteen years since the adoption of the Beijing declaration and the Platform for Action. Much has been accomplished. Many challenges remain, especially MDG3 and 5, which are lagging behind most. We have to look at what has worked, what not and what still needs to be done to realize the goals and commitments we made. We cannot be satisfied with our results. We should continue the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action vigorously.

In the Netherlands there is a growing interest in gender equality. Labour participation of women has increased. The Dutch government is actively working towards a society in which women work more hours and men spend more time with their children.

We are in a time of financial and economic uncertainty. We should use this as an opportunity to encourage and empower women to increase their labour participation, to secure the household income. International finance institutions and governments should include gender sensitive strategies in the stimulus packages to reduce the effects of the economic crisis on women and girls.

Mr/Madam Chair,

A very important topic is violence against women and the right of women to sexual and reproductive health and rights. Governments should step up efforts in support of comprehensive health policies, taking into account the interrelationship between HIV/AIDS, violence against women and sexual and reproductive health and rights.

Violence against all women -including vulnerable groups like lesbian and bisexual women, and transgender people- is a violation of basic human rights. Despite all good efforts, violence against women seems to be the most difficult area of concern of the Beijing Platform for Action. The Netherlands therefore pays a lot of attention to fighting violence against women in general, as well as in improving the position of women and girls in armed conflict. For example by implementing UNSC resolution 1325, through a National Action Plan.

We firmly believe that the full involvement of women as agents of change is essential in all these efforts. The Dutch government operates in concerted action with civil society organizations, women's networks and other partners. Gender equality should be promoted starting at a young age. Youth organizations play a special role in promoting gender equality and should be involved in decision-making processes.

Mr/Madam Chair,

I conclude with a few words on the UN gender entity. We are very pleased with the adoption of the resolution by the General Assembly to create one gender entity within the UN system. The Netherlands has appreciated the consultations on the gender entity, which now should become operational as soon as possible. In anticipation thereof, we hope that the Secretary

General will soon nominate an Under Secretary General to lead the process. Once the entity is operational the Netherlands will double its present core funding for the UN's work on women's equality through this newly established organization.

Thank you Mr/Madam Chair.