



**SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
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Statement by

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AT THE 54TH SESSION

OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

New York, 2 March, 2010

Mr. Chairperson,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It's my honor, on behalf of Vietnam's delegation, to extend my warmest greetings to Mr./Madam Chairperson and distinguished participants at this important event. Vietnam highly appreciates the United Nation ECOSOC convening this Meeting of the 54th session of the Committee on the Status of Women to review 15 year implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. This is indeed a good opportunity for UN member states to look back and review our achievements in promoting gender equality and women's advancement in the past years and discuss most effective measures to promote the implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at national, regional and international levels.

Mr./Madam Chairperson,

The Government and people of Vietnam are determined to realize the objectives of Beijing Platform for Action. The adoption of the Law on Gender Equality, Law on Prevention and Combating Domestic Violence, among other legal documents has laid a foundation for the establishment of state management agencies for gender equality, consolidating and improving the quality of inter-sectoral cooperation mechanism for women's advancement; facilitating the activities of Vietnam Women's Union. These are important factors to promote women's advancement and bridging gender gaps. Vietnam is making constant efforts in realizing the goals of the National Strategy and Plan for the advancement

of Vietnamese Women by 2010. Our consistent policy of pursuing Beijing Platform for Action has been reaffirmed by the Government's efforts in effectively implementing the Government's Plan of Action for Women's Affairs in the Country's Era of Industrialization and Modernization by 2020, which was adopted in December 2009. The major aim of the Action Plan is to raise awareness, responsibility and efficiency of central and local government activities on women affairs, gender equality promoting towards the goal of improving women's capacities, education attainment, professional expertise and skills which are commensurate with the requirements of the country's industrialization, modernization and international integration; creating employment for women, significantly improving their material, spiritual and cultural living standards; facilitating their participation in all aspects of social life; their equality in all fields; their contribution to family and the society. First priority has been accorded to developing National Strategy on Gender Equality for 2011-2020 period, attracting the participation of community and private sector in developing legal framework on gender equality and women's advancement in Vietnam.

So far, significant progresses have been gained in improving Vietnamese women's roles and status in all aspects of social life. Vietnam continues to be one of the leading countries in Asia Pacific which has highest rates of women in the National Assembly (25.76% in 2007-2011 term, an increase of 8% as compared with 1992-1997 term). Female literacy rate increased from 82.3% in 1993 to 90.5% in 2008. Vietnamese women are enjoying high participation rate in the labour market, accounting for 49.4% of the total employed workforce. The percentage of women in high skilled workforce is also high, at 47%; the percentage of women having access to health care services increased from 83.5% in 2005 to 85.3% in 2008. Vietnam's achievements in human development and gender development index have been recognized by international organizations Vietnam stands among middle-rank groups; 116th position out of 182 countries in Human Development Index and 94th out of 155 countries in Gender Development Index. In the Gender Empowerment Measure (GEM), Viet Nam ranked at 52 out of 93 countries, and in the Gender Gap Index (GGI) in 2008 Viet Nam ranked 68 out of 130 countries.

It is my pleasure to bring Vietnam's experience, which help make these achievements possible, to this meeting as follows. First, economic development should be pursued in tandem with social development and poverty reduction. Second, efforts in strengthening state management in gender equality should be made in connection with specific activities, programs and initiatives to promote women's advancement in practice at all levels. Third, women's will and efforts for

their advancement should be at the centre of women's empowerment activities. And fourth, international cooperation, sharing of experience and best practices play an important role in promoting gender equality and women's advancement.

Mr./Madam Chairperson,

With strong political commitment, Vietnam has gained encouraging achievements. However, like many other countries, major difficulties and challenges still lie ahead for us in promoting gender equality and women's advancement. The lingering prejudice of preference for men and undervaluing women still exist in rural areas. The conservative approach of allocating domestic works for women and girls in a number of families in Vietnam is hindering opportunities for girls to access to education, women to participate in social activities and to enjoy status, income on an equal footing as men. Maltreatment against women still exists in both urban and rural areas, in all social strata. There are wide gaps in knowledge and experience in mainstreaming gender equality in developing legislative documents, socio-economic programs and projects. Gender equality institutions are in the early stage of development, with limited financial and human resources. Gender equality officers have limited knowledge and skills to undertake their tasks. Moreover, new challenges are emerging in the process of globalization, namely, HIV/AIDS prevalence among women and girls; prostitution, trafficking of women and children; women getting married with foreigners for lucrative purposes; women migrants facing new challenges, etc. These challenges are placing major obstacles for Vietnam to effectively implement the Beijing Platform for Action. The immediate tasks are challenging, which requires strong political determination in combination with practical and strategic measures and joint efforts with international partners towards the common goal in Vietnam.

In the spirit of strategic objectives of the Beijing Conference, the Government of Vietnam is determined to effectively enforce the Gender Equality Law, adopt and implement successfully the National Strategy on Gender Equality for 2011-2020 period; make continued efforts in economic development and poverty reduction; and promote the equal rights of women and girls.

On this occasion, on behalf of the Government of Vietnam, I would like to express our sincere thanks for the effective support and cooperation of countries, international organizations, and the United Nations in implementing Beijing Platform for Action in particular and realizing gender equality objectives in Vietnam in general. It is our wish to see this cooperation close and fruitful in the future.

Wish you good health and our meeting success

