



THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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General discussion

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Distinguished delegates,

1. It is my pleasure to address the 52nd Session of the Commission on the Status of Women on behalf of the Republic of Korea. I wish to express my gratitude to Mr. Chairperson, and the entire bureau for your excellent stewardship.

Mr. Chairperson,

2. We are encountering both good news and bad news at the same time regarding the situation of women around the world. The good news is that we have observed an extension in the average life span and an increase of awareness regarding the rights of women across the board. However, the bad news is that we are living in a time of obscurity which brings about too many variables and too few constants. On one hand, long-term trends in the modern world include climate change, aging societies, major urbanization and the ever widening gap between the developed and developing countries.

3. I encourage the various UN institutions for women to study these mega-trends and their complicated impact on women. And it is also important for them to incorporate their analysis on these matters in policy making in order to cope better with these challenges. In this regard, the Republic of Korea urges the creation of a consolidated, stronger and fully-funded UN entity for women to mainstream a gender perspective in the context of the “Delivering as One” Initiative.

4. While the challenges mentioned before are evolving ones, we also have issues that need to be addressed in a most urgent manner. These are issues of refugees and internally displaced women, as well as gender-based violence. The most intractable problem we face is a combination of these two issues.

According to UNHCR, the overall number of people under UNHCR mandates increased from 21 million in 2005 to almost 33 million in 2006. According to the *Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children*, over 60% persons among refugees and IDPs are women and it takes an average of 15 years for these women to return to life before displacement. What is also saddening is the double victimization of women in refugee and IDP camps who are easily being exposed to gender-based violence, including rape.

5. In this light, the Republic of Korea would also like to express our heartfelt welcome to the Secretary-General's campaign to end violence against women. Furthermore, as a specific and practical measure for women in refugee and IDP camps, I strongly urge the World Health Organization (WHO), the Global Health Cluster and IASC Task Force on HIV to include comprehensive reproductive health in their policy framework as defined in the *Interagency Field Manual on Reproductive Health in Refugee situations*.

Mr. Chairperson,

6. Let me turn to the priority theme of this session, "Financing for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women." Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women will ultimately serve as an effective tool for global development and prosperity. As one example, I hope to briefly touch upon the policies and measures that the Government of the Republic of Korea has in place.

7. The Republic of Korea is endeavouring to provide financing for gender equality not only through the national budget, but also by mobilizing resources in an innovative way. For instance, the Women's Development Fund, a leading resource for gender equality, has been an effective instrument for a number of projects aimed at women's capacity building in a wide range of areas. Since this Fund was established in 1996 pursuant to the Women's Development Act, its holdings have grown to some 139 million US dollars by the end of 2007.

8. At the international level, the Government of the Republic of Korea has continued to provide financial assistance to women's empowerment programs in developing countries at the bilateral level and in partnership with international organizations. Acknowledging a number of effective and successful projects carried out by UNIFEM, the Republic of Korea made a contribution to "Result-based Project for Liberian Rural Women" in partnership with UNIFEM and the World Bank. The Republic of Korea also made a modest contribution to the UN Trust Fund in support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women in 2007. The Government of the Republic of Korea will henceforth increase its efforts to apply a gender perspective in its ODA policies.

Distinguished delegates,

9. We can not stop time from unfolding. The new challenges will demand from us many compromises. However, we should not let go of our common goals. MDGs and Human Rights, in particular gender-mainstreaming, are our beacons along the road ahead. The Republic of Korea will share responsibility in realizing our common goal, gender equality.