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Permanent Mission of the
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البعثة الدائمة
لدولة الامارات العربية المتحدة
لدى الأمم المتحدة
نيويورك

Statement by

H.E. Ambassador/ Ahmad A. Al Jarman
Permanent Representative
Of the United Arab Emirates
To the United Nations
At the 53rd session of the
Commission on the Status of Women
on item 3 entitled

**“Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on women and to
the special session of the General Assembly entitled “Women 2000:
gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century”**

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Mr. Chairman,

I am pleased to extend to you on behalf of the delegation of the UAE our congratulations on your election as chairman of the 53rd session of the Commission on the Status of Women. I also would like to express to you and the members of your office our appreciation for your efforts in directing its work, and wish you success. Also I want to thank the Secretary General for his valuable reports on the items of the agenda.

My delegation wishes to associate itself with the statement given by the distinguished representative of Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77.

Mr. Chairman,

The UAE has translated its keenness on the advancement of women and the implementation of the principles of gender equality through provisions of the constitution and national laws which ensured the equality of citizens ,

men and women, in all rights and duties including the enjoyment of equal opportunities in all areas; education, work, health and social benefits. In addition to that my country became party to the international and regional treaties on women including CEDAW and the Human Rights as well as a number of treaties on women's work and employment, and we are committed to implement all the recommendations and outcomes of international conferences and summits on women. With the integration of women advancement affairs and gender equality into all programs of development in the country, women issues gained political attention and support on the highest level. The government has assigned seven national mechanisms to be directly concerned with women and children affairs and work to implement women advancement strategies in accordance with the recommendations of the Beijing Plan of Action and the outcome of the 23rd special session of the GA.

The UAE has accomplished concrete achievements in the area of gender equality in all areas. In education, the percentage of girls enrolled in elementary schools is close to that of boys', while in higher education girls surpass boys comprising 77 % of the total number of university graduates with constant increase in the number of women holding Masters and PhDs.

In the area of work and economic participation, the state has encouraged and supported women entry in the work market, while working on removing any obstacles in their way to work in any job they are qualified for. Women now form 22.4% of the total national work force; they occupy 66% of jobs in the public sector of which 30% are in leading and decision making positions including membership in the boards of the chamber of commerce and industry. The establishment of the Business Women Council and Business Women Prize in the UAE was another step to promote and support women contribution in the private sector. Investments run by women include different areas such as trading, finance and banking, construction, real estate, services, tourism and many other areas.

To assist women who are unable to work away from their families, the Ministry of Social Affairs undertook the implementation of "Program Productive Families", which seeks to improve the financial resources of limited income families and transform them from dependent families to contributing ones.

In order to encourage and facilitate equal sharing of responsibilities between men and women including caregiving for children, the elderly, the sick and the disabled, the government has taken a number of legal, social and economic measures and initiatives to alleviate the burdens of caring for the family, most of which are carried by women, thus allowing her to work productively outside the home and encouraging fathers' participation in caregiving.

As for HIVS/AIDS I would like to say that AIDS has not been a source of social or economic burden for the Emirati family so far. We succeeded in keeping the cases of AIDS to the lowest rate possible, with the government providing required health and medical care for the patients.

In the field of women participating in decision making, the UAE has lately witnessed obvious changes in such issues. Such changes include political participation of the citizens, especially women, in the decision making process , where now we have four women ministers in the cabinet two of whom are in charge of foreign trade portfolio and social affairs portfolio. Further more, women had the opportunity to run for offices in the Federal National Council resulting in a 22.5% representation of women in the total membership, which is a high percentage compared to women representation in many countries in the world.

In addition to women representation in the executive and legislative bodies, women started participating in the judicial authority through the assignment of women, for the first time, as a judge and a prosecutor, which represents a strong expression of the belief in women's role in decision making.

The UAE continues its efforts to promote and dissipate a culture of equality and justice through all state institutions, especially schools and the media. It continues working on to removing social and psychological obstacles facing women's participation and total integration in all work sectors and their participation in decision making at all levels.

Mr. Chairman,

The UAE expresses its solidarity and support to the Palestinian women, who are living under tragic humanitarian conditions due to the brutal aggressions committed by the occupying Israeli forces in Gaza. Therefore we urge the international community to continue extending its support and assistance to

the Palestinian women and people and to speed reaching a peaceful and comprehensive permanent solution to the Palestinian problem.

In conclusion we urge for the continuation of international efforts to enhance the political and financial support aiming to assist millions of women in the developing and poor countries and to improve their living conditions in accordance with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Human Rights, the Beijing Plan of Action and the outcome of special 23rd session of the General Assembly.

Thank you.