



PERMANENT MISSION OF NEPAL TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**Statement by Hon'ble Badri Prasad Neupane, Minister for Women, Children and Social Welfare of the Government of Nepal at the Fifty-seventh session of the Commission on the Status of Women on agenda item 3: Follow up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the Twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"**

**(11 March 2013, New York)**

**Madame Chair,**

Allow me at the outset to convey to you and all the delegates attending the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women warm greetings on behalf of my country Nepal and my delegates. I am honored at the invaluable opportunity to address this esteemed session. My Government aligns itself with the statement made by the Hon'ble Minister for Women and Social Welfare of the Republic of Fiji on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Government of Nepal strongly believes that elimination and prevention of all forms of violence against women and girls is critical to achieving gender equality and women's empowerment. Towards this end I would like to reaffirm my Government's commitment to promoting gender equality and the full and equal enjoyment of human rights by women and girls.

In the last few years Nepal has made significant progress in social, economical and political areas which has set the benchmark for elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls. The Constituent Assembly of Nepal had 33 % women's participation - the highest in the region through which women gained more political and intellectual independence. Nepal is committed to preserve these gains achieved after long years of struggle and ensure the implementation and adoption of all policies and programs that accelerate the progress of women.

**Madame Chair**

The interim constitution of Nepal 2007 has envisioned the right to equality of all and has ensured the social justice of women and girls. For effective implementation of this fundamental right, sexual violence has been declared a punishable crime and legal provisions are in place for punishment of the perpetrators. Nepal believes that gender equality cannot be achieved without guaranteeing women's sexual and reproductive health and rights, and reaffirms to expanding access to sexual and reproductive health information and services across the country. In this regard provisions of a range of services and responses including rehabilitation centers, one stop crisis centers, service centers, medical, psychological and other counseling services and free legal aid are being initiated and will be expanded gradually in more parts of the country. In addition to this a special national fund for gender based violence has also been established.

Violence against women and girls being one of the major challenges impeding development, Nepal attaches great importance to address this phenomenon through strong normative framework. The Government of Nepal has adopted a five year National Strategy and Plan of Action related to Gender Empowerment and Ending Gender Based Violence. The strategy among other measures, sets forth provisions for zero tolerance against violence, one stop crisis management centre for the protection of survivors/victims, gender mainstreaming in economic and social development related programmes and greater access to justice, such as free legal aid and fast track courts. It has also set up institutional mechanisms so that women and girls can report acts of Gender Based Violence against them in a safe and confidential environment.

There is a sustained effort to review laws that discriminate against women coupled with enactment of gender responsive ones. The Domestic Violence (Crime and Punishment) Act 2009, the Human Trafficking and Transportation (Control) Act, 2007 and the National Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Women and Children

(2012), the National Commission on Women Act, 2006 and other national laws also mandate the government of Nepal to work more purposefully to address violence against women and girls. In this regard the establishment of fast track court specially for addressing the domestic violence against women is in process. Special services for most marginalized and vulnerable women such as migrants, women with disability and conflict affected women.

**Madame Chair,**

Nepal is the first South Asian country to develop the National Action Plan on United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 and 1820. The plan in its second year is being implemented and funds for implementation have been earmarked from the Nepal Peace Trust Fund. Increased participation of women in decision-making and protection of women and girls from sexual and gender based violence and ending impunity are our topmost priority under the National Action Plan. The Government of Nepal strongly believes that there cannot be peace and security if violence against women and girls persist. Promoting a bottom up approach the Localization of NAP with specific guidelines is now being carried out to ensure that the NAP is effectively implemented.

**Madame Chair**

Nepal government reaffirms its strong support and commitment to the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA) and to its reinforced implementation. We are also fully committed to the effective implementation of the Convention on Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) and its optional protocol as well as the full implementation of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). In this regard we are committed to investing in gender equality and women's empowerment to tackle the root causes of violence against women and girls including improving their access to justice, strengthening the rule of law and ensuring an effective security and legal response.

The Government of Nepal believes that enhancing women's economic empowerment, by ensuring women's rights to own land and property, to inheritance, equal pay for equal work, and safe and decent employment and most importantly engagement of men and boys are central to preventing the pandemic of violence against women and girls. Our strategy plan emphasizes on mobilizing men and boys to break the silence on violence against women and foster equality. Towards this end a successful intervention initiated by civil society and supported by the Government is the launch of the national campaign "Our Goal: Stop Violence Against Women" in partnership with All Nepal Football Association.

Global efforts, strong political will and commitment are required to address the root causes of violence against women and girls. Therefore, the Government of Nepal strongly believes that violence against women and girls should be an important target in every goal on achieving gender equality and women's empowerment in the post 2015 development agenda.

**Madame Chair**

In spite of the significant progress made in the area of violence against women and girls critical challenges still remain in the implementation of plan of actions constrained by limited resources. Nepal recognizes that a multi sectoral approach and a concerted effort are required on different dimensions like health, education, legal rights, protection and security to prevent violence against women and girls. In this regard in addition to inter ministerial and agency collaboration Nepal Government has also been promoting proactive partnership and collaboration with civil society and women's groups and other development partners including UN agencies. We will continue to work with diverse stakeholders at all levels to deliver on our gender equality commitments.

**Madame Chair**

In conclusion, let me reiterate Nepal's commitment to support the work of the Commission on the Status of Women in achieving a substantial forward-looking outcome at this session so that a global roadmap of action to prevent violence against women and girls is endorsed.

**Thank you very much**