



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

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**Statement**  
**of**

**Lok Chumteav Mrs. Hou Samith**  
**Secretary-General, Cambodian National Council for Women**

**at the**  
**54<sup>th</sup> Session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

**New York**  
**March 5, 2010**

Mr.Chairman  
Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is an honor to present the statement on behalf of the Royal Government of Kingdom of Cambodia at the 54th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women.

Mr. President, I endorse the statement made by the distinguished Permanent Representative of Yemen on behalf of G-77 and China.

Since last reporting in 2005, further progress has been made in all relevant *areas of concern* of the Beijing Platform for Action. These achievements, in relation to the objectives of our meeting today, include:

- Increased enrolment rates for girls at all levels with gender equity at primary education level; the gender gap at upper secondary education is narrowing from year to year;
- Improved access for girls and women to health services, including reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention.
- Women have achieved parity in wage employment in the agriculture and industry sectors.
- Cambodia has established legal, policy and institutional frameworks to address violence against women and trafficking of women and girls. There is strong engagement of multiple stakeholders and improvements are made in data collection and monitoring. Key legislation includes the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence and Protection of Victims (2005), the Law on Suppression of Human Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation (2008), and the National Action Plan to Combat Violence against Women (2009).
- Greater awareness of women's rights and gender equality
- Women's participation in decision-making at all levels has increased; we have women Deputy Governors in all districts and provinces. The percentage of elected female commune councilors has doubled; there is at least one woman among the three village leaders
- Cambodia has ratified the Optional Protocol to the CEDAW Convention.

Factors contributing to this progress on gender equality and the empowerment of women are the following:

- High political commitment and support of the Prime Minister, resulting in gender targets and gender considerations mainstreamed in all key sectors of the Cambodian National Strategic Development Plan
- The Rectangular Strategy of the Royal Government of Cambodia states that women are the backbone of the economy and the society, and key elements of gender-responsive budgeting have been introduced as part of the public financial management reform process.
- A comprehensive and innovative gender mainstreaming system, covering all key sectors and the sub-national levels. The Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Cambodian National Council for Women are supported by a government-donor

technical working group on gender (TWG-Gender) which includes NGOs. Gender mainstreaming action groups have been established in all key line ministries.

- The implementation of the five-year strategic plan of the Ministry of Women's Affairs has contributed to strengthen gender equality and the empowerment of women.
- Through our *Cambodia Gender Assessment* and gender responsive national statistical survey and census instruments, we now have a more solid evidence-base for gender analysis and policy formulation.

While remarkable progress has been achieved, the Ministry of Women's Affairs still faces obstacles in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women:

- Further capacity development and continued awareness-raising on women's rights and equal status is still central to implementation of many of the policies, laws and strategies. Although changing gradually, traditional gender stereotypes still persist.
- Despite clear government and development partner policies on gender equality, there is still a need to cultivate commitment and strengthen knowledge of the importance of gender equality in development and poverty reduction.
- Continued efforts are necessary to strengthen access to justice and law enforcement, especially in relation to legal protection of women and girls, and in scaling up of services for victims, in particular in cases of domestic violence and human trafficking.
- Low completion rates, especially the high drop-out rates of girls; expanding options for youth, especially young women, to acquire training and productive skills that will support employment and self-employment requires urgent attention.
- There is still lack of funds for implementation of some of the plans and strategies.

The Royal Government of Cambodia acknowledges these challenges and is actively taking measures to address them, in cooperation with development partners and civil society. Women's health and rights are important as the benefits extend beyond the woman herself to her family, community and nation. The sustainable reduction of poverty requires urgent action to end discrimination against women and girls.

The Royal Government of Cambodia looks forward to continued productive cooperation with the UN and other Member States present here today for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women.

Thank you for your attention.