



**Statement by
H.E. Ambassador Ahmad 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 54th 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 in doing so. I also 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 Yemen on behalf of the Group of 77.

We extend our heartfelt condolences to the Government and People of Chili for the losses they suffered due to the last earthquake. The UAE will cooperate with the donor countries to provide the needed assistance.

Mr. Chairman,

The UAE has translated its belief in the importance of mainstreaming a gender perspective in its plans for achieving the Millennium Development

Goals, with the advancement and empowerment of women as one of its priorities, through integrating the concepts of the advancement of women and gender equality within the national programs for sustainable development in the country with the support of the provisions of the constitution and national laws that 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 Human Rights as well as a number of treaties on women's work and employment. Furthermore, 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 support on the highest level. The government has assigned seven national mechanisms to be directly concerned with women's and children's affairs and work on implementing women advancement strategies in accordance with the recommendations of Beijing and the 23rd special session of the GA.

The UAE has accomplished visible achievements in the promoting gender equality in all areas. In education, the percentage of girls enrolled in elementary schools is close to that of boys. 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's entry in the work market, at the same time working on removing any obstacles in their way to work in any job they are capable of. 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 Chambers of Commerce and Industry. The establishment of the Business Women Council in the UAE was another step to promote and support women's contribution in the private sector.

As for women participating in decision making, the UAE has witnessed in recent years new developments in the political participation of women. We now have four women ministers in the cabinet, two of which are in charge of Foreign Trade Portfolio and Social Affairs Portfolio. At the same time, women have been offered the opportunity to run for offices in the Federal

National Council and gained 22.5% representation 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 began participating in the judicial authority through the assignment of women, for the first time, as a judge and a prosecutor, which is a demonstration of acknowledging the role of women in decision making.

Among the efforts made by the UAE to combat all forms of violence against women, the State has issued the Law against Human Trafficking, which is considered the first in the region, with provisions covering all forms of trafficking and exploitation of women and children. It is backed up with a national plan of action including criminalization, law implementation, victims support and international partnership and cooperation.

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 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, while it expresses its solidarity and support to Palestinian women, who are living under tragic economic and humanitarian conditions due to the brutal aggressions committed by the occupying Israeli forces in Gaza, urges the international community to continue extending its support and assistance to the Palestinian women and girls in the Palestinian Occupied Territories and the refugees camps, especially in areas such as education, health care, social care, employment and economic empowerment, taking into consideration a complete integration of a gender perspective in the international assistance programs for the Palestinian people in general. It is necessary that the international community should intensify the efforts to put an end to the violence against the Palestinian women and expedite the process of reaching a peaceful and comprehensive permanent solution to the Palestinian problem.

Furthermore, we urge all involved parties to take into consideration the safety and protection of women and children during armed conflicts and to release those of them detained as hostages or prisoners, and call upon the

relevant UN bodies to follow up on their situation and provide them with the necessary assistance.

In conclusion we urge for the continuation of the international efforts to enhance the political and financial support to assist millions of women in the developing and poor countries 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 special 23rd session of the General Assembly.

Thank you.