



# CROATIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS  
NEW YORK

**Statement by**

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**50 session of the Commission on the Status of  
Women**

**Agenda item 3**

**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"**

**General discussion**

United Nations, New York  
1 March 2006

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Madam Chairperson,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you Madam Chairperson and the members of the Bureau on your election. On behalf of the Croatian delegation I would like to extend my gratitude to you and to the Secretariat of the Division for the Advancement of Women on the preparation of this session.

I would like to stress that the Republic of Croatia gives its full endorsement to the European Union statement delivered here by the Austrian Presidency.

At this 50<sup>th</sup> historic session of the CSW, which has during the past 60 years developed into the central UN intergovernmental body for the promotion and protection of women's rights, we must consider the future of women's rights as well as the role of CSW within the current UN reform process and the establishment of the Human Rights Council.

With regard to the improvement of the working methods of the CSW, Croatia supports the establishment of such mechanisms that could strengthen the implementation of already adopted standards. Since discriminatory laws and practices represent the main obstacle for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, CEDAW Convention and the achievement of gender equality throughout the world, the idea of the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on Laws that Discriminate against Women or other appropriate mechanism should be fully explored during this session.

Madam Chairperson,

CSW Declaration adopted at its last session emphasized the important linkages between States' follow-up of global policies such as the Beijing Platform for Action and the Millennium Declaration on the one hand, and States' implementation of the international legal obligations under the CEDAW Convention, on the other.

The Croatian Government has drafted its National Report on the Implementation of the UN Millennium Declaration and its conclusions

indicate our priorities in the promotion of gender equality. These include issues such as gender-sensitive education, economic empowerment of women and stronger participation of women in public and political life.

As a State party to the CEDAW Convention since 1992 and its Optional Protocol since 2001, Croatia presented its Second and Third Periodic report to the CEDAW Committee in January 2005. Full implementation of the CEDAW Convention and the Committee's concluding comments for Croatia will be pursued by the Government in its elaboration of the third National Policy for the Promotion of Gender Equality for the period 2006-2010. This is a framework national document for the effective promotion of women's rights.

Madam Chairperson,

We view an enabling environment as one which creates the conditions for the elimination of inequality and discrimination through legal and gender-sensitive institutional frameworks. Important elements of this are the allocation of necessary resources, the eradication of discriminatory social and cultural norms and practices, as well as the stereotypical roles awarded to women and men.

Improved access to education and health services is a crucial precondition for the establishment of full participation of women in development, as well as equal access to employment opportunities. Accordingly, Croatia believes that policies and programs aimed at enhancing the position of women have to be based on gender analysis and take into account the existing gender inequalities.

In order to identify areas of special concern, it is also essential that all the relevant data be gender-disaggregated. Accordingly, in 2005, Croatia has for the first time gathered gender-disaggregated statistics of average monthly gross-net salaries.

Madam Chairperson,

The Republic of Croatia fully supports the principle of equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes as a vital tool for strengthening democracy and achieving the goals of sustainable development. We must stress that the measures dealing with under-representation of women should include the introduction of temporary

special measures, in accordance with Article 4.1 of the CEDAW Convention and CEDAW Committee General Recommendation No. 25.

Croatia's new Law on Gender Equality prescribes the introduction of temporary special measures, the implementation of which is aimed at the promotion of equal participation of women and men in the bodies of legislative, executive and judicial power. The provisions of our Law on Political Parties envisage a temporary special measure according to which political parties are allocated 10 percent more funds for each representative of the under-represented gender.

The Croatian Government is also very proactive in the suppression of domestic violence. Recently, a comprehensive set of legal instruments was adopted, including the Law on the Protection against Domestic Violence, the National Strategy for the Protection against Domestic Violence for the period 2005 – 2007 and Rules of Procedure in Cases of Domestic Violence. September 22 has been proclaimed the National Day for the Suppression of Violence against Women. In this regard, Croatia is looking forward to the elaboration of the Secretary-General's Study on Violence against Women and its recommendations.

Madam Chairperson,

As regards women's representation in the parliament as an indicator for the achievement of the third Millennium Development Goal, we must stress that there is a trend of a continuous gradual increase of participation of women in the political life of the Republic of Croatia.

From the first multiparty elections in the 1990 until today, the number of women in the Croatian parliament has increased considerably, from 5 % to approximately 21 %, and we are striving towards the targeted goal of 30 percent women representatives, which is considered to be the critical mass necessary to bring about real changes.

We have also registered an increase in the participation of women in the exercise of executive authority; today it is at approximately 30 % among members of the Government, including for the first time a woman in the position of Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Integration.

Madam Chairperson,

In conclusion, I would like to assure you that Croatia will do its utmost to contribute to a constructive debate of this session.

Thank you for your attention.