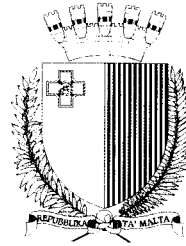


# MALTA



**Statement by**

**H.E. Mr. Saviour F. Borg  
Ambassador  
Permanent Representative of Malta  
to the United Nations**

**at the**

**Fifty-second session of the  
Commission on the Status of Women**

**Thursday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008**

*(Please check against delivery)*



Mr. Chairman,

My Delegation would like to offer its congratulation to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election to preside over this important Commission. My congratulations also go to the other Members of the Bureau.

Mr. Chairman,

I would like here to present succinctly Malta's views on the question concerning the advancement of women. But before doing that, my Delegation would like to state that the statement delivered by Slovenia on behalf of the EU Member States generally reflects Malta's position on the subject being considered by this Commission. At the same time, and in this connection, Malta would also like to clarify its position with respect to the language relating to the issue of sexual and reproductive health and rights in the said statement. Malta firmly continues to maintain that any position taken or recommendations made regarding women empowerment and gender equality should not in any way create an obligation on any party to consider abortion as a legitimate form of reproductive health rights, services or commodities.

Mr. Chairman,

Malta remains committed to the attainment of concrete results towards empowering women and achieving gender equality. In this regard, the Government of Malta has through time shown a continuous commitment to gender equality through various initiatives. Thus, through both legal enforcement and the adoption of procedural measures, the situation of both women and men and gender equality in Malta has made important and critical strides particularly through a series of major breakthroughs which include legislative measures that safeguard equality between the sexes. In addition, the Government's commitment to the promotion of gender equality and work-life balance led to the introduction of a succession of initiatives that were launched, not only within the Public Service, the liberal professions and elsewhere, but also in the Judiciary.

Among these significant measures are:

- The enactment of legislation and the setting up of the national machinery (2003) responsible for the promotion and enforcement of equality between genders;
- The enactment of legislation on Domestic Violence (2006) and Amendments to the Criminal Code which included the setting-up of a Commission on Domestic Violence responsible for, among other things, advising on educating the public on all aspects of domestic violence; setting up of a Standards for Care Facilities for victims and standards and Protocols for practitioners; developing a comprehensive plan for a multi-disciplinary approach of active prevention and early intervention;
- The promotion of measures towards reconciling work and family responsibilities mainly through the introduction of family friendly measures;
- Changing of school text books having a gender bias thus eliminating from an early age the stereotypical classifications in favour of males;
- Amendments to legislation bringing in harsher punishments for trafficking in women and girls.
- The appointment of females as Judges and Magistrates and a female Judge to the EU Court of Justice;
- The constant annual increase of female over male students at university, where interestingly enough a significant improvement can be observed in the number of students who graduated from the University of Malta, and where in 2006 the number of female graduates stood at 57.4% (1560) whilst the number of males was 42.6% (1156).
- Specific ICT courses for women to ensure availability of trained personnel while monopolising on all possible initiatives to increase female employment; and
- The encouragement and support of specific initiatives such as female entrepreneurship.

Mr. Chairman,

As already stated, Malta is fully committed towards the development of the status of women in all spheres of life which aim to embrace equality and a true partnership between men and women in the sharing of responsibilities including those appertaining to families, careers and decision-making. Malta strongly believes that this position protects and consolidates such a partnership through the promotion of the right values of personal development for both men and women thus creating what we believe as the right role model for our present and future generations.

It is in this spirit and conviction that Malta intends to work within the European Union and with other UN Member States towards the empowerment of women and the achievement of gender equality in all spheres.

Thank you Mr. Chair