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STATEMENT BY

**THE STATE MINISTER FOR WOMEN EMPOWERMENT
REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA
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**AT THE FIFTY THIRD SESSION
OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

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Mr. Chairman,

It is a great pleasure to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on resuming the leadership of the Fifty Third session of the Commission. I am confident that under your leadership, we will have another constructive and fruitful session.

In discussing the issue, Indonesia wishes to associate itself with the statement by the distinguished delegate of Sudan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We acknowledge as well the Secretary General's reports and notes on the priority theme, "*The equal sharing of responsibilities, between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS*", which is indeed timely and highly relevant.

For some time now the principle of equal partnership between men and women affecting all aspects of life has been one of the main areas of deliberation by the CSW and other related forums. Measures have been taken at the international and national levels to create an enabling environment to promote a sharing of responsibilities by both genders.

Mr. Chairman,

Equal sharing of responsibilities, including caregiving is a cultural matter. Consequently we need to design a relevant cultural strategy and policy. Therefore we need to establish a socio-culturally new consensus between women and men. I like to remind us all here that sharing of responsibility is a vital social capital and at the same time is also an invisible human investment that must be incorporated into the formulation of the National Development Plan.

Since the Fourth–World Conference on Women in 1995, Indonesian women have made tremendous progress in the twelve priority areas identified by that conference. Our Constitution and democratic political system guarantee women greater participation in our political life. For the first time, there are four women ministers in Indonesia with wide ranging responsibilities, namely women empowerment, health, trade and finance, and four political parties with women as leaders.

In order to bring about the elimination of violence against women, we have not only promulgated the Law on Prevention of Domestic Violence in 2004 and the Law Against Human Trafficking, especially of women and children, in 2007, but we have increased and improved the facilities to help women and children affected by such violence. The police too have taken on a more active role in providing protection to potential victims.

Mr. Chairman,

In the area of politics and its decision-making processes, the Government of Indonesia has legally endorsed a quota system to benefit women candidates in General Elections. The articles of the Law state that lists of provisional legislative candidates submitted by political parties must ensure that at least thirty percent of the nominees are women and at least one of every three legislative candidates must be female.

In the area of women and health, we have made a significant progress. In reproductive health, we have managed to reduce maternal mortality by focusing our attention on ensuring that pregnancy is not solely the responsibility of women or mothers, but also the responsibility of husbands and the whole family through an Alert Husband Campaign. Furthermore, this campaign is also aimed at sensitizing men to share responsibilities in doing households chores, including providing care and treatment for those infected by HIV/AIDS, involvement in family planning and child education and nurture.

With regard to HIV/AIDS, the Government has implemented various programmes that make possible a comprehensive and integrated response to HIV/AIDS. The National AIDS Commission has formulated a National Strategy for Combating HIV/AIDS 2007–2010 and relevant laws are being reviewed to ensure they do not obstruct progress in combating the spread of the virus.

At the same time, Gender focal points and working groups of line ministries and development agencies have been strengthened to mainstream gender and to meet the challenges posed by the current economic and financial crises.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, let me re-emphasize our Government's commitment to the empowerment of women and gender equality at the national and international levels. We recognize that the key factor underlying successful implementation of initiatives for change is adequate reliable financing. Both domestic and international sources of funding are critical for success. Donor countries should therefore fully honour their international commitments, including increased ODA, free and fair trade and greater debt relief, in order to maintain the momentum for change.

Indonesia is firmly convinced that national efforts will benefit tremendously from international assistance and cooperation. In this context, we recognize the role of national machineries, including National Human Rights institutions, related to the promotion of the rights of women, both at national and international level. Additionally, countries sharing their experiences and best practices will accelerate the pace of change to achieve equality between men and women within the household and in the wider society. Once achieved, this change will undoubtedly modify the role that men play in providing care for HIV/AIDS victims within the family structure.

I thank you.

