

Commission on the Status of Women
55th session
22 February to 4 March 2011

H.E. Mr. Garen Nazarian
Chair of the Commission on the Status of Women

Opening remarks

Deputy Secretary General, President of the Economic and Social Council, Under-Secretary-General,
Distinguished delegates,

I am honored to welcome you all to the 55th session of the Commission on the Status of Women. I extend a special welcome to representatives from Capitals and in particular to Ministers and senior Government officials, to the large number of non-governmental organizations and to the entities of the United Nations system that have joined us for this important gathering.

We meet at a moment of tremendous expectations, excitement and promise.

In 2010, achieving the goals and commitments for gender equality, development and peace was the central objective of a number of review sessions, commemorations and summits.

Member States and other stakeholders strengthened the basis for real change for gender equality, women's rights and empowerment. It is now our responsibility to see to it that these commitments are turned into reality for girls and women in all parts of the world.

The establishment of UN Women has created an unprecedented momentum for action towards gender equality and women's empowerment. UN Women will be a key partner in all our efforts.

It gives me very great pleasure to welcome UN Women, and its Executive Director, Ms. Bachelet, to the United Nations family.

Distinguished delegates,

One of the key tasks of the Commission on the Status of Women is to monitor progress achieved and problems encountered in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The annual sessions are the occasion where we focus on a specific theme in an in-depth manner, and identify good practices, lessons learned and results achieved.

It is also the occasion where we resolve to accelerate implementation of previous commitments and make additional action-oriented recommendations addressed to States and other stakeholders.

We review the status of implementation of previously agreed commitments, highlight new and emerging issues of concern, and exercise a catalytic role in promoting gender mainstreaming.

This year, the main focus of our work will be on the role of education, training and science and technology, and the transition of women from education into the world of work. While much progress has been, and is being made, inequalities between women and men persist in all parts of the world.

There will be ample opportunity for dialogue to share experiences and exchange views on good practices and lessons learned in high-level roundtables and interactive expert panels.

The Commission's deliberations should result in a set of agreed conclusions on the priority theme that are focused, practical and action-oriented, so that they can effectively guide the different stakeholders towards implementation.

The Commission's discussions should also result in a renewed effort to eliminate all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child, which is the topic of our review theme. And they should raise the visibility of gender perspectives in the preparatory process for the 2012 Conference on Sustainable Development.

Many parallel events organized by Member States, United Nations entities, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders will further enrich our work. I look forward to two weeks of dedicated work with concrete outcomes that will improve the lives of women and girls globally.