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**Commission on the Status of Women
The 55th Session
General Discussion**

**Statement by
Mrs. Sri Danti
Secretary of the Minister for Women Empowerment
and Child Protection of the Republic of Indonesia**

**On Agenda item 3
Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the
twenty-third 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,

Allow me to extend my delegation's appreciation to your able stewardship in guiding the current works of the Commission to further advance the role of women at all levels of the society, in accordance with the Beijing Platform for Actions and the outcome documents of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly

In our national capacity, Indonesia would like to align itself with the statement of ASEAN as well as Group of 77 and China delivered by the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Chairman

Indonesia has always held the view that women and men have equal rights and responsibilities, consonant with their natural capabilities and potential. Both have the ability to do positive and constructive work to steer the advancement of their peoples and country.

Here in New York, we again have the opportunity to build on the cumulative gains towards equality between women and men, and further these gains with policies that will deliver results.

The priority theme of this session: "***access and participation of women and girls in education, training, science and technology, including for the promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work***" couldn't come at a better time. It particularly bodes well for our current efforts to attain the MDGs.

Education reaps life long benefits for all. It is widely viewed as a means to help develop skills that could lead to jobs and gainful employment. Enabling girls and boys equal access to education not only fosters healthy mindsets and respectful relations between genders, but in the wider context, it also helps promote a democratic, prosperous and harmonious society.

Yet, if barriers to education are not removed, it cannot fulfill its societal and development role. Foremost is removing the obstacle of unaffordability. Investing in education for women and girls is one of key elements to address gender gaps, family welfare and poverty reduction.

Along this line, there is a need to emphasize on an education that empowers; gives skills and builds self-confidence. Furthermore, in the context of our current global economy that is becoming more knowledge based, science education forms an important part in addressing inequity and empowering women to contribute in the development.

Mr. Chairman,

The Government and women of Indonesia have made significant progress in the twelve critical areas of concerns. Our Constitution guarantees gender balance and fair representation of women in all constitutional bodies. The Government has taken, among

others, special temporary measures to redress the imbalances based on gender, particularly in politics, education, social and cultural. The 2009 data showed that we nearly closed the gender gap in elementary, secondary and tertiary education.

At present, we have been making efforts to **improve the quality of education**, and to accelerate the completion of the Nine Year Compulsory Education. To this end, the Government has increased **twenty percent of its budget for education** since 2009.

To engender education policies and programmes, the Ministry of National Education has completed several manuals among others on Guidelines for School with a Gender Perspective; Institutional Capacities in Gender Mainstreaming in Education; Gender Mainstreaming Working Group's Tasks and Functions; Gender and Education Disaggregated Data to facilitate their stakeholders to mainstream gender in education. Since last year we have been preparing a manual for gender mainstreaming in Islamic Schools. The Ministry of National Education has also started to integrate gender perspectives in its planning and budgeting since 2009.

The efforts of **civil society organizations** have also enhanced government action. In Indonesia, the central focus of NGOs is providing both formal and non-formal education to reach the unreached group of girls and women, in different locations.

As for our **commitment to combat illiteracy**, the situation has been improving every year. In 2008, the illiteracy rate in Indonesia for men was 4.27% and women 7.51%. By 2009, the illiteracy rate in both decreased by 5%. We are also intensifying efforts by trying to identify and implement actions that would accelerate progress on the national nine years of compulsory education program. A national coordination task force was established for this purpose.

Ultimately, we intend to make sure that female representation in the education system can be fully translated into more equitable job opportunities, and income distribution between males and females in our country. Along this line, **gender mainstreaming has been integrated to related sectoral ministries**, among others the Ministry of Manpower and Transmigration, as well as the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small Medium Enterprises (SMEs), to **further ensure gender equality in employment**.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me also briefly highlight Indonesia's progress in other areas of the Beijing Platform for Action:

One of our key strategies is to **incorporate gender mainstreaming within the Five year National Development Plan (2010-2014)**. The Minister of Finance also initiated the gender responsive planning and budgeting since 2009.

In women and poverty, Indonesia has been carrying out the National Program of Independent Community Empowerment (PNPM Mandiri). Poor communities, including female headed households, have been targeted in poverty reduction efforts so that their capacities as well as their quality of life are enhanced accordingly. Apart from that, a

special fund has been allocated for women's economic groups to strengthen and develop their small businesses including provision of skills training, access to information and marketing.

It's also been our mission to continue improving **access to micro-credit and micro-finance for women**. By providing micro-credit to women, it has created work for thousands of families, and contributed to women's access to full employment and decent work.

To achieve the goal of equal access of women to education and employment as well as to enhance women's role in development, first and foremost, we must ensure their well-being.

In the area of women and health, we have made some progress. In reproductive health, we have managed to reduce maternal mortality from 307 per hundred thousand live births in 2003 to 228 in 2007. Mother and baby friendly hospitals and districts have been promoted. Other measures taken is to mobilize community involvement in making pregnancy safer for both women and the baby.

On violence against women, the Indonesian government continues to promote the implementation of the minimum standards on the Integrated Services for Women, and Children Victims of Violence established last year, as a guideline for our stakeholders at the national and sub-national levels.

In the area of trafficking in women and girls, we have developed a National and sub-national Task Force in anti-trafficking, and also established a budget the for Task force's five year plan.

The **Bill on Gender Equality** has been included in the 2011 National Legislation Programme of the Parliament. The Government and the Parliament are now working together to finalize the draft.

Finally, **Mr. Chairman**, allow me to reiterate Indonesia's firm commitment to the objectives of gender equality and women empowerment. We will continue to work with the global community and all relevant stakeholders in meeting these objectives at the national and international level.

I thank you.