

Islamic Republic of

I R A N

Permanent Mission to the United Nations

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Statement by

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55th Session of the UN Commission on the Status of Women

On the agenda Item 3:

“Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the 23rd Special Session of the UN General Assembly”

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In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Madame Chairperson,

At the outset I would like to congratulate you as the Chairperson of the 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. I am sure that under your able leadership this session would bear fruitful results. I would also like to extend my congratulations to other members of the bureau as well as the secretariat. Moreover, my delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Argentina on behalf of the G77 and China.

Madame Chairperson,

The promotion of women's human rights and dignity and their empowerment are parts of the prerequisites for development in all societies. The Commission's sessions are ample opportunities for exchanging of views on issues of concern related to women for adopting the required strategies and innovations. At the same time, it is an opportunity for reviewing the global decisions and policies adopted in the area of women's issues. Policies and Strategies that, in some cases, have failed to consider the diversity of cultures and characteristics of various civilizations, and as a result of being one-dimensional, prescribing a single remedy for all societies. Hence, they have failed to remove the obstacles and challenges, women facing at global level.

Today's World bears witness to the daily emergence of new challenges and crises which profoundly impacts the process of development and the advancement of women. These new changes signify the important role of the present Commission in identifying and examining the challenges and crises such as those of the economy, employment, family values, the impact of military invasions and occupation, state terrorism, new forms of slavery, lack of spirituality and the pursuit of justice.

It is therefore, our firm belief that the Commission on the Status of Women ought to adopt a complementary approach towards gender issues derived from the human nature. Men and women are complementary to one another in the world of creation and as such are essential in

human survival. This divine rule ought to be carefully considered when legislating crafting laws. Neglecting the central role of women in the management of family and society while attempting to compare men with women in the world of work without due attention to their natural rights and responsibilities on one hand and their similarities and differences on the other, would lead to disregarding their rights and responsibilities and their discrepancies as well as their similarities and ultimately, derailing from the real path of the advancement of women.

The Islamic Republic of Iran while paying serious attention to the promotion and improvement of the status of women has made gender justice as the basic strategy for providing a sustainable balance in its efforts to identify the real factors undermining the rights of women away from any form of exaggeration. The comprehensive model for Iranian women based on Islamic values has been enacted in the agenda of the decision making bodies of the Islamic Republic of Iran and as such "the Charter on the Rights and Responsibilities of Women" with emphasis on spirituality, justice, security and advancement has been ratified by legislative bodies of the country. The context of this document is more comprehensive cross-cutting and goes beyond the relevant international instruments.

Madame Chairperson,

The establishment of recent UN Entity for Women is a big step towards the long process of reform of the United Nations Organization. The UN Women could only become efficient and universal when it bases its support for women and its adoption of strategies and future policies on recognizing and respecting the religious, national and cultural diversities of diverse societies and nations, while exploring ways and means of an ideal localized model. Moreover, UN women should attempt review the past trend since the Fourth World Conference on Women with an aim to identify the highs and lows of the past measures while being accountable to the member States.

The Islamic Republic of Iran pays close attention to the functioning of the new UN Entity for women. While appreciating the report of the Executive Director contained in the document E/CN.6/2011/2, Iran hopes that in recruiting the staff of the new entity the element of equitable geographical distribution be fully respected bringing the representatives from all geographic

regions in, so to fully empower an entity with a complete understanding of the cultural sensitivities of various societies. Equally important for the new entity is paying urgent attention to the women living under foreign occupation or those women under oppressive rule or affected by state terrorism.

Madame Chairperson,

The aggravated status of women and children in the Occupied Territories of Palestine and the violence perpetuated against them is undoubtedly one of the greatest tragedies of history faced by women in the contemporary era.

The policies of the occupying power in the Gaza strip creating through building the Wall and erecting Check points have led to the imprisonment of all Palestinians in particular, the inhabitants of the Gaza strip. Women and children comprise the highest number of victims. Based on the report of the UN Secretary General entitled “the Status and assistance to Palestinian Women” contained in the document E/CN.6/2011/6, the humanitarian situation in the occupied Palestine has worsened and it still continues to be in the alarming situation.

It is disappointing that the report has overlooked the root causes of today’s situation of Palestine which is the continuance of foreign occupation and its direct and negative impact on the Palestinian women and children who are deprived of their basic rights; diverting the responsibility of the complex situation towards the Palestinians themselves. The report has also neglected the extreme violation of the human rights and the international humanitarian law due to the long term siege over the Gaza strip by the occupiers and their prevention of entry of International aid convoys to this region. One expects that the Secretary General would consider the above mentioned points in his future reports.

Madam Chairperson,

Providing full access of women to science, technology, skills and their participation in the scientific and technological education ensures women's full participation in the production and application of science, technology, innovation and management; helping their societies to fulfill the scientific and technological needs for development. The elimination of discriminatory

obstacles to the transfer of science and technology from developed countries and recognizing the rights and capabilities of the developing countries in having access to modern science and technology are basic for the advancement of women.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has included into its main policies a comprehensive campaign to promote a software revolution, as well as the production, acquirement, transfer, localization and commercialization of modern with direct participation of Iranian women. To this end, as part of a national policy planning, The National Elite Foundation of the Islamic Republic of Iran has been established to identify, assist, guide and to offer material and moral support to the scientific elites in particular, the women researchers in the research and technology sectors.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Iran has appointed an Iranian female university professor as his deputy for science and technology. Today, the female students comprise a remarkable percentage of participants at scientific festivals and Olympiads. Currently, support for establishing women's scientific societies and allocating scientific and research facilities to attract women scientists and elites are part of the national policies of the country.

Madame Chairperson,

The enhancement of women's status in the cultural, social, economic and political life of Iran is part of the key elements of all national policies, legislations and decision makings. Since the Islamic Revolution, the indexes related to women have seen a considerable growth in the areas of development, education and research, science and technology, justice, security, and health. Moreover, women have participated in all decision making, planning and implementation phases. It is noteworthy to mention that the main approach of Iran's development policy focuses on supporting the family and strengthening, empowerment and safeguarding the wellbeing of the family. In our view, no social reform is attainable unless the family is regarded as the main focus of attention.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to some of the significant achievements gained by women in the Islamic Republic of Iran:

1- Growth in the education and literacy level including areas of research, science and technology with the following indexes as examples:

- a) Gender justice index; the rate of literacy among populations of 15 years of age and over which compares women's literacy to that of men, has reached 89 % in 2006 and has risen to 90 % in the year 2009.
- b) The rate in scientific and research articles published by women members of scientific boards in the last decade has reached to 49 %.
- c) The enrollment rate of girls in primary schools, had reached to 98% in 2009.
- d) The considerable growth in the rate of health indexes and the decline in the mortality rate among mothers and curbing the AIDS.
- e) Providing means for economic development and appropriate job opportunities in public, private cooperatives sectors and creating home and distance working conditions.
- f) Growing rate of management levels from mid to and senior in the Education Ministry from 20 % in 2005 to 90 % in 2010.
- g) Increase in the rate of women's participation at high managerial levels as currently there are four women in the cabinet. There are also a number of women as deputy ministers and other high management levels.

Thank you.

