



KAZAKHSTAN

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STATEMENT
by H.E. Mrs. Madina Jarbussynova
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of the Republic of Kazakhstan
on the General Debates of the 55th session of the
Commission on the Status of Women

New York, 24 February 2011

**Mr. Chairperson,
Distinguished delegates,**

At the outset let me thank Secretary General for a well-grounded and comprehensive overview of the current global situation on implementation of the Beijing commitments as well as the decisions of the twenty-third Special session of the General Assembly.

Kazakhstan welcomes an establishment of a new gender entity UN Women and, being a member of its first Executive Board, expresses its strong hope on the future fruitful collaboration of the Commission on the status of women and UN Women aimed at achievement of internationally agreed gender-oriented goals. At the same time my delegation deems important that while complementing each other they should waive inefficient duplicity.

Acknowledging an existing gap between globally agreed goals and their translation into the reality, we assume it is crucial to increase national efforts and enforce national gender-mainstreaming capacity.

Kazakhstan is proud that women, being the prevailing part of a population, play a significant and increasingly important role in our society. The Beijing Platform of Action triggered the establishment of policies and strategies for gender equality, adherence to relevant international and regional instruments and has increased attention to gender issues. Thus in line with it Kazakhstan has set up a threshold of 30 per cent representation of women at the decision-making level to be achieved by 2016. Recognizing the fact that progress is uneven the authorized national body - the National Commission on women issues and family-demographic policy under the President of Kazakhstan - consequently implements principles of evolutionary empowerment of women. To this end, the republican network uniting 57 branches for promotion of female political leadership was established; talent pools were created under every national and local executive body. The Commission put special emphasis to consistent cooperation with political parties on promotion of gender mainstreaming, political advancement of women and gender balanced composition of election candidates' lists.

Undertaken measures have entailed an increase in women ratio on the high governmental posts in Kazakhstan. At present women constitute 18 per cent of the members of the Parliament as compared to 12 per cent in 2005. 28.6 per cent of the Supreme Court judges are women. In the civil service women account for 58 per cent, though only 10.3 per cent occupy decision-making positions.

Although women's political empowerment remains to be an ongoing concern certain improvement of indicators in this field is envisaged due to adoption of this Law "On the State Guarantees to Equal Rights and Equal

Opportunities for Men and Women” in December 2009, as it stipulates accountability of employers and public bodies to ensure gender equality.

The Government takes necessary measures to provide sustainable economic growth and hence to improve the well-being of every family. Great significance is attached to the economic advancement of women. Poverty reduction, improvement of social and financial determinants and gender-sensitive financing are considered a primary impetus for the economic empowerment of women.

While in Kazakhstan women constitute 4.2 million of 8.5 million economically capable population, their input to GDP is less than 39 per cent. This is also reflected in the existing wage gap, women’s salary is 66 per cent of that of men. The National Commission has proposed a set of recommendations for governmental bodies to increase this indicator up to 80 per cent by 2020.

In 2009 Kazakhstan launched the new Programme on Women Entrepreneurship for 2009-2015. Nine million US dollars were allocated last year to implement its provisions. The Programme promotes free vocational education and retraining for women. Nearly 26 thousand women attended income-generating and skills training courses last year, 64 per cent of whom got permanent job places.

We strongly believe that micro-crediting is an effective way to empower women. In accordance with the State Programme 5097 micro-credits totaling 12 million US dollars were loaned last year to rural citizens, women became recipients of 36 per cent of them.

Mr. Chairperson,

Undoubtedly the non-discriminatory education is a key driver of economic growth and is a vital factor for advancement of women and girls through decent job. In the Address to the Nation made on January, 28 President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev paid special attention to further modernization of education for timely implementation of the 2020 National Programme of Accelerated Industrial and Innovative Development. The Head of State stressed that quality education should be the basis of industrialization and innovative development of Kazakhstan.

Kazakhstan has already reached the millennium Development Goal of equal access for girls and boys to primary and secondary education. Our Constitution guarantees a free secondary education which is also mandatory to all citizens irrespective of sex. The gender component is incorporated into the overall State standard of secondary education.

As mentioned in the Secretary General’s report it is highly important not only to ensure wide access to education but also provide its high quality. To reach this goal Kazakhstan has been increasing financing of education, which has already

grown tenfold in the last seven years. A total number of 750 schools were built during the last decade. Innovative education demands particular focus at attainment of modern facilities. As for today computerization of schools has been fully completed, 50 per cent of them have multimedia classrooms and interactive equipment. Special attention is paid to school curricula, programmes and textbooks. Undertaken measures equally benefit both boys and girls.

There are 7516 schools in Kazakhstan, where primary and secondary education is provided to more than 2.5 million pupils, 49.5 per cent of whom are girls. In sphere of high education there are 58.2 per cent of female students. As a result statistics data shows prevailing number of women with university degrees in Kazakhstan.

Despite women's educational gains, their access to employment is often constrained by stereotypical perceptions. There is still a counter-productive identification of some professions as specifically female or male. As a result there is, on one hand, an underrepresentation of women in sphere of science and engineering and, on the other, - their overrepresentation in the humanities and social sciences. For example 80.9 per cent of teachers at secondary schools and 62 per cent of lectures at high level institutions are women.

To improve the current situation the National Commission is trying to address the root causes of horizontal and vertical occupational segregation, to eliminate obstacles to female employment and to eradicate a practice of career selection according to gender stereotypes. The textbooks have been reviewed and revised to eliminate gender stereotypes in educational process. Besides the Guidelines for gender expertise of graduate and post-graduate textbooks have been developed and successfully implemented.

Mr. Chairperson,

Resuming my statement let me express my delegation's strong confidence that close and fruitful collaboration of the relevant stakeholders will allow the international community to translate Beijing commitments into practical indicators and long-wished results in gender equality.

Thank you for your kind attention.