

STATEMENT
by the representative of Ukraine at the 55th Session of the CSW
(New York, 28 February 2011)

Mr. Chairman,

While aligning fully with the statement of the Presidency of the European Union, I would like to briefly touch upon a number of issues which are of particular interest for my country.

Ukraine welcomes active involvement of all UN bodies in the process of improvement of ways and modalities of empowerment of women. Let me express our appreciation to the UN Secretary-General for his leadership and crucial support in this field. Ukraine recognizes the vital importance of a strengthened United Nations gender architecture in advancing women's rights. It's great honor and responsibility for our country to be elected to the UN Women Executive Board and the Bureau. We welcome successful outcomes of the first regular session of the UN Women Executive Board as a very important step forward which demonstrates strong support, significant credibility and great expectations of Member-States. We have no doubt that the new entity will bring an important shift to the work of the UN in the area of gender equality and the empowerment of women. Ukraine will do its best to make implementation of gender policies and programmes more effective.

Mr. Chairman,

Fifteen years after Beijing undoubtedly, there has been progress in implementing its outcomes. Above all, more countries have understood that women's equality is one of basic prerequisites for development. Still, while the advancement of women has increasingly made its way into global and national agenda, women continue to face persistent obstacles in their lives. Perhaps the most insidious barrier to women's equal participation in leadership roles is the persistence of stereotypes towards women, which perpetuate discrimination and entrenched prejudices. To overcome this women must be educated and enabled to play their part in the global economy, life of their families, communities, states.

The problem of sexual exploitation and trafficking in human beings has become a serious challenge for many States, representing one of the worst forms of violence against women. The terrible business of trafficking in persons as well as other forms of violence against women are particularly flourishing in the areas of armed conflicts. Indeed, we must redouble our efforts to end these brutal phenomena. The tenth anniversary of the UN Security Council Resolution 1325 has been a key opportunity to strengthen the global agenda on women, peace and security. Ukraine became a co-sponsor of the SC Resolution 1960 (2010) on Sexual Violence in Armed Conflict. We remain ready to undertake further steps, in particular as a Member of the Peacebuilding Commission and the UN Women Executive Board.

Mr. Chairman,

Since the Beijing Conference the gender policy became an integral part of the state policy of Ukraine. After the adoption in 2005 of the Law of Ukraine "On ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men" its provisions are incorporated in national action plans adopted every five years. This led to the development of the institutional mechanism on gender equality, gender-oriented system of education, science, statistics, civil society activities and state human resources policy. In 2010 in the office of the Ombudsman of Ukraine the Representative on protecting children's rights, equality and non-discrimination started her work. The society's perception of the role of men and women has changed, 40% of young families have equal distribution of gender roles. The population started to better identify the situations of discrimination on the basis of gender that shows the population's raising awareness of its rights.

These and other important trends are properly reflected in the combined sixth and seventh periodic report of Ukraine on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, which was successfully presented in January 2010 in Geneva. Ukraine has submitted to the UN Secretariat the national report "Millennium Development Goals.

Ukraine–2010”. It comprises targets and indicators related to gender equality which were adapted to the Ukrainian context taking into consideration the particularities of the country's development.

Though Ukraine has made a substantial progress on a number of issues defined in the national report, there are still challenges to face. Among them – incompleteness of the gender transformation; a need for further development of gender statistics; an insufficient level of awareness of the legal aspects of ensuring the equal rights and opportunities for women and men; established gender stereotypes in society, etc.

Ukraine is actively involved in the process of standard setting within the framework of international structures such as the Council of Europe. In particular we welcome the finalization of work on the Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence.

Last year we also made significant steps to build up national legislation on the bases of international standards. Ukraine ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The correspondent national law was adopted in order to adjust national legislation to the norms of this Convention.

In May–November 2011 Ukraine will assume Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. We consider the future Chairmanship as a great honor which also imposes a great responsibility for our country.

At present we are finalizing our internal financial and organizational aspects of the Chairmanship main program events. We believe gender mainstreaming to be inherent part of our Chairmanship. That is why the calendar of events during this period envisaged the Conference on current developments of national gender equality mechanism.

A draft concept document of the Government of Ukraine, which shall form the basis of the State social program of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men for the period until 2016, was prepared, *inter alia*, to meet the above objectives. It should also be noted that for the Ukrainian Government the achievement of gender equality in the society is one of the main components of social and economic reforms under way.

Mr. Chairman,

Ukraine has traditionally been regarded as a country with a powerful scientific potential, with scientific schools recognized throughout the world and with an advanced system of training. At present, almost half of our women have higher education and secondary special education. Girls constitute more than half of the students in universities.

In spite of everything that is being done in Ukraine to deliver gender equality in education and science, there persists a multitude of pressing problems calling for special attention on the part both of the agencies of the State and of civil society. Changes will be possible only if representatives of both sexes participate actively in this process.

In conclusion, **Mr. Chairman**, my Delegation would like to reaffirm the strong commitment of Ukraine to apply all its efforts in order to ensure for women as well as their families and children healthy and worthy conditions for their steady advancement in all spheres of life.

I would like to take this opportunity and invite all delegations to a Side Event at the 55th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women “Stopping sexual violence against children through international standards”, organised by the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the United Nations, the Council of Europe and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General on Violence against Children. This event will be held on Monday, February 28 at 1:15 pm in Conference Room 7.

I thank you, **Mr. Chairman**.