

THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM



**STATEMENT BY
THE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE VIETNAMESE DELEGATION
AT THE 55TH SESSION
OF THE COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN**

New York, March, 2011

Mr./Madam Chairperson,

It's my honor, on behalf of Vietnam's delegation, to extend my warmest greetings to Mr./Madam Chairperson and distinguished participants at the session. Vietnam highly appreciates the priority theme of the session "access and participation of women and girls to education, training, science and promotion of women's equal access to full employment and decent work. This is indeed a good opportunity for UN member states to look back and review our relevant achievements, and discuss most effective measures to promote the implementation of Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action at national, regional and international levels.

Mr./Madam Chairperson,

The Government and people of Vietnam are determined to reinforce the legal framework on gender equality in all fields, including education, training and employment. In particular, the Government formulated No 2351 dated 24 December 2010 on the first-ever National Strategy on Gender Equality in the period 2011-2020 with the overall objective "*By 2020, basically ensure the de facto equality on opportunity, participation and benefit for both women and men in the political, economic, cultural and social fields, contributing the dynamic and sustainable development of the country*". The Strategy regulated specific Objective No 2 on Narrowing gender gap in economy and labour; Increasing the access of poor women in rural areas and ethnic minority women to economic resources and labour market and the specific objective No 3 on Improving female human resource, gradually ensure equal participation in education and training. Based on that, concrete indicators and specific solutions were set out to realize these objectives. In addition, national targeted programmes on employment; national programme on education and training; proposal on vocational training in rural areas have been also taking into account in to equal access and participation of women and girls.

So far, Vietnam has made much progress in developing a labor market, creating more job opportunities for women and men, ensuring equal access and participation in education and training. Women claim their roles and positions

and actively participate in all activities of production, in business, the service sectors, creating material and spiritual wealth for their families and the society. The labor force participation rate of women is 78.2 per cent and 86 per cent of men. The female labor force plays a very important role in export and processing sectors. Women make up more than 30% of labour force working abroad on contract basis annually.

The literacy rate is high and the gender gap has been narrowed at all schooling levels. The literacy rate is 94 per cent of the population aged 10 years and older which grew faster than the previous 10 year period. The primary schooling rate country-wide is very high; there is almost no gender gap at this level. The gender gap at the lower secondary and secondary is narrowing significantly as Vietnam continues to implement the target of universalizing lower secondary and secondary education in the delta provinces and urban regions by 2010.

At the university level, the ratio of men and women is getting more balanced – an important condition for developing high quality for female human resources. The rate of female intellectual development is going up and reaching the highest at the college level. The rate of female students in universities and colleges was 53.9 per cent in 2008. More women are first laureates graduating from universities and colleges.

Mr./Madam Chairperson,

With strong political commitment, Vietnam has gained encouraging achievements. However, like many other countries, major difficulties and challenges still lie ahead for us in promoting gender equality and women's advancement in the field of education and training, science and technology as well as labour and employment. Female laborers are predominant in labour-intensive sectors; meanwhile male laborers are concentrated in capital and technology intensive sectors. The proportion of untrained female laborers,

especially in rural areas, is still high. The real income of female laborers is only equal to 74.5 per cent of male laborers. Men are expected to be successful in their economic support of the family.

Women coming from poor families in remote and extremely difficult regions face many obstacles in accessing education. In this context, women and girls make up the majority of the illiterate population aged 15 to 40 years. These challenges and difficulties are placing major obstacles for Vietnam to effectively implement the Beijing Platform for Action. The immediate tasks are challenging, which requires strong political determination in combination with practical and strategic measures and joint efforts with international partners towards the common goal in Vietnam.

In the coming time, the Vietnamese Government is determined to promote the implementation of Gender Equality Law as well as National Strategy on Gender Equality in the period of 2011-2020; striving for ensuring equal rights of women and girls in all fields, including education and training, labour and employment and science, technology.

On behalf of the Vietnamese Government's delegation, I would like express our efforts with other State members to discuss and give recommendations with the aim of further developing gender-responsive programmes and policies to achieve the session's objectives..

Wish you good health and our meeting success.

Thank you, *Mr./Madam Chairperson.*