

**THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM**



**STATEMENT OF MS. TRAN BICH LOAN  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF VIETNAMESE NATIONAL  
COMMITTEE ON THE ADVANCEMENT OF WOMEN  
AT THE 56<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE STATUS OF  
WOMEN OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

*New York, 5 March, 2012*

*Madam Chairperson,*

*Ladies and Gentlemen,*

On behalf of Vietnamese delegation, it's my honor to extend warmest congratulations to you and other members of the Bureau on your elections and wish to assure our full cooperation during the deliberation of this important meeting. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive report submitted under the theme "The empowerment of rural women and their role in poverty and hunger eradication, development and current challenges". This is indeed a good opportunity for UN Member States to look back and review our relevant achievements, and discuss on the most effective measures to promote the participation and enjoyment of rural women and girls in all fields.

My delegation would like to align itself with the statement made by Algeria on behalf of Group 77 and China.

*Madam Chairperson,*

In 2008, the United Nations chose October 15 to be the "International Day for Rural Women" in recognition of the contributions of rural women throughout the world. As they represented more than a quarter of the total world population, rural women are the main force in the development of agriculture, improvement of food security and poverty eradication, as well as in many non-agricultural activities, diversification of family incomes and care of children and the elderly. Studies have shown that if rural women are given equal access to productive resources as men, the world's agriculture output could increase by 30% and the poverty rate could fall by 17%, and quality of life of more than 150 million people living in poverty could be improved. Despite their tremendous potential, rural women have always been undervalued and often completely ignored. Too little have been done to fully recognize their role – legally, economically, technologically and in statistics. It is time for the international community to invest in rural women and create an enabling environment for rural women to utilize their full potential in contributing to the growth and socio-economic development and support their equal participation in decision making.

*Madam Chairperson,*

In Viet Nam, women are a major and crucial force in the process of rural modernization and industrialization. According to our National Population Survey, women accounted for 50.5% of the total workforce in agriculture. Among the total female workforce, 68% is in agriculture while this number in male is 58%. Women's role in agricultural production has become more and more important in the economic transformation, as participation of women is continually increasing compared to the participation of men. Women are also actively participating in administrative as well as mass organizations, greatly contributing to the rural and agricultural development in Viet Nam.

In recent years, Vietnamese Government has made numerous efforts to improve the framework of policies and legislations on gender equality, as well as to promote the implementation of social security policies in order to contribute to

the stability and development of the country. Together with the implementation of Gender Equality Law, the Prime Minister approved National Strategy on Gender Equality for the period 2011 – 2020 and National Program on Gender Equality for the period 2011 – 2015. These documents proposed specific objectives, targets and projects to strengthen the access to economic resources and labor market for poor women in rural areas and ethnic minority women. The Prime Minister also approved Project on Vocational Training for Rural Laborers by the year 2020 which focus on vocational training for women, by relevant agencies, and create favorable conditions for women to access employment opportunities and increase their income.

Access to credit has also been improved for rural women, particularly women in need and in remote areas. By 2010, the rate of poor households headed by women got credit loans from the Viet Nam Social Policy Bank were 83.73% of the total number of households that received credit loans. Models such as Club of well-doing-business women, Club of female entrepreneurs, etc, have been successful and implemented throughout the communes, wards and villages. As a result, for the period of 2006 – 2010, more than 800 thousands households had come out of poverty, more than 50% of which was headed by women. In addition, more attention has been paid to education, training and capacity building for rural women and girls. The literacy gap between rural and urban areas is small (92% and 97% respectively). The revised Land Law in 2003 created crucial legal framework for women to have rights in owning and using.

*Madam Chairperson,*

With strong political commitments, the Government of Viet Nam has been vigorously engaged in a range of activities to improve the situation of rural women and has gained encouraging achievements. However, like in many other countries, Vietnamese rural women have been at a disadvantage compared to men, as well as to urban women with regards to opportunities on education, employment, information access and enjoyment of life. The discrimination and preconception against rural women have been reduced but still exist severely, particularly in the participation of communal affairs and decision-making positions.

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 the ensuring of equal rights of women and girls in all fields, including education and training, labor and employment and science, technology.

On behalf of the Vietnamese Governmental delegation, I would like to express our commitments to fully cooperation with the United Nations system and other Member States in further developing gender-responsive programs and policies to achieve the objectives set out in this session.

Thank you. /.